



WVC Information

We're delighted you're interested in our chorus. We hope you will decide to audition, and would like to provide you with a little advance information about some of our policies and expectations. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact our Director, Allan Friedman, or any member of the group.

Who we are: Women's Voices Chorus is the Triangle's only community-based classical chorus for sopranos and altos. We sing classical sacred and secular music, folk song settings, spirituals, and a little bit of jazz. Half our repertoire is by women composers. We generally have about 60 - 65 singers, and from that number we also draw a chamber choir of 16-20 voices. We welcome women of all ages—high school through retirement age. We rehearse on Monday evenings in Chapel Hill, and give concerts in January and May in Durham and Chapel Hill.

Here's why we love to sing: By delving into historic repertoire, we revive and relive our choral history. Learning new works stretches us musically, and revives us mentally and spiritually. We work hard and laugh a lot at our rehearsals, forging a close-knit community where each member cares for her fellow singers. We strive for the highest levels of musical excellence and revel in the chance to create something beautiful as part of a greater whole.

Auditions

Auditions are by appointment only. For your 10-minute tryout, you will sing vocal exercises, repeat musical patterns, try some easy sight-reading, and sing a folk song or hymn with piano accompaniment (music provided.) That's it! No prepared solo piece is required.

Tuition & Music

Tuition is \$75 per semester, due by the third rehearsal of the semester. Checks should be made payable to Women's Voices Chorus, Inc. Some scholarship help is available, or you may pay in installments. Nobody needs to leave the chorus for financial reasons - we'll work something out. See the treasurer to make confidential arrangements.

You will not need to purchase music; it is provided on loan from WVC. Feel free to pencil in any notes on the music. All music must be returned immediately after the concert. You will be expected to reimburse WVC for any music not returned.

Attendance

Regular attendance is vital to the health of any chorus. Tone, blend, vocal production, and a host of other choral skills are honed at rehearsal and inconsistent attendance weakens both the musicality and morale of the group. Each section's Social Chair takes attendance at each rehearsal. If you are going to be late or cannot attend a rehearsal, Allan and the Social Chairs should be informed as far ahead of time as possible. For last-minute problems, ALWAYS phone or email Allan at 684-3855 or allan@duke.edu and leave a message.

It's also important to be on time, at your seat and ready to sing by 7:30. Warm-ups are a vital part of the rehearsal, developing tone, choral skills, and concepts that we use throughout the evening.

Members who miss the dress rehearsal or miss more than four rehearsals during the winter semester or three rehearsals during the spring semester will not be allowed to sing in the concert. A retreat counts as one rehearsal for attendance purposes. Repeated attendance problems will jeopardize your ability to sing in the chorus.

For more information:

Contact Allan Friedman at: phone 919-684-3855, email allan@duke.edu,
or visit our website at: www.womensvoiceschorus.org

Practice

Most chorus members find it essential to practice their music between Monday practices. Even the best sight-readers can benefit from some review at home. In addition to going over the notes at a keyboard, you may find it helpful to:

- Speak the lyrics aloud (especially helpful for non-English texts); practice pronunciation; work on clean consonants at beginnings of words, and pure vowel sounds
- Speak the lyrics in rhythm, taking breaths only at breath marks, and paying attention to dynamics
- Read the text: Do you know what the song is about? What's being expressed? What story is being told?
- Make tapes of rehearsals to practice with at home
- Listen to online Scorch files of our works in progress on your computer at home (more on this later).
- Listen to practice CDs which will be available early in the semester – watch for sign-up info.
- Participate in extra sectional rehearsals; ask your **music section leader!**

Many of these review techniques can be practiced at the bus stop or over your morning coffee.

Concerts

Concert dress is all black, from neck to toe, including dress, skirt or pants and top, shoes and stockings. Sleeves should be elbow length or longer. Please don't wear any visible jewelry (small stud or hoop earrings are OK). And no perfume or other scented products, please - somebody may be allergic to it.

Each singer receives one complimentary ticket for each concert, as does each friend or family member who works crew or box office for the concert. A few weeks before the concert, each chorus member also receives some tickets to be sold to friends, family, co-workers, etc. Unsold tickets are returned so they can be sold at the door.

Staying Informed

We have a Yahoo group to notify members of important announcements and rehearsal updates. Members receive an invitation to join this Yahoo group via email, which will include instructions on how to join the group online.

We also have a members section of our website with more extensive information, including:

- Chorus Handbook (detailed policies on rehearsals and concert dress, our organizational structure, etc.)
- “Faces and Stories” (a great way to start getting to know your fellow chorus members)
- Links to Scorch files (digital files that are recordings of current season's pieces, so you can listen and rehearse at home).
- “Who Does What,” a list of various chorus activities and who is responsible for them.
- Essays by WVC founder Mary Lycan, about women, music and history. Her writings provide good insight into the mission and purpose of our chorus, and are also quite funny.

Get involved!

Women's Voices is a member-run organization. Every member is encouraged to do some volunteer work in addition to singing. The commitment can be easy and short-term, or longer-term and more involved. Announcements will be made at rehearsals and via email when volunteers are needed. Please consider ways you may be able to help.