



VSAA Vocal Syllabus 2015-16

Vocal Level One – Concert Choir –
Acappella Women’s Ensemble – Men’s Ensemble

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Our year of study will be divided up into three sections, each with a slightly different focus.

Sept – late October

Choral Roots Music

Students will be researching and singing the music that is the origin of choral music; Gregorian Chant, part songs, canons, madrigals, etc. Like any art form, it is important to know what the origins of our art form are. Students will work with guest artists to learn older musical notation and to see how it has evolved over the centuries.

October 27th – **Vocal Informance**
7pm at VSAA *free of charge*

November – March

Building Music Theory Skills through: learning music notation, vocabulary, sight reading skills, and rhythm work. Students will also examine the vocal mechanism; how it works, how to care for it, how to use it in a healthy way. Developing efficient and consistent breath management/support to enhance singing. Learning ensemble skills through the concepts of unified vowels, blend, and balance.

December 8th – **Winter Concert**
7:00pm at VSAA \$

January 11th – **Combined Music Level 2/3 Concert**
7:00pm at VSAA

March 24th – **Spring Sing: The Rhythm of Life**
7pm at VSAA \$

April – end of May

May 24th - End of the Year Vocal Concert
“That Motown Sound”
7pm - Royal Durst Theatre – VSAA \$

This concert will feature the music of Motown. Students will explore the music made famous by artists like The Temptation, The Supremes, Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson, and many more! We’ll also put on our dancing shoes with the help of several guest choreographers.

This school year I will continue to use Standards Based Grading. A Standard is:

What a student should know and be able to do at the completion of a course

For each vocal class there is curriculum which includes standards students must meet to move on to the next level. The goal of all classwork is to help students develop the skills they need to pass each standard.

A couple of examples of standards in a vocal music class:

- Uses and interprets musical vocabulary/terminology with consistent and precise accuracy
- Tone is clear, focused, full, and open when singing
- Note reading/pitch recognition is accurate, fluid and clear with no mistakes



All standards used in my classes are taken from the National Music Standards for each grade level

I will be using a FOUR point scale when grading. What does each number mean?

4 (A) – **Outstanding** Students at this level demonstrate an in-depth understanding of a standard

3 (B) – **Proficient** Students at this level have a solid grasp of the standard

2 (C) – **Developing** Students at this level demonstrate partial command of the standard

1 (D) – **Needs improvement** Students at this level are failing to apply basic skills and effort

I – **Incomplete** This mark in the grade book indicates that the assessment which measures this standard has not been completed/submitted.

The grading scale that my colleagues and I will be using is:

3.7-4.0 = A	92.51-100.00%	2.7-3.0 = B-	62.51-70.00%	1.3-1.8 = D+	32.51-40.00%
3.5-3.7 = A-	85.91-92.50%	2.3-2.7 = C+	55.01-62.50%	1.0-1.3 = D	25.00-32.50%
3.3-3.5 = B+	77.51-85.90%	2.0-2.3 = C	47.51-55.00%	0.1-0.9 = F	0.00-24.99%*
3.0-3.3 = B	70.01-77.50%	1.8-2.0 = C-	40.01-47.50%	* Students will also earn a failing report card grade if ANY Incomplete marks remain at the end of the semester	

Grading Categories:

Student’s Organizational Skills will be 15% of a student grade

A daily record of student organization is recorded in my gradebook. It is based on students arriving to class on time, with their folder, and a pencil.

Student Self-Assessment will be 25% of a student’s grade

Students will self-assess themselves **bi-weekly** based on six standards (these include singing with proper alignment, attentiveness in class, supporting vocal tone with breath and support, taking instruction and applying it, demonstrating focus, and showing respect to peers and the teacher)

Assessment of Standards will be 60% of a student's grade
Homework, class work, and group work is considered formative (i.e., practice),
and will not be factored into your final grade. Nevertheless, it is in your best interest to
keep up with classwork that you miss and written work so that you will be prepared
for the Mastery Task assessments (**concert performances are considered a Mastery Task**).

**While students are learning a new skill and moving toward demonstrating their
knowledge, it is considered PRACTICE.
There will be a record of this work in my gradebook but it will be listed as NC (NO COUNT).
The assessment will count toward their grade.**

Attendance Protocol for Vocal Classes

Pre-Arranged Absences: it is your responsibility to make sure that Mrs. Green has something **IN WRITING** stating when you will be absent from class. This notification must be given to Mrs. Green at least **THREE WEEKS** in advance/or earlier if possible. Any missed work must be made up within two weeks of the absence. Failure to notify Mrs. Green (or telling her at the last minute) can result in a loss of credit (see recovering credit).

Excused Absences: a pass must always be given to Mrs. Green upon return from any kind of absence. Failure to do this will result in loss of points toward your grade. Please make sure to take care of this ASAP as to avoid any problems/misunderstandings.

Tardys: should not happen! It is important to the ensemble and to Mrs. Green that everyone be present when it is time to begin class. If you are detained (by a teacher, ASB meeting, etc), you **MUST HAVE A NOTE**. If there is no note, you will lose points. Chronic tardiness is not acceptable and will be addressed.

Excessive Absence: Attendance at all performances, rehearsals, and extra rehearsals are required unless pre-excused in advance. Provisions for being late or leaving early must also meet this requirement. In all cases, Mrs. Green reserves the right to accept or decline and excuse, in accordance with district policy, although all reasonable excuses will be accepted (i.e. death in the family = ok; brother's birthday party = not). Public performance necessitates a high level of preparation. Students who frequently miss class (especially in the week prior to performance) or earn low points based on poor work ethic/participation are not adequately prepared. This would disqualify the student from participating in the upcoming performance (s).

Double Booking: There have been a few instances in the past when a student has not kept track of their personal schedule and has discovered a conflict with a vocal event. It is important to honor your original commitment. If that is a VSAA Vocal commitment, then it is expected that you excuse yourself from the conflict and visa versa.

Recovering Credit for a Missed Performance/Assignment:

A missed performance simply cannot be made up, as that event will not be repeated. But, all students are given the opportunity to recover credit lost for missing a performance or assignment. Most assignments in vocal classes are performance/participation based, make up can be rescheduled at a time convenient to Mrs. Green and the student.

Assignments must be made up within a week of the due date.

The same applies for a missed performance. Within a week of the missed performance, the student is responsible for arranging a meeting time with Mrs. Green and "performing" the concert music with students from the other vocal parts (it is the student's responsibility to find those individuals to sing with them). Only ONE missed concert per semester can be made up. Repeatedly missing concerts is grounds for removal from the ensemble. **In the case of a pre-arranged absence, the make-up work can be done in advance.**

The Facebook Caveat:

Please note that I will not "friend" current VSAA students on Facebook. After you graduate, I would love to keep in touch, but in the meantime, I think there is some information about you that it's best I not know.