

GRADUATE CHORAL LITERATURE CURRICULA AND PEDAGOGY

By

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A DOCTORAL DOCUMENT

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTORATE OF MUSICAL ARTS

College of Music

Spring 2017

DEDICATION

The time, work, and rewards of this project are dedicated to my lovingly supportive wife, Ashley Gill Minear, and our daughters, Clara and Emilia. We made it. Thank you, from my heart.

This manuscript is dedicated to my mom, Carolyn Minear, whose love and guidance as both my mother and mentor mean the world to me.

In memory of my dad, Douglas Minear (1949-2016), who showed me the great joy of curiosity and learning new things.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper represents much more than the simple culmination of my doctoral study. Completing my doctorate degree is a huge milestone in my life and career, and as I look back on where I have been, I am overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude for the people who have shaped and supported me along the way.

First, thank you to the professors and authors interviewed in this study for your time, wisdom, and willingness to share your brilliant work. This project would not have been possible without you.

To my MSU professors... thank you for your guidance, knowledge, patience, support, and all the amazing opportunities I had during my time in Michigan. Dr. David Rayl, I have learned so much from you, and I am a better conductor and musician today because of your teaching. Importantly, your wonderful choral literature courses grew my world and sparked in me a desire to pursue this project and this line of inquiry for many years to come. Dr. Sandra Snow, your wisdom, expertise, and insightful feedback continuously challenge me to be a better conductor and engage in new ways of thinking. I feel so fortunate to have had this time with you. Thank you also to Dr. Michael Largey and Dr. Michael Callahan for serving on my committee. Your brilliant guidance helped me bring more focus to this paper, and your questions and suggestions will guide my work going forward. Dr. Cindy Taggart, you helped shape this project from the very beginning. Thank you for your keen eye for detail and for being such a great role model as a teacher. I will forever appreciate your encouragement and kindness to me and my family. Dr. Jonathan Reed, thank you for always believing in me and for three awesome years with the MSU Men's Glee Club—I will carry those guys and that experience in my heart forever.

To my MSU colleagues... especially my 3-year doctoral buddies Brandon, Dan, Elizabeth, Josh, Kyle, Megan, Meredith, and Stuart: thank you for your friendship and for constantly inspiring me to be better. I went to MSU to be surrounded by brilliant colleagues, and what an honor it is to be in your company. I admire you all and am so glad we did this together—what fun!!

To my FSU professors... the foundation you provided me as an undergraduate student, and the transformative summer masters experience have shaped me more than anything into the teacher and conductor I am today. Dr. Judy Bowers, Dr. Kevin Fenton, Dr. Clifford Madsen, and Dr. André Thomas, thank you for everything you have taught me, and thank you for your continued support and mentorship over the years. I am also deeply appreciative of the late Roy Delp, my undergraduate voice teacher, whose lessons I continue to pass on to my students every day. I am so proud and so grateful to be part of the FSU community.

To my music teachers... my choral music roots are at the Cathedral Church of St. Luke in Orlando where I gained a solid foundation of musicianship and ensemble singing skills thanks to Murray and Hazel Somerville, Jeff Johnson, and Ben Lane. Many thanks also to my piano teacher, Margaret Patten, and high school voice teacher, Jack Warren. My choral music wings are from my amazing high school chorus teacher, Trey Jacobs. It is safe to say I would not be in this profession if it were not for him. Thank you, Mr. Jacobs, for everything.

To my students... and students' parents from Southwest Middle School, Winter Park High School, and Dr. Phillips High School, thank you for all the music and special memories; you all have taught me more than words can say. Lastly, thank you to the wonderful students of the MSU Campus Choir for keeping me grounded and bringing joy into my life every week. I love and miss and am so proud of you all!

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The awesome and emotional power of choral music inspires tens of millions of people across the country to join together in song.¹ In addition to the wonderful social and emotional outlet choral singing can be, I believe that it is the music itself that is at the heart of the ensemble experience. The music is what compels groups of people to breathe together, to listen to each other, and to create beauty in ensemble with others. Many agree that the choice of repertoire, or *choral literature*, is fundamental to the choral experience. Hilary Apfelstadt says, “the selection of repertoire is the single most important task music educators face before entering the classroom or rehearsal room.”² Brandon Dean says, “Successful choral music education begins with the selection of repertoire that is of artistic and pedagogical merit.”³ When Harold Decker and Scott Goldthwaite created what many consider to be the country’s first Doctorate of Musical Arts degree in Choral Music at the University of Illinois in 1960, the curriculum included courses in choral literature and performance practice taught by professors of the musicology faculty.⁴ Today professors of the choral faculty often teach the academic study of choral literature in graduate choral conducting programs all across the country. Through graduate study, artist-teachers learn about vast amounts of repertoire and trace the stylistic trends of choral music throughout the centuries. They develop their capacity to “articulate the historical, theoretical, and aesthetic considerations that change the way a work is performed.”⁵

¹ *The Chorus Impact Study*, 4.

² Apfelstadt, "First Things First: Selecting Repertoire," 31.

³ Dean, "A Repertoire Selection Rubric," 1.

⁴ Latimer, "The Nation's First D.M.A.," 29.

⁵ Freeman, "Rebuttal: The No-Nonsense DMA Degree," 54.

The aim of this study is to describe the structure and content of graduate choral literature curricula and determine current approaches to choral literature pedagogy. Those who teach graduate choral literature may discover in the findings ways they could innovate their own courses. In addition, a discussion of choral literature textbooks will help professors select the most fitting literature for the courses they teach. Furthermore, the way the book authors organize and sequence the material offers yet another model for how to organize the subject matter of a choral literature course. Any choral music educators might use these findings to enhance the way their students learn about choral literature, whether in a choral ensemble, choral methods course, or choral conducting class setting.

Need for Present Study

A doctoral degree in choral conducting has become the primary way university choir directors prepare for their profession, and these degrees commonly include intense instruction in choral literature.⁶ Repertoire is so fundamental to graduate conductor training that it is likely the reason why choir, band, and orchestra conductors are so compartmentalized in graduate school.⁷ The field of graduate choral literature curriculum and pedagogy is absent from the research literature and practically void of published resources in general. Where can a new professor of graduate choral literature find guidance when first teaching the class? Where can experienced professors of graduate choral literature look to innovate and evolve their curriculum? While vocal pedagogy and music theory pedagogy are established fields, and music history pedagogy is a growing area of study, little focus has been placed on choral literature pedagogy.

⁶ White, "Significant Developments in Choral Music," 123.

⁷ Bucoy-Calavan, "The Incomplete Conductor," 34.

Few instructors of undergraduate conducting receive any sort of structured training in conducting pedagogy during their graduate study, so therefore they either create their own curricula or just mimic how they were taught.⁸ Many programs employ the apprenticeship model by which graduate students learn about conducting pedagogy by assisting the professor in a conducting course. If many graduate programs are not actively preparing future college professors to teach conducting, a course taught in almost all college music programs, one might assume that they are also not preparing the future college professors to teach graduate choral literature, a course taught only at the smaller number of schools with graduate conducting programs.

Several textbooks for students of graduate choral literature exist (including some to be reviewed in chapter five). Though these books contain quality content, they provide no instructional guidance. Instructors are left to their own devices to design a course of study. What should be taught? How should it be taught? And why? Most of these books also require supplementary materials for students to receive a more complete education in choral literature. The supplementary materials could be in the form of additional books or a collection of academic articles. Many academic articles on history, style, and performance practice have been published, but Garretson suggests it is not always easy to find them when needed.⁹ Of course, since he stated that, the internet has made searching much easier. Nevertheless, a graduate choral literature course should be the place where all these resources are curated and compiled in one place. In addition to exploring the history of choral music, the study of choral literature intersects with the study of choral conducting and choral pedagogy. The ultimate aim of graduate study in choral conducting is of course to put acquired knowledge and skills to use as a practicing choral

⁸ Haldeman, "Availability of Instruction in Conducting Pedagogy," 114.

⁹ Garretson, *Choral Music: History, Style*, ix.

conductor. Dr. Chester Alwes refers to this as the “synthesis between academic knowledge and performance.”¹⁰ The study of choral literature may be enhanced by using academic knowledge to inform choices of conducting gesture and pedagogical approach germane to the historical repertoire in rehearsal.

To learn about the structure and content of graduate choral literature curricula requires a study of what exemplary graduate choral conducting programs currently include. In addition to assembling the resources utilized for graduate choral literature courses, a study of how outstanding professors actually teach this material might prove helpful to others who would like guidance in teaching their own choral literature course. Teaching methods to be revealed in this study could also be transferred to undergraduate conducting, K-12 general music, or performance ensemble settings where choral educators wish to impart knowledge of choral literature to their students.

¹⁰ Alwes, *A History of Western Choral Music*, ix.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to determine how graduate choral literature curricula are designed and implemented. The research questions of this study include:

1. What subject matter is included in graduate choral literature courses?
2. How many courses are included in graduate choral literature sequences, and how is the subject matter divided and organized among the courses?
3. What textbooks, articles, or other resources are used in graduate choral literature curricula?
4. What do teachers and students do during class time in graduate choral literature courses?
5. What is required of graduate choral literature students outside of class time?
6. What types of assessments are used to measure student learning in graduate choral literature courses?
7. What underlying philosophical or practical considerations affected the design of the graduate choral literature courses?
8. Is technology used to enhance graduate choral literature curricula and, if so, how?

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Choral Literature in Conducting and Choral Methods Texts

How do choir directors make the important decision of what music the choirs under their direction should sing? Many choral directors choose the repertoire for their choirs based on recommendations of colleagues, convention performances, and personal holding files.¹¹ Roach suggests that choirs should be presented a variety of literature, not limited to historical styles, but also including contemporary and popular styles.¹² Forbes found that repertoire selection practices largely are unstructured, but that “outstanding” directors tend to use more criteria and strive for balance.¹³ Phillips states that one of the most difficult jobs for choir directors is to decide what music to teach and perform.¹⁴ Undergraduate students typically feel unprepared to select repertoire for their choirs upon graduation.¹⁵ Green suggests that undergraduate conducting sequences be comprehensive to include all aspects of the conductor’s role, including how to choose choral literature.¹⁶ Clearly, choral literature instruction should occur not only in graduate choral literature courses, but in undergraduate degree programs as well.

To best prepare these young pre-professionals, undergraduate courses should provide a survey of choral literature to prepare students for the important task of repertoire selection and to convey an understanding of style for informed rehearsals and performances. Undergraduate and graduate choral methods or conducting classes ideally provide opportunities for students to learn

¹¹ Devore, "Choral Music Repertoire Selection," 84.

¹² Roach, *Complete Secondary Choral Music Guide*, 98-103.

¹³ Forbes, "Repertoire Selection Practices," paragraph 1.

¹⁴ Phillips, *Directing the Choral Music Program*, 171.

¹⁵ Grant, "Choral Music Education Programs," 286.

¹⁶ Green, "From Classroom to Podium," 106.

about choral literature, criteria for repertoire selection, as well as score study issues related to performance practice of different style periods.

The study of choral literature is not limited only to graduate conducting programs. Surveying the contents of undergraduate choral methods and conducting textbooks currently available provides a sense of how this subject matter (i.e. choral literature) might be presented in undergraduate or choral methods or conducting classes. Many of these books do not just contain academic information; the authors also suggest didactic strategies to deliver the material to the students. Sometimes they also provide activities for the students to practice on their own. In the following overview of selected text books for choral methods or conducting courses, commentary will focus on how they include material on choral literature. Though other conducting texts are available, they lack substantial discussion of choral literature or repertoire selection and therefore are omitted from this discussion.

Choral Conducting: Focus on Communication, co-written by Harold Decker and Colleen Kirk, is a popular textbook for conducting classes that includes two chapters on these topics.¹⁷ One chapter reviews historical style periods for the purpose of score study, and another chapter provides strategies for repertoire selection and concert programming. In addition, the authors provide a list of selected repertoire for church choirs and school choirs of various types.

Though not a comprehensive text for a conducting course, Miller's *Handbook of Choral Music Selection, Score Preparation and Writing* offers a volume of ideas and information for the choral conductor.¹⁸ Its various chapters cover repertoire selection, concert programming, and performance practice for different historical style periods. Miller provides an annotated list of forty-five compositions by major composers of history for various voicings; and an entire

¹⁷ Decker and Kirk, *Choral Conducting: Focus on Communication*, 30-80, 150-175.

¹⁸ Miller, *Handbook of Choral Music Selection*, 11-13.

chapter on American choral music from Billings to Barber.¹⁹ Due to its limited scope, Miller's *Handbook* is best as a supplementary resource.

Many choral methods books address a wide variety of topics of interest to the practicing choral director, including rehearsal strategies, audition procedures, working with different types of choirs, working with male/ female voices, working with different age groups, issues germane to church music settings, and administrative organization. Some of these also include one or two chapters on performance practice and the characteristics of the historical style periods. These broad overviews of style in historic choral literature are appropriate for beginning choral directors as they first conduct this repertoire. A selection of these titles includes: *Teaching Choral Music* by Collins, *Rehearsal Guide for the Choral Director* by Boyd, *Complete Secondary Choral Music Guide* by Roach, *Choral Director's Rehearsal and Performance Guide* by Gordon, *Choral Director's Guide* by Neidig and Jennings, *Choral Music Methods and Materials* by Brinson and Demorest, and *Directing the Choral Music Program* by Phillips.²⁰

One of the first comprehensive guides for choral directors, Boyd's 1970 book *Rehearsal Guide for the Choral Director* includes practical strategies for planning and leading rehearsals in a school setting. Boyd writes two chapters concerning repertoire from different style periods. Chapter 14 focuses on how to approach contemporary music, and Chapter 16 examines one piece from each of five style periods. Boyd states that he chose the five pieces because together they would allow discussion on a variety of rehearsal concerns.²¹ The goal of these chapters is not to

¹⁹ This chapter is like a time capsule of the American choral music scene from the late 1970's. It also carries a chapter sub-heading of "Composers Who Were Native Americans" by which he means those composers born in the United States, not the contemporary expression to mean American Indians.

²⁰ Complete publisher information for each of these books can be found in the Bibliography.

²¹ Boyd, *Rehearsal Guide for the Choral Director*, 185.

provide a thorough survey of choral literature but to give practical ways to rehearse different styles of music.

Similarly, Roach's 1989 *Complete Secondary Choral Music Guide* addresses many different aspects of running a junior or senior high choral program, including one chapter on choral literature.²² Roach takes a different approach than Boyd. Instead of profiling five representative pieces, for each historical style period Roach presents an overarching view of the period and its characteristics in several paragraphs. Lists of major composers follow these "big picture" summaries of each period, and these are followed by lengthy representative lists of repertoire of the period divided by voicing. He does not include any explanation or criteria for how he selected those particular pieces and not others. A weakness of Roach's approach is that he offers no distinction between subcategories of style or genre. Mass, motet, and madrigal are listed one after another with no indication of how these are different.

Like Boyd and Roach, Gordon covers a variety of topics in his 1989 book, *Choral Director's Rehearsal and Performance Guide*. In his chapter entitled "Developing Authentic Style," Gordon writes about the different interpretive decisions one would make based on the style period.²³ He includes summaries of the different stylistic traits of each period, including aspects such as type of performers, tone color, phrasing, dynamics, and tempo. Gordon does not include specific musical examples, and, although he does not go into detail about the various genres within each style period, he does divide up some of the periods a little bit. For example, the 20th century section includes five separate subheadings (e.g. "Expressionism" and "Neoclassical Music").

²² Roach, *Complete Secondary Choral Music Guide*, 70-97.

²³ Gordon, *Choral Director's Rehearsal and Performance Guide*, 159-182.

A more contemporary book, *Teaching Choral Music* by Don Collins, is still in use as a comprehensive choral methods textbook. It begins with two chapters dedicated to the history of choral music.²⁴ The first chapter includes a survey of European choral music from antiquity through the twentieth century. Chapter two explains the history of choral music in America, from colonial singing schools to the “a cappella” movement of the twentieth century. The proceeding chapters cover a wide scope of important topics for the secondary choral director. Collins provides a solid philosophical grounding for choral music education and detailed, sequential, standards-based guidance for vocal and musicianship skill development. The topic of choral literature returns in a later chapter where Collins writes about authentic performance practice.²⁵ He addresses stylistic features of different eras and advocates for young singers to perform music of the Renaissance. He also includes criteria, such as range and tessitura, that one might use when selecting music of the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods for adolescent singers. The appendices contain suggested repertoire lists for middle school and multicultural music.²⁶ Instead of a repertoire list for high school choirs, Collins refers to other resources (e.g. the Texas UIL list) for vetted lists of appropriate choral literature. Collins concludes each chapter with a “Study Project” and “Thoughts for Contemplation and Discussion.” These provide a helpful guide to professors as they plan class activities and assignments for their students.

The 1967 book, *Choral Director’s Guide*, edited by Neidig and Jennings is a collection of thirteen chapters, each written by a different well-known choral director of that era. Hugh Thomas’ chapter, “A Practical Guide to Style,” includes succinct lists of recommended recordings, representative repertoire of each style period, and an especially insightful pair of

²⁴ Collins, *Teaching Choral Music*, 1-29.

²⁵ Ibid., 331-339.

²⁶ Ibid., 479-494.

tables.²⁷ These tables consist of side-by-side comparisons of two composers, one early and one late, of each period. The tables provide a model format for any future comprehensive resource on choral literature; it might also be a good framework for a student assignment in a choral literature course. Thomas writes a helpful guide to analysis and brief summaries of the musical elements of each style period. A weakness of this text is that the included repertoire lists include no context or indication of the exact genre of the work. This chapter is primarily focused on practical rehearsal and performance issues. Though the *Choral Director's Guide* contains elements that might prove useful for teaching choral literature in a contemporary course, the age of the text limits its relevance today.

Two of the most popular choral methods textbooks in use today address repertoire selection and stylistic considerations of choral literature. *Choral Music Methods and Materials* by Brinson and Demorest is an often-used textbook for choral methods classes that includes programming ideas, an appendix with lists of recommended repertoire, and a section on repertoire selection that emphasizes difficulty level.²⁸ The most commonly adopted textbook for choral methods classes in the United States, *Directing the Choral Music Program* has one chapter on style and performance practice considerations for the various historical style periods.²⁹ In his introduction to the chapter, Phillips states that basic knowledge of the characteristics of the different style periods is sufficient for beginning conductors.³⁰ Phillips suggests that more experienced conductors seek a more thorough knowledge of performance practice.

²⁷ Neidig and Jennings, *Choral Director's Guide*, 115-154.

²⁸ Barbara A. Brinson and Stephen M. Demorest, *Choral Music Methods and Materials* (Washington: Cengage Learning, 2013).

²⁹ Jones, "Choral Pedagogy Books," 48.

³⁰ Phillips, *Directing the Choral Music Program*, 362.

Influence of Choral Faculty

The books highlighted above provide excellent, if basic, introductions to choral literature and repertoire selection. One more important influence on repertoire selection merits mention: the collegiate choral faculty themselves. Collegiate choral conductors' knowledge of repertoire acquired from graduate choral literature courses likely impacts their concert programming decisions and what material they include when teaching undergraduate conducting and choral literature courses. These decisions affect those students and singers in their ensembles that go on to be choir directors. Performance experience influences the repertoire choices of beginning choral directors; and novice teachers are more likely to choose something with which they are familiar from choir or conducting class.³¹ This suggests that the study of choral literature might be especially effective when students have opportunities to sing or conduct the repertoire. In a study of undergraduate music history students, Yang did in fact find that, one semester after the course, music history students best remembered the music they performed in class.³² This might also suggest that a "trickle down" effect occurs through repertoire selection. What graduate students study in their choral literature courses influences what they teach when they join a collegiate choral faculty; what collegiate choral directors program for their choirs influences what those singers later program for their own choirs. Conceivably this cycle ultimately impacts what musical works remain in the choral canon. Perhaps the more conductors know about choral literature, the more confident they will be in selecting a wide variety of repertoire of all style periods for their ensembles.

³¹ Diddle, "Repertoire Selection Practices," 76.

³² Yang, "Singing Gesualdo," 52.

Choral Anthologies and Listening Guides

As shown above, many course textbooks for choral methods courses include information about choral literature. Several include specific suggestions or lists for quality repertoire. For more comprehensive collections of choral repertoire, one can explore several published choral anthologies. Some anthologies provide surveys for undergraduate or beginning choral conductors who are just beginning to learn about the breadth of choral literature. Graduate students and veteran choral conductors benefit from more in-depth anthologies that include examples from a variety of subgenres and lesser-known composers from throughout history.

Some choral anthologies are meant specifically for conducting classes. One choral anthology for conducting students is Shrock and Mayhall's *Music for Beginning Conductors: An Anthology for Choral Conducting Classes*.³³ Useful for undergraduate conducting students or others who need practice with basic conducting navigation, it consists of over 100 pieces organized by meter, on or off beat entrances, and texture. Other anthologies often used for conducting classes are G. Schirmer's popular two volumes of *Five Centuries of Choral Music for Mixed Voices*, and their sequel, *The Golden Years of Choral Music*.³⁴ They consist of high-quality repertoire from throughout history. If used for a college course however, the professor will need to provide guidance because the music is printed without annotation or commentary to explain the stylistic features or provide historical context. Adler's *Choral Conducting: An Anthology* (2nd edition) contains over 150 excerpts of choral works dating from the early Renaissance.³⁵ Each excerpt is accompanied by a short paragraph explaining some of the stylistic

³³ Dennis Shrock and Ronald Bruce Mayhall, *Music for Beginning Conductors: An Anthology for Choral Conducting Classes* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2011).

³⁴ Hawkins, *Five Centuries of Choral Music. The Golden Years* is published by G. Schirmer.

³⁵ Samuel Adler, ed., *Choral Conducting: An Anthology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1985).

features or conducting challenges of the piece (e.g. meter or tempo changes). Though the book was conceived as a text to be used in a conducting class, Adler states in the preface to the second edition that it could also be used in a choral literature class.³⁶

Well-suited for a graduate choral literature course, Ray Robinson's *Choral Music: A Norton Historical Anthology* contains over 100 choral works organized by century and country of origin. The book's appendices include composer biographical sketches, translations, and commentary on each of the included works.³⁷ One challenge faced when selecting repertoire to include in choral literature courses is how to choose music from the modern era. The year of publication of the Robinson anthology limits its usefulness in a contemporary course as it precludes any significant works published after 1992.

The newly published *Choral Scores* edited by Dennis Shrock contains 129 works organized by era and then country of origin.³⁸ Intended as a companion to his 2009 book *Choral Repertoire*,³⁹ Shrock includes in the index translations and editorial notes for each piece. The notes include information about the historical context, formal structure, and significant musical features of the work. Shrock explains in the introduction that his editorial choices for each piece were based on clarity of presentation on the printed page as well as comparisons of autograph scores with modern scholarly editions. Helpful for those studying choral literature, the index also includes a list of included works organized by genre (e.g. anthem, cantata, mass, motet). As the newest anthology to be published, the Shrock anthology includes several works by living composers.

³⁶ Ibid., xiv.

³⁷ Robinson, *The Choral Experience*, 1028-1089.

³⁸ Dennis Shrock, *Choral Scores* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

³⁹ Dennis Shrock, *Choral Repertoire* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

A published anthology provides some assurance that the repertoire therein is of a certain significance and presented in a scholarly edition. Another place one can find collections of choral works is the internet. Some websites deserve mention for their vast collection of choral scores. Well-known now in the profession, the Choral Public Domain Library (CPDL) contains over 24,000 scores by over 2,700 composers.⁴⁰ A background in choral literature helps to cull the choicest repertoire from such a massive collection. Nevertheless, CPDL holds multiple free editions, though of varying quality, of the historic choral canon. A similar website, the Petrucci Music Library (IMSLP), includes facsimiles of old editions with expired copyright.⁴¹ Especially interesting are the facsimiles of autograph scores or first editions of early music. IMSLP currently holds over 370,000 scores of over 112,000 works by over 14,500 composers.

Like anthologies, listening guides provide curated lists of quality choral literature. Melvin Berger's *Guide to Choral Masterpieces: A Listener's Guide*, Michael Steinberg's *Choral Masterworks: A Listener's Guide*, and Nicholas Tarling's *Choral Masterpieces* offer brief and easy-to-read descriptions of important choral works and their composers.⁴² Though these are not anthologies that include printed music, this type of listening guide provides an excellent model for how one might present required listening in graduate choral literature courses. Written in the style of program notes, each entry presents historical background of the composition and highlights the important stylistic features of the music.

Anthologies and listening guides are important resources for students of choral literature. Published anthologies make available high quality, scholarly editions of repertoire curated by

⁴⁰ <http://www.cpd.org>

⁴¹ <http://www.imslp.org>

⁴² Melvin Berger, *Guide to Choral Masterpieces: A Listener's Guide* (New York: Double Day, 1993).

expert choir directors and musicologists. As a complement to a comprehensive choral methods or conducting text book, anthologies give undergraduate and students and young professionals good examples of historical (and sometimes contemporary) repertoire. For graduate students and veteran conductors, annotated anthologies offer not only repertoire ideas for concert programming, but examples for in-depth study of compositional style trends throughout history.

Style and Performance Practice

One more area related to the study of choral literature deserves mention, and that is style, or performance practice. Once repertoire has been selected, another challenge for choral conductors is to make informed interpretive decisions about how the music is to be performed. For music of the historical choral canon, directors need thorough understanding of the particular style of each piece. Likewise, knowledge of the cultural and historical context of each work enhances performers' understanding of the repertoire. One can find many resources that relate to specific topics of performance practice or style, especially in scholarly journals. The literature on specific style periods is robust and beyond the scope of this paper, though some texts provide some broad overview of certain style periods and would be a valuable addition to the bookshelf of any choral conductor. Some consist of collections of essays on a variety of topics, such as *Five Centuries of Choral Music* and *Choral Music Perspectives*.⁴³ Others consist of commentary or detailed information culled from primary sources, such as Summer's *Choral Masterworks*

⁴³ Gordon Paine and Howard Swan, *Five Centuries of Choral Music: Essays in Honor of Howard Swan* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1988); Eric Ericson, Lennart Reimers, and Bo Wallner. *Choral Music Perspectives: Dedicated to Eric Ericson* (Stockholm: Royal Swedish Academy of Music, 1993).

from Bach to Britten and Renaissance Music for the Choral Conductor, and Shrock's *Performance Practices in the Baroque Era and Performance Practices in the Classical Era*.⁴⁴

Choral Literature Textbooks

Students of choral literature benefit from a comprehensive textbook that traces stylistic developments in choral music throughout all eras. Chapter five of this document consists of an overview of several choral literature books. For graduate students, a comprehensive choral literature text in conjunction with published scholarly articles and a high-quality choral anthology would suffice when gathering required materials for a graduate choral literature curriculum. For undergraduate students to learn about choral literature in the context of a choral methods or conducting class, a comprehensive choral methods or conducting text (like those reviewed above) combined with an anthology would give ample choral literature material for a course of study in preparation for the start of their career.

Music History Pedagogy

A search for literature on the teaching of graduate choral literature courses yields a dearth of information. Fortunately, a group of musicologists have begun to work on identifying

⁴⁴ Robert J. Summer, *Choral Masterworks from Bach to Britten: Reflections of a Conductor* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2007); Robert J. Summer, *Renaissance Music for the Choral Conductor: a Practical Guide* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2013); Dennis Shrock, *Performance Practices in the Baroque Era: As Related by Primary Sources* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2013); Dennis Shrock, *Performance Practices in the Classical Era: As Related by Primary Resources and as Illustrated in the Music of W.A. Mozart and Joseph Haydn* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2011).

affective pedagogical strategies for the music history classroom, and they have worked to legitimize what Dirkse calls a “pedagogy movement” in musicology today.⁴⁵ Because many graduate choral literature courses are essentially surveys of music history through a choral music lens, professors of choral literature can benefit from the innovation of their musicologist colleagues.

With the aim “to equip, challenge, and inspire musicologists from all career stages to grow as effective teachers,” the American Musicological Society’s Pedagogy Study Group (AMS-PSG) formed in 2006 and produces workshops and a journal focused on the pedagogy of music history.⁴⁶ They acknowledge that “pedagogy is rarely a focus of graduate training in musicology.”⁴⁷ Balensuela writes that even though most music historians teach at colleges and universities, musicologists traditionally have not considered teaching an important academic pursuit in comparison to research and scholarship.⁴⁸ Without practical instruction on the art of teaching, new faculty face a large learning curve and typically rely on teaching methods passed down from professor to professor.⁴⁹ In 2010 the AMS-PSG started the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* to begin to address this concern. Twelve published issues of the journal contain numerous articles transferable to the choral literature classroom.

Around the same time, two books came out to address similar issues. In Briscoe’s 2010 collection of articles, *Vitalizing Music History Teaching*, the authors address philosophies of teaching and how to connect history to theory and practice, among various other topics.⁵⁰ In

⁴⁵ Dirkse, "Music History Pedagogy," abstract.

⁴⁶ “About,” The website of the American Musicological Society Pedagogy Study Group, <http://www.teachingmusichistory.com/about/>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Balensuela, "Toward a Scholarship of Music History Pedagogy," 1-2.

⁴⁹ Knyt, "Teaching Music History Pedagogy to Graduate Students," 1.

⁵⁰ James Briscoe, *Vitalizing Music History Teaching* (Hillsdale, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 2010).

Davis's 2012 collection of essays, *The Music History Classroom*, authors explore pedagogical topics ranging from classroom activity/ lecture, the use of technology, and assessment.⁵¹ Before these two volumes, only Natvig's 2002 *Teaching Music History* had attempted to address music history pedagogy. It is a collection of articles on broad topics (e.g. peer learning, writing about music) and more specialized topics (e.g. teaching "women in music", games for teaching the twentieth century).⁵² The existence of these books and the new journal suggests that some musicologists are dissatisfied with the status quo, and they desire a new approach to music history pedagogy.

The field of music history pedagogy is young indeed, but development in the field has taken place over time. Burkholder observed in 2009 several changes in the way music history has been taught over the previous fifty years. One issue especially pertinent to choral literature courses is the expanding repertoire, both newly composed music and newly discovered music from the past. This leads to new narratives about the development of music that includes, as examples, women and contemporary styles. Of course the materials we use have changed with the availability of online resources. The final development he observes is the change from the teacher-centered lecture to a more student-centered and active classroom.⁵³

The student-centered classroom is at the heart of a praxial philosophy advocated by Maiello in his article, "Toward an Extension of Regelski's Praxial Philosophy of Music Education into Music History Pedagogy."⁵⁴ Maiello questions the usefulness of traditional approaches to the teaching of music history (e.g. lecture by the "sage on the stage," term papers, memorization of facts for exams) and makes a case for learning by doing. Praxis is usually

⁵¹ James Davis, ed., *The Music History Classroom* (Abingdon, Oxon, GB: Ashgate, 2012).

⁵² Mary Natvig, *Teaching Music History* (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 2002).

⁵³ Burkholder, "Changing the Stories We Tell," 116-28.

⁵⁴ Maiello, "Towards a Praxial Philosophy," 71-108.

defined in terms of action or doing things; and the implication is that the action is beneficial to the student and applicable to use in life outside the classroom.⁵⁵ Maiello writes, “In order to learn a concept, then, the learner must experience it in action because knowledge is constructed through active experience in the given environment.”⁵⁶ Maiello calls this “Action Learning.”⁵⁷ As a practical example, instead of an instructor lecturing about the nature of critical editions, students can create their own critical edition based on primary sources; then they can compare their own with previously published editions and evaluate the merits of each. This activity has the added benefit of helping the student develop a practical professional skill.⁵⁸ Regelski believes that “In sum, when acquired as praxis, what is learned is never forgotten.”⁵⁹ The reader is cautioned, however, to beware of planning student activities just for activity’s sake; the praxial philosophy is grounded in intentionality.⁶⁰ The praxialist is inherently pragmatic and when planning student activity must ask the ethical question, “what is it good for?”⁶¹ Guided by this philosophy, a music history professor will design courses around student activity that is useful beyond the classroom and individualized to meet each student’s unique needs. Assessment is based not on what students “know,” but on what they “can do.”⁶² This is a paradigm shift for those who believe the instructor’s role is to transmit or deliver knowledge instead of the student playing a central and intentional role in the act of learning. Another important aspect of the praxial philosophy is continuous improvement and refinement of the pedagogical approach. Regelski sums it up thus, “In a praxially oriented program, teaching methods and curriculum also

⁵⁵ Regelski, "Music History as Praxis," 109-136.

⁵⁶ Maiello, "Towards a Praxial Philosophy," 91.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 102.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 97.

⁵⁹ Regelski, "Music History as Praxis," 114.

⁶⁰ Maiello, "Towards a Praxial Philosophy," 104.

⁶¹ Regelski, "Music History as Praxis," 120.

⁶² Maiello, "Towards a Praxial Philosophy," 92.

change and improve over time according to ever-changing needs, diagnoses, and improvements in current practice, technology, society, and music.”⁶³

With virtually all facts and information available to students online, the model of the professor as transmitter of information appears anachronistic. With the ever-expanding amount of repertoire that one could include in a music history course, the old paradigm of “coverage” becomes problematic. In order to “cover everything,” nothing in the course receives more than a superficial treatment. Instead, Cain contends instructors should not focus on coverage, or transmission of facts and information (since this is all available now online), but should instead set learning goals that involve understanding and application.⁶⁴ In other words, class time should not be spent just with the transmission of facts, but students should be involved in doing activities that apply new knowledge. Grymes and Allemeir aptly describe this change in approach as the transformation from “the history of music” into “the history of music-making.”⁶⁵ As a choral literature example, for a difficult to understand subject like isorhythm of the *Ars Nova*, he would teach it by having students create their own *talea* and *color* and incorporate them into a new composition. The compositions themselves along with a journal-style report from the student describing their thought process during the composition provides the kind of information the teacher needs to assess for understanding.

Another activity borrowed from history (non-music) pedagogy is a role playing game where students research historic issues outside of class and assume the roles of important figures during in-class debates. These games provide creative ways to engage with the material,

⁶³ Regelski, “Music History as Praxis,” 134.

⁶⁴ Crain, “Beyond Coverage: Teaching for Understanding,” 301-318.

⁶⁵ Grymes and Allemeir, “Making Students Make Music,” 231-254.

encourage students to read, and result in increased student engagement during class.⁶⁶ As an example, students could assume the roles of various characters involved in the Reformation or the Council of Trent and discuss the important issues of the time period from various perspectives. Cross-disciplinary connections also help students acquire knowledge more deeply. Fournier contends, for example, that incorporating music theory (e.g. formal and harmonic analysis) directly into musicology assignments improves the quality of student work.⁶⁷ Lagueux calls for the reintegration of intellect and emotion in the music history classroom, especially when listening and responding to music. He writes that “a classroom that purposefully strives to integrate students’ emotions will use both teacher’s and learners’ affective responses as a scaffold to support the material of the course.”⁶⁸

As music history teachers pivot to this new student-centered model, the use of online tools like Blackboard, blogs, and wikis can help instructors facilitate collaborative learning among students as they each contribute to the construction of knowledge.⁶⁹ Using online resources allows for delivery of course content and administration of assessments outside of class time.⁷⁰ Using time outside of class to deliver factual information allows students during class time to engage in discussion and more thoughtful encounters with the material under the guidance of the professor. Mark Clague values the development of students’ ability to find factual information on their own time because it encourages lifelong learning. These are the

⁶⁶ Burke, "Roleplaying Music History," 1-21.

⁶⁷ Clague et al., "Building Bridges," 149.

⁶⁸ Lagueux, "Inverting Bloom's Taxonomy," 136.

⁶⁹ Folio and Kreinberg, "Blackboard and Wikis and Blogs," 164-75.

⁷⁰ Bowen, "Roundtable: Rethinking Technology," 43-59.

skills that will enable a student to continue seeking and learning beyond the end of the semester and into their careers.⁷¹

J. Peter Burkholder explains the value of a music history survey thus: students build an overarching framework within which they can in the future fit new pieces as they encounter them.⁷² Of course, the survey is not the only way to organize course subject matter. Bonds describes the many possibilities for organizing course material in a music history class, as well as the difficulties in selecting what music to include. The inclusion of some repertoire naturally results in the exclusion of other works worthy of study. Mark Bonds suggests creating an anthology of musical selections (i.e. the musical material of the course) that through their similarities frame a grand narrative. For example, one might choose works that are based on parody, or are different settings of the same text (e.g. mass settings), or share compositional techniques (e.g. ostinato); and select music from different eras that share these elements as touchstones of stylistic development.⁷³

Some scholars today question the validity of hegemonic frameworks like grand narratives, style periods and constructs like chronology or “the canon.”⁷⁴ Free from “the way things have always been done,” history teachers can creatively structure course subject matter in new ways. Melanie Lowe argues that skills are perhaps more important than knowledge. She explains that with so much knowledge readily available online, students need to learn the skill of evaluating information and then how to use it in meaningful and personally relevant ways.⁷⁵

When she and her colleagues restructured the musicology curriculum at Vanderbilt University,

⁷¹ Clague et al., "Building Bridges," 149.

⁷² Burkholder, "The Value of a Music History Survey," 57.

⁷³ Bonds, "Selecting Dots, Connecting Dots," 78, 89-90.

⁷⁴ Lowe, "Rethinking the Undergraduate Music History Sequence," 65.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

they balanced survey courses with a selection of topical courses students can select for more in-depth exploration; the knowledge and skills acquired in these more narrowly-focused courses are meant to be applicable and transferable to other repertoires.⁷⁶ Douglass Seaton summarizes the issues germane to music history curriculum design with four questions: “How do we think of history? How do we do history? What do we want our students to know? What do we want our students to do?”⁷⁷

Though the field of music history pedagogy now addresses the improvement of instruction for undergraduate music history courses, work remains to be done on the topic of instruction for graduate music history courses (if differences might or should exist). “Still lacking are articles about graduate-level teaching strategies and mentorship, as well as curriculum content at the graduate level. To date, there has been no published discussion about how to implement new teaching methods in graduate classes, much less whether or not music history pedagogy scholarship should play any role in graduate-level education.”⁷⁸ Erinn Knyt suggests “that exposing graduate students to new discipline-specific pedagogical methodologies, theories, and questions as part of their education requirements could reduce initial stress in teaching positions and lead to more creative and confident music history teachers, while increasing awareness about the many ways teaching and scholarship can and do intersect.”⁷⁹ This material could be infused into an existing graduate course. Though many schools offer pedagogy courses for music theory, voice, and other instruments, very few offer pedagogy instruction in musicology.⁸⁰ Imaginably even fewer schools, if any, with graduate choral conducting programs

⁷⁶ Ibid., 69.

⁷⁷ Seaton, "Reconsidering Undergraduate Music History," 54-55.

⁷⁸ Knyt, "Teaching Music History Pedagogy to Graduate Students," 3.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 4.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 8.

infuse any pedagogy instruction in choral literature. This author found no published articles or studies on choral literature curriculum or pedagogy. This study is an attempt to begin to fill that void.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Design

This descriptive study uses a qualitative method of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The process of triangulation helps to support the trustworthiness of the results. I sought answers to the research questions by doing case studies of the graduate choral literature sequences at six respected graduate choral conducting programs in the United States. For each setting, I gathered data through:

1. Collection of syllabi and other course materials.
2. An interview with the professor of the course.
3. If possible, live observation of graduate choral literature courses, documented by video, collection of artifacts, and field notes.

In addition, I interviewed the authors of three textbooks used in choral literature courses. Because this study does not consist of a broad survey of all graduate choral literature curricula, it will not be meant to reflect what commonly is incorporated in all graduate choral literature sequences across the country. Instead the results are shared as an example for other choral professors in hopes that they will find exceptional aspects of these models to transfer to their own settings.

Researcher's Lens

My interest in this topic of study has developed over the course of my life and career as a choral musician. Whether as a treble singer in a boy choir at age 10, or a young baritone and student conductor of my high school chorus at age 17, I have always been fascinated by the choral music of history. In the summer between seventh and eighth grade, my boy choir went on tour to England. Singing the music of William Byrd and Henry Purcell in several of the glorious cathedrals of that country captured my imagination. I would dream that I was singing in the time of the Tudors or Stuarts, and I would be transported through time. In high school we sang music from throughout all the historical style periods, and I learned that the way we perform Renaissance music is different from the way that we perform Romantic music. As an undergraduate choral Music Education major, I received my first formal instruction in choral literature. Over the course of my conducting classes we learned about some of the exemplary pieces from each historical time period, conducted them in class, and discussed the broad stylistic differences.

It was over the course of my twelve years teaching secondary choral music that I truly began to learn the repertoire. Whether teaching middle school or high school, I was committed to providing students a balanced and well-rounded experience with the choral literature. My goal was that every student would sing music from each of the historical style periods every single school year. When I found myself in the position of teaching the repertoire, I truly got to know those exemplary works. I relied on professional recordings, books, articles in the *Choral Journal*, and instinct based on my years of choral singing to make informed decisions with things such as tone color and articulation appropriate for different style periods.

As I learned more about the choral canon and spent so many hours selecting music each semester for the choirs under my direction, I grew more and more passionate about concert programming. My increasing experience with choral repertoire and love for programming first culminated in a session I presented at the state music educators conference. I found myself to be both comfortable with and excited in this setting, sharing what I have learned with young and experienced teachers.

In the midst of pursuing a doctorate degree in choral conducting, I explored choral repertoire in much greater depth than ever before. In the choral literature sequence, I learned how and why various musical trends developed and put choral music into its historical context. Now as a university choral conductor-teacher charged with teaching graduate choral literature courses, I am deeply interested in the course material and how it is delivered. I want to learn what subject matter is covered and how it is taught at some of the top graduate choral conducting programs in the country so that I can offer my students as comprehensive a course as possible, taught with the best pedagogical practices in use around the country. Furthermore, much of this same material and many of these same teaching methods could be applied in undergraduate conducting settings, performance ensemble rehearsals, K-12 general music courses, as well as in conference sessions for practicing choral directors.

Participants

Participants for this study include professors that teach graduate choral literature at four respected graduate choral conducting programs in the United States, as well as the authors of three choral literature textbooks. The names of the participants and their institutions will be

replaced by a letter name (e.g. Professor A, from University A). In addition, two teachers of graduate choral literature, Professors E and F, participated in an interview and shared course syllabi, but were not observed in person. In the case of Professor E this is because they are not currently teaching the course (but have for many years at their highly esteemed graduate choral program). In the case of Professor F this is due to the extensive distance that would need to be travelled. I included their curriculum models in the results for the sake of providing additional examples of how to structure a graduate choral literature course sequence.

Procedures

This study includes three methods of data collection: gathering course materials, conducting interviews, and observing classes.

First I collected course syllabi and all other available course materials via email from the professor of each of the graduate choral literature programs. Then I conducted a semi-structured interview with each professor and three textbook authors. The interview process incorporated a free-flowing approach that allowed for the questions to be asked in any order and for follow-up or more deeply probing questions to be asked when deemed appropriate. The purpose of the interviews with the book authors was to learn about the books themselves and how decisions about the organization and content of the books might inform similar decisions when designing choral literature courses. The purpose of the interviews with the professors was to find how each professor designs and teaches the graduate choral literature class they teach, as well as to find what philosophical or practical reasoning informed their design decisions. The interviews included questions about overarching themes of the curricula and course structure as well as

more detailed descriptions of how they structure an individual class. These interviews were conducted in person when possible and otherwise over the phone. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded for data analysis.

Finally, I made an onsite visit to each university where I observed one class. Each class was video recorded as well as audio recorded for backup. I took detailed field notes of everything I observed during class time. Materials I collected on site include a journal article, student presentation handouts, samples of students' completed assignments, and a sample test.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of the data will be achieved through the process of triangulation. Evidence of the course materials and design come from three sources: course materials, professor interviews, and class observation. In addition, I employed member checks, which involve interviewees reviewing their interview transcripts to ensure their remarks accurately reflect what they intend.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The following descriptions of graduate choral literature curricula cull details from syllabi and other course documents, live observation of classes, and interviews with the professors.

These professors willingly shared their materials and agreed to be observed and interviewed for the purposes of this paper. To protect the anonymity and intellectual property of these professors, the materials gathered will remain confidential and therefore not necessitate further citation in this chapter. Quotes within each university's heading below are from the choral literature professor at that institution. Each graduate choral literature program will be referred to by a letter name, and the professor of the course will go by a pseudonym of the corresponding letter (e.g. Professor C teaches choral literature at University C).

Below I will describe the graduate choral literature courses at six universities. First I will detail the course structure, second I will describe a typical day in class, and third I will report the professor's philosophies and insights about teaching graduate choral literature.

UNIVERSITY A

Course Structure

The choral literature curriculum at University A consists of four semester courses organized by historical style period. Master's students take at least three of the four, and doctoral students take all four. University A divides the style periods as follows: "Renaissance,"

“Baroque,” “Classical/ Romantic,” and “After 1900.” It offers these courses chronologically in consecutive semesters, including the summer term. This allows full-year students to complete the sequence (Fall-Spring-Summer-Fall), and summers-only master’s students to complete the required three courses in three consecutive summers. The sequence repeats cyclically, with the “Renaissance” class following the “After 1900” class. Because of this, choral graduate students do not always begin in their first semester with early music and move forward; they begin wherever the sequence happens to be in the cycle. Classes meet for fifty minutes twice per week. Students earn two credit hours per semester. Each semester the courses seek to provide students a survey of the development of that period’s choral music, familiarity with individual works appropriate for various choirs, a conception of performance practice, and the ability to present information well both in spoken presentation and in writing. Students at University A also benefit from guest teachers every semester that lecture on various topics matching their area of expertise. Recent guests include a theorbo and lute player, and members of a Baroque music ensemble.

Professor A provides all course materials in a google drive shared with the students. The google drive consists of a folder for each composer or topic covered over the course of the semester as well as a folder named “Syllabus.” Each of the composer/ topic folders contain pdf files of score excerpts, audio and video files, required reading (usually journal articles to be read before class), and an informational outline. The outline serves as both a study guide and a lecture guide on which students add their own notes. Though they vary in format, they usually include historical context, some biographical details of the composer(s), general stylistic traits, and annotated lists of representative works. The Syllabus folder holds the actual syllabus, a schedule of topics, details of assignments, listening examples to be used on exams, assessment rubrics,

and quality samples of previous semesters' style analysis papers (more on assignments below). In addition to the reading assignments provided in the google drive, students read assigned excerpts from a choral reference text, *Choral Repertoire* by Dennis Shrock.⁸¹ Students may access these by viewing a digital edition of the book available via the school library, or they may purchase a printed edition if they choose.

The choral literature courses at University A include three types of assignments to enhance and assess student learning: daily homework, style analysis papers, and two exams (midterm and final). The daily homework (aside from completing the required reading assignments) typically consists of listening to one or two pieces and/ or looking at scores and responding to questions. For example, students might have to compare and contrast two pieces to be covered in the upcoming class, or compare one piece to something they covered in a previous class. Sometimes students are required to email their responses to the professor before class, and sometimes they simply must come to class with their responses ready to discuss with the group. Style analysis papers vary according to the semester both in number and requirements. Professor A sometimes varies assignments each time the same course repeats in the sequence. For example, a style analysis paper might be replaced with a journal article writing assignment, or an analytical guide to a piece or set of pieces. In the Renaissance semester, students write four papers, each with three to four pages comparing two pieces (e.g. a Palestrina motet and a Di Lasso motet) to demonstrate knowledge of the genre. In the "After 1900" semester, students write two papers, each with approximately ten pages, to summarize a broad trend (e.g. the influence of early music on choral music of the 20th century). Lastly, the two exams consist of traditional "drop the needle" identification and short answer questions. The pieces used in the

⁸¹ For more information about this text, please see chapter five of this paper.

exams come from a list the professor considers to be canonic works any educated choral director should know. Professor A provides the list of pieces along with audio files to the students at the beginning of the semester. On the exam students identify the composer, the piece, and, if applicable, the larger work or collection from which the piece comes. Then they answer a question about that specific selection, its composer, or the genre.

The way the choral literature sequence at University A is integrated with the overall graduate choral conducting curriculum merits explanation. Doctoral students take an additional seminar that serves as an extension of the choral literature class, and all full-year choral graduate students, both master's and doctoral, take individual conducting lessons and attend a weekly conducting masterclass. Repertoire for lessons and the masterclass typically parallel the style period studied in the concurrent choral literature course. Professor A explains that this “allows you to address appropriate tone quality in the Renaissance..., tempo in the Baroque, [and] articulation in the Classical period. You can cover part of it in Choral Lit [*sic*], and point things out as we're listening to music. Then that can be reinforced or elaborated upon in the conducting lessons.” For the repertoire to be conducted in each lesson, students prepare to discuss the background of the piece and its composer, text translations, formal structure, and compositional approach. Instruction during the masterclass might address any number of issues related to the repertoire, including performance practice, gesture as it relates to style, and pedagogical strategies. The doctoral seminar meets as an additional hour after each choral literature class. It can include a variety of activities, including student presentations, conducting recitatives, score study of major works from the period, discussions about performance practice, and other topics not directly related to choral literature (e.g. teaching in higher education, constructing a résumé). Professor A also notes that in the coming years the doctoral seminar is “going to include more

interaction with instrumental conducting, faculty, and students. That's...a gap that we're trying to fill in the curriculum.”

Observation: A Typical Day in Class

University A’s class consists of 6 students seated in desk chairs, arranged in a semi-circle, facing a projection screen. They each have a laptop that they use to take notes and to access scores or other materials from the class google drive. The laptops also allow students to quickly search for additional information online as questions arise in class discussion. The day’s course materials (scores, videos, and lecture outline) display in turn via the ceiling-mounted projector that is linked to the professor’s media cart in the corner. Professor A stands alternatively at the front of the classroom (centered in front of the screen) to lead discussion, and at the media cart in the corner to control what shows on the screen or what audio to play from a CD player or laptop. One listening example consists of a video that plays a recorded performance while showing the corresponding page of the score.

“We’ve looked at three important composers of motets at the end of the Renaissance. Who are they?” Professor A begins class by reviewing what they have recently covered. After students respond, he asks more probing questions. He asks students to compare stylistic features of one composer to another. After students respond, he elaborates on their answers, filling gaps or making gentle corrections. After one student brings up the harmony at a cadence, Professor A demonstrates the progression by playing it on the piano. The culture of the class strikes me as especially student-centric. When interviewed, Professor A said, “Ideally, I would not want to talk more than about three minutes without having someone else in the class talk.”

Next Professor A instructs the students to look at a Di Lasso score while he plays the recording, and to discuss within their two small groups what they hear and how it fits with other music to which they've been listening. Students then engage in energized discussion as they listen. "Now let's make a list," Professor A begins full class discussion. They share their observations, and Professor A elaborates and questions them further. Then they listen again, and the professor speaks over the recording to point out salient features of the score. When the music pauses, a student mentions a passage from the reading homework regarding "chord progressions." Professor A nicely rewords this as "chords that are adjacent to each other" because the piece was written before functional harmony. In his questioning and prodding, Professor A is always particular about students being specific and accurate with their choice of words. Another student says that the striking chromatic movement reminds them of the music of Gesualdo. "Good!" the professor says. "So many have to do with mediant relationships, like Schubert one hundred years later. Let's keep listening." He begins the recording again and continues to point out stylistic features that differentiate this motet style with Palestrina's characteristic long arching lines. He elucidates, "He seems more interested in color created from vertical sonorities. This is an important thing about the end of the Renaissance." Professor A consistently connects specific compositional approaches from the examples with overarching themes of choral music development. Next a similarly active and engaging discussion occurs about two additional pieces. They listen. Students point out what they see and hear. Professor A elaborates and probes for more, always looking for comparisons and contrasts, always showing how these pieces relate to the narrative of choral music stylistic development.

After concluding the active listening and discussion portion of class, Professor A displays the Di Lasso outline from the class google folder on the screen. He gives a brief lecture on how

the composer's biography (different places he lived and worked) explains the cosmopolitan nature of his compositional output. One now realizes how the professor selected the works for the opening class discussion; they each represent a different compositional style of the composer. Professor A then goes on to highlight the representative works listed on the page and discussing the important features of each. They touch on each of the genres in which the composer worked. For some pieces, students find the score excerpt in the class google drive, and for others they also listen to a recorded excerpt. For each piece, the professor emphasizes the text setting and how that informs compositional choices (e.g. imitative counterpoint, contrasts in texture, meter). Students feel free to ask questions, and Professor A shares his encyclopedic knowledge in reply. His passion for choral literature is obvious and contagious. "See how he shortens the motives here. I think it is so cool rhythmically!" As class time comes to an end, Professor A summarizes the themes discussed, referring back to the lecture on the cosmopolitan nature of Di Lasso from earlier in the class. Classes typically follow the structure just described: setting the stage by relating to what has already been learned, delving into the material of the day, and then summarizing the main points of the day.

Background and Viewpoint of Professor

After a student's graduate choral literature coursework is complete, Professor A wants them to have a solid framework for the development of style, to understand the genres of each period, to know the important works, and to understand where those works fit in the overall development of choral music. Because the emphasis is on stylistic development, one does not have to teach every piece. Major composers warrant exposure to many of their works, but minor composers usually do not receive much time in class. Professor A's expects that when students

encounter unfamiliar music in the future that they will be able fit it into the framework built by the iconic works analyzed in class. “I think if you know and understand the guiding premise of five or six English madrigals, any English madrigal you encounter thereafter, you should be able to add to the framework that you have.” With this focused approach in recent years, Professor A covers fewer pieces in class, but with more depth than he did previously. Students are less likely to program obscure repertoire, but if they do stumble upon it they will be informed by their ability to determine how the piece does or does not fit into a particular style.

Professor A intertwines performance practice and historical context into the course. He marvels at the availability of recordings today, and he uses multiple recordings of the same piece as a way to address performance practice decisions. The way choral literature classes integrate into the overall graduate choral conducting curriculum (detailed above) allows instruction on performance practice to happen outside of choral literature class time. Professor A conveys historical context through reading assignments, but he especially believes in the use of video to get “the feel of a period in a fairly short time.”

Professor A’s understanding of choral literature and his approach to teaching it come from several experiences as a student. First, his undergraduate music history teacher provided the scaffolding for Professor A’s conception of the Renaissance. Then, during his master’s degree, Professor A’s work with choral literature focused more on analysis than on development of style. Third, his experience as a doctoral student provided a model that partly influences how he teaches the course today. His doctoral program also consisted of four semesters of choral literature, but they spent class time almost entirely on student presentations. Professor A believes in the educational value of doctoral students preparing presentations, and he uses these presentations in the doctoral seminar to fill gaps in knowledge and expose students to additional

repertoire. The only downside to this, he notes, happens if the student presentations fail to adequately cover the assigned material; that leaves the other students with a hole in their knowledge. Therefore, he believes the teacher must be an active participant and interject in the discussion to ensure the topic is covered.

One of the objectives of the courses at University A focuses on written communication. Professor A achieves this objective with reading and writing assignments. Some of the assigned reading comes from musicological journal articles, but most of it comes from the Choral Journal. He believes that the broader audience of the Choral Journal requires a certain style of writing, and that this is the style most doctoral students in choral conducting will do in their careers. Professor A explains, “It’s hard to teach someone to write in a certain style if they haven’t read things in that style.” To emphasize writing style in the course, assessment rubrics for the writing assignments at University A include points for mechanics in addition to the content of the paper. Professor A never tires of teaching choral literature because of the endless amount there is to learn. “There’s a comfort level because you’re revisiting [every four semesters] a repertoire that you know and a structure that you know, but at the same time we constantly have access to new performances, new scores, new information. I find it endlessly interesting.”

UNIVERSITY B

Course Structure

The choral literature curriculum at University B consists of four semester courses. Three semesters function as surveys of choral literature, and a fourth semester deals with only a few

pieces in depth. The three survey courses divide the material by years: 1450 to 1750 (I), 1750 to 1900 (II), and 1900 to now (III). The classes meet once per week for eighty minutes. Students earn two credit hours per semester.

In the fourth semester, known as “Score Study,” students analyze a handful of major choral works. They study three of the works all together through the first eleven class meetings, and during the final three class meetings small groups present on a work they have studied independently. Groups of two or three work collaboratively to study and analyze a major work or composer. If the topic is a composer, they focus on one of that composer’s significant works. Each group leads a seventy-minute class session. As part of the class, they provide a handout that includes analysis charts, background information, a bibliography of the composer and the work, and a discography. The three works studied as a group each receive three or four class sessions wherein they discuss the background and style of the work, analyze scores, and take notes. Works to be analyzed vary each time the course is offered, but typical works include Mozart’s *Requiem*, Handel’s *Messiah*, the Brahms *Requiem*, or Bach’s *St. Matthew’s Passion*. At the end of each unit, students submit notebooks that include a summary of background information, a bibliography of the composer and the work, analysis charts, and a discography. Required materials for the semester include conductor scores as well as one or two specific books about the work being studied.

In the three semester surveys, class time is spent largely on discussing the reading assignments and style characteristics, looking at scores, and listening to excerpts of recordings. Professor B does not present many lectures; he instead leads group discussion and invites students to contribute information based on their reading and score study. On a typical class day, they go through some recordings and comment and highlight things such as style or

characteristics of that composer. Big themes like “Romanticism vs. Classicism” receive more in-depth conversation. During class discussions, Professor B requires students to take careful handwritten notes in a binder or notebook.

Required textbooks for the all three courses include Dennis Shrock’s *Choral Repertoire* and an accompanying anthology (previously the Norton anthology, and now the new companion to Shrock’s book, *Choral Scores*). For Choral Literature II, Professor B also requires Shrock’s *Performance Practices in the Classical Era* and suggests optional reading in Nick Strimple’s *Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century*. For Choral Literature III, Professor B requires Nick Strimple’s *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century*. In addition, at the beginning of the semester every student borrows a packet of music (approximately 30 pieces) pulled from the choral library to supplement the published anthologies. They bring the music packets and anthologies with them to class so that they can look at scores when they listen to the recordings. On days when they will be discussed, Professor B brings multiple scores of the major works (e.g. *Missa Solemnis*) so they can compare editions. Resources provided in the various syllabi include a “Chronology of Significant 19th Century Choral Works,” a “Chronology of Significant Choral Works from the 20th and 21st Centuries,” and a list entitled “Genres of Choral Music.”

Aside from being active participants in each class, students complete a variety of assignments over the course of each semester. Syllabi list specific page numbers to be read in the Shrock and Strimple books. Sometimes students also receive additional reading assignments (e.g. journal articles, an exceptional paper or presentation handout written by a former student). For a listening assignment, students listen to at least thirty-two compact discs from a specified list, following along with scores when possible. They must submit a journal documenting which recordings they heard and noting their personal reactions, including whether they liked it or not

and why (e.g. "I was so moved by this," or "The singing was so in tune," or commentary on the melodic structure, the harmonic language, the use of vibrato or not use of vibrato, the dynamic variation, etc.). Professor B says, "I want them to be able to take not only the literature ideas, I also want them to take historic performance practice ideas and [think] 'how can I bring that sound to the rehearsal this afternoon.' So if we're doing Elgar, what is it about that sound that I heard in that recording that sounded so perfect for this Elgar piece, and how could we bring that to rehearsal?" More recently, students bypass the compact discs in the library and listen to recordings online, either through the library's Naxos subscription or on streaming services like Spotify. Professor B also requires students to spend time with books in the library. He provides an extensive bibliography (over one hundred books) as part of the syllabus, and he requires the students to spend time in the library reading or skimming the books on the list. They make a brief annotation of just a few sentences for each one. To make the task more manageable, Professor B allows them to divide up the list and share their findings with each other. Another task for the students on their own time is to become familiar with all the music in the provided packet and the published anthology. The syllabus notes that "this is the heart of the course." Professor B expects students to study, analyze, listen, and play on the piano all of this repertoire. They must make a database to include each of these works, plus any additional that the student desires. The repertoire database serves as their biggest semester project, and for each piece it includes the following information: style period, source, composer, title, genre, editor/arranger, voicing, soloists, accompaniment, publisher, year, number of pages, text source, whether it is sacred or secular, if it is seasonal or for an occasion, level of difficulty, and any additional comments/ evaluation. Professor B hopes that through the process of completing that project, the students encounter several pieces they did not previously know. Lastly, at some point during the

semester, each student does a twenty-minute presentation and provides a bibliography and pertinent handouts. Topics for these presentations, depending on the semester, include things such as a Bach cantata, a Handel oratorio, or the works of a particular composer. The assessment rubric for these presentations includes points for content, use of media, preparation, speaking style, and professional appearance.

Students take two exams (midterm and final) that consist of half-page handwritten responses to four prompts, such as “Discuss the oratorios of Haydn,” or “Give important examples of the Requiem or Mass in the 19th century,” or “Brahms Greatest Hits.” Another type of question appears on semester exams as well as doctoral oral exams: analysis of an unknown work. For example, students get a score they likely do not know, and, using the stylistic characteristics present in the score, argue why it is not the music of, say, Vaughan Williams.

Though the overall graduate choral conducting curriculum does not formally integrate with the choral literature sequence, all the choral graduate students attend a weekly two-hour seminar in which certain topics enhance what they learn in choral literature. It functions primarily as a conducting masterclass, but they also address topics like chant, score study, rehearsal technique, preparing resumes and job application letters, and creating performing editions of Renaissance music from a clean CPDL or manuscript score. The markings students add to the performing edition demonstrate their understanding of performance practice such that if someone were to perform from them it would be a beautifully stylistic performance. In connection with the seminar, they also take weekly individual conducting lessons. The repertoire for those lessons does not necessarily parallel what they are studying that semester in choral literature. Instead, Professor B chooses repertoire to fill gaps in the experience of each individual student. Conducting lessons also provide a forum for the discussion of score study, tempo, style,

performance practice, and other pertinent issues. The only time the seminar and the choral literature directly overlap is during the score study semester. In the seminar they often conduct the major works they are studying in the choral literature score study class.

Observation: A Typical Day in Class

University B's class consists of five students seated at a ten-seat conference table. A nice, large window lets in lots of natural light. Opposite the window, a projection screen displays a PowerPoint presentation from the ceiling-mounted projector. The atmosphere strikes me as relaxed, friendly, and conversational. Everyone is free to chuckle at lighthearted moments, and they focus with intensity when it is time to listen to another person or a recording. Everyone remains attentive, making eye contact with both the student presenter and the professor, except to look down to take notes. Sitting around the table, all students take notes with pencil and paper. "I require that," explains Professor B, "because research has proven that if students take notes on their computer, which they used to always do, they write down too much. They'll write down complete sentences and they don't distill anything, or they don't distill as much." Professor B does, however, encourage them to type out their notes later on their computer. The one time that most students use personal electronic devices, they take out their phones to access a handout the professor had emailed to them before class (except for one student who already printed and placed it in her binder). One student also keeps a laptop handy in case Professor B needs them to play something on Spotify or quickly search for something online.

The class begins with a twenty-minute student presentation on Gustav Mahler. The student provides a handout listing the sources for the information presented. The student presents from a seated position at the end of table (apparently to be connected to the media cabinet). The

student shares information in a conversational style, including a host of details: biographical background, Mahler's outlook, reception history, a list of works, published editions, style characteristics, and cultural influences. At the end of the PowerPoint presentation, he plays video excerpts of just a minute or two from each of the three choral symphonies. During the videos, the professor and several classmates comment on the performance and the conducting. After recalling previous years in which they performed one of the Mahler symphonies, Professor B asks, "Any questions for our presenter?" [there are no questions, just silence] "...every lecturer's dream!" And with that the presenter turns off the projector and relinquishes the head of the table.

Professor B takes the head seat and opens his large white binder full of class lecture notes and handouts. He plugs an iPod into classroom speakers and places a watch on the conference table to monitor the time. "Bizet opera choruses: who can list them?" A student lists them, and Professor B follows up with a question about soloists. "Now Puccini..." Professor B would like to play an excerpt of the "Humming Chorus" from *Butterfly* but does not have it available on the iPod. He asks a student to find a recording online. The student opens a laptop and instantly finds a recording on Spotify. For the rest of class, they listen to recordings alternatively from the iPod (if available) or stream them from the laptop. Over the hums, Professor B comments on staging and the use of the chorus as orchestral color; he also recalls that they performed it once as a concert transition. In this way, throughout the class he mentions the practical applications of programming the repertoire. Moving on to Saint-Saens, they briefly discuss his oratorios: Deluge ("Ask me if I've ever heard it...no [laughter]" and the Christmas Oratorio ("You should know it, not a great piece, but a good piece..."). They listen to a few seconds of the opening, middle, and end. Up to this point, the excerpts to which they listen are so brief, students just get a small sample of the music (though they have extensive listening assignments for outside of class time).

So, when Professor B plays an entire piece, in this case a beautiful part song for men's voices, it makes an impact. "I hope I've enticed you."

Moving on to English composers, Professor B notes the way people usually associate them with kings and queens (Victorian and Georgian) and the overlap of sacred and secular composition. "Let's look at Samuel Wesley." A student asks if this is the Methodist Wesley. Professor B replies by putting the question back to them (with a smile as if to say he knows the answer but wants them to look it up). The student with the laptop finds the answer and shares it with the group. They listen to part of a Samuel Sebastian Wesley anthem. "Would someone look up on the computer or device the "Oxford Movement" of 19th century England?" A student reads a short explanation. "Sound familiar?" Professor B compares it to the Caecilian Movement of Catholicism. He points out that he put S.S. Wesley's name in bold print on the handout because he is a favorite. "*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace* is a most perfect anthem", he says as he plays the entire piece from the iPod. Students comment while the recording plays.

In this way, they work through a buffet of repertoire, listening to excerpts, and commenting on stylistic features of the music, as well as the performances themselves (e.g. tone quality, cathedral acoustics, etc.). Professor B sometimes notes a biographical detail of a composer or emphasizes certain composers or works ("You should know..."). They listen to representative pieces of Anglican anthems and English part songs. During listening, students generally are looking down with a sort of intense listening expression on their faces. Because there is not enough time to listen to everything during class, the handout lists additional compositions to which the students listen on their own time. Students name the pieces on the list that are their favorites. Nearing the end of class, Professor B provides a short exposition on Elgar's oratorio, *Dream of Gerontius*. They listen to a brief excerpt ("Listen to it if you haven't

listened to it.”), they then similarly touch on two American composers, Parker and McDowell. An overview of what to expect on the upcoming exam concludes the class.

Background and Viewpoint of Professor

After a student’s graduate choral literature coursework is complete, Professor B wants them to have encountered many composers that they didn't know before and to have a sense of the most important smaller and larger works of each of those composers. He wants them to start being voracious listeners. Professor B says, “I want them to have experience in listening and looking at scores and in hearing something about all of the major genres, madrigals to part songs, to big oratorios. Our repertoire is so vast.” They're listening journals provide a vehicle for them to achieve this. Nevertheless, because of the vastness of the choral repertoire, covering everything is impossible. “I always tell them if they're going to be frustrated about shallowness, then they better not take the class because there's so much to cover, and it truly is a survey, and I'm not a musicologist, and this is not a musicology class. It is really a class to get the big picture of all the possibilities. I would say it's three miles wide and half an inch deep.” Professor B self-deprecates, but in actuality, the students acquire quite a bit of depth through their semester-long independent projects, and the score study semester goes in-depth on several major works.

Some aspects of the curriculum at University B come from Professor B’s experience as a graduate student. The listening journals and the database projects recall similar work he did in his doctoral program, though at that time, instead of a database it was all on index cards. He also took a two-semester survey, and it was that experience that led him to start the choral literature sequence at University B. It began originally as a similar two-semester sequence, and later developed into the four-semester sequence it is today. The expansion of the curriculum allows

them to cover the repertoire much more broadly. Professor B did not have choral literature classes as part of his master's degree. They worked instead on score study and writing papers. This background informs the score study semester of the sequence at University B. He says the best outcome of intense score study is the way one looks at a score and sees the structure of the piece. He believes this ultimately applies to the pacing of performances.

Other development of the coursework resulted from the publication of new textbooks. For many years they only had the Ulrich book or other older books that Professor B had to greatly subsidize with other materials; but the publication of Shrock's *Choral Repertoire* changed that. He also sometimes combines the Shrock book with the Strimple books. Now Professor B is considering also using the new Chester Alwes book, *A History of Western Choral Music*.⁸² Aside from revising the course by using the latest available textbooks, Professor B updates the extensive bibliographies included in every semester syllabus. He believes in the importance of students going to the library and becoming familiar with the monumental books from over the decades. "I think they need to see them, that they exist, even though they will probably never ever touch them again. They need to be able to dust them off." This reverence of the past, the awe of the vastness of choral repertoire, and Professor B's obvious joy and enthusiasm in being a part of this tradition pervades the choral literature courses at University B.

⁸² Alwes, *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 1* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Alwes, *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 2* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

UNIVERSITY C

Course Structure

The choral literature curriculum at University C consists of a four-semester sequence of courses entitled “Repertoire and Pedagogy,” with three semesters organized chronologically, and one semester as a special topics semester. The three chronological semesters divide the material by style period: “Renaissance and Baroque,” “Classic and Romantic,” and “20th Century and Contemporary.” The class meets once per week for two and a half hours. Students earn variably two or three credit hours per semester.

The subject matter of the special topics semester differs each time it arises in the cycle (biannually), depending on the needs and interests of the choral conductors currently in the program. For instance, a recent special topics semester focused on the large masterworks of Bach: the Passions, the Mass in B minor, and the Christmas Oratorio. Previous semesters’ special topics courses covered all the choral music of Johannes Brahms, or a study of the motet. When they spent a semester studying motets, Professor C taught all six of the Bach motets and all of the Brahms motets, then the students researched, wrote papers, and led class presentations on other motet repertoire from the Renaissance, Romantic, and Twentieth Century periods.

Professor C focuses on different aspects of the repertoire in each of the chronological courses. Issues of performance practice arise in the Baroque literature, and editorial issues come to the fore in music of the Renaissance. Studying the large choral-orchestral masterpieces of the Classical, Romantic, and Twentieth Century eras, the class deals with issues related to working with an orchestra. The Classical and Romantic course also includes students from the graduate instrumental conducting program, so Professor C teaches choral/vocal pedagogy, diction

(including use of the International Phonetic Alphabet), vocal health, and choral tone. In the contemporary unit, they cover a good amount of octavo literature that might be useful in collegiate choral positions or youth honor choirs. Professor C explains, “We try and weed through a lot of the octavo literature and say, ‘This is worth doing, this is not. When you encounter this, try doing it this way. When you encounter that, try and get them to pick a different piece.’ There's just a bunch of junk out there.”

The primary objective of the choral literature courses is for students to engage in scholarly analysis. Though they sometimes come up in discussion, conducting and rehearsal technique lie outside the scope of the course. They do at times, however, parallel the choral literature course in their conducting class. In one semester, for example, the conducting class time consists of work on recitatives from the Bach that they are studying in choral literature. Except for the contemporary octavo repertoire, Professor C primarily devotes class time to the study of larger works. In the words of Professor C, “The teaching of the [choral literature] seminar really is about encountering the big master works in the repertoire, knowing how they're structured, knowing how to analyze them, knowing how to learn them and grapple with them, and then applying those techniques to other pieces that you would encounter. Presumably if you work with a Brahms *Requiem* significantly, then when you encounter the *Schicksalslied*...you'll have the tools at your disposal to do a good job with that.”

Professor C provides an extensive bibliography of scores and books held on reserve each semester in the library. The books range in topic from overviews of historical time periods to studies of individual composers or specific masterworks. They include source works, musicology sources, and performance practice sources. Professor C requires students to purchase one book:

Choral Performance: A Guide to Historical Practice by Steven E. Plank.⁸³ Students can find remaining assigned readings in the books on reserve, or they receive journal articles from the professor. In special topics semesters, student also purchase scores for the major works to be studied over the term.

In addition to the required reading, the choral literature courses at University C include two types of assignments every semester: presentations and a research paper. Also, during the Renaissance semester, students work in groups to produce a new performance edition. This helps them see what choices one must make when producing a quality edition, and then how those choices affect the way choirs rehearse and perform the music. For the research paper, each student chooses one major work from the style periods studied that semester and writes a fifteen- to twenty-five-page paper. They also do a presentation of the paper in class. If a semester is already busy with more presentations than usual, then Professor C does not assign the term paper. Each student completes at least three, and as many as five or six presentations each semester on the works or movements of works to be studied that term. For example, in the Renaissance period, students might present on works such as Victoria's *Missa O quam gloriosum*, Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli*, or Byrd's *Mass for Four Voices*. For each presentation, students provide the following to be distributed to the class: a structural analysis, a diction and pronunciation guide using I.P.A., a working bibliography, a discography, and a list of practical performance considerations. The students have lots of flexibility in the way they choose to organize their structural analysis. One student does traditional phrase diagrams, another marks everything onto a copy of the score, another outlines the structure with bullet points, and another uses their own unique system on graph paper. The only requirement is that they can pass it out

⁸³ Steven E. Plank, *Choral Performance: A Guide to Historical Practice*, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004.

and clearly explain their analysis to the class. Professor C says, “I try and get them to show us what they know, and then use that as a springboard to talk about that piece intelligently.”

The schedule of presentations dictates the format and schedule of the course. They alternate between Professor C doing presentations on major works or portions of major works, and the students doing presentations on either portions of the same major work or on other works not covered by the professor. For example, in the special topics semester on the major works of Bach, they divided the Christmas Oratorio into the six cantatas, with the professor presenting on three, and each student presenting one of the remaining three cantatas. The way the works divide depends on the number of students in the class. Presentations consist of sharing the required handouts and walking everyone through the analysis.

Professor C also expects the students to become acquainted with various iconic recordings of the masterworks they study. He wants them to compare, say, the John Elliot Gardner recording and the Philippe Herreweghe recording, “so that they're aware of what some of their choices are and how to proceed that way. It's just trying to immerse themselves as much as possible.”

Professor C does not administer any sort of tests or exams. In a small seminar, if someone has not done their reading or score study, it shows. He does not feel the need for further assessment. The only other kind of assignment that he gives would be an annotated repertoire list. On a special topics semester where they studied motets, for example, the repertoire list serves as a final product of their work as well as a bibliographic resource they share with each other for their future programming and study. The repertoire sheet also proves useful when sharing twentieth-century and contemporary octavo repertoire.

Observation: A Typical Day in Class

The choral literature class at University C meets in Professor C's studio. The class consists of three students seated in chairs with music stands to hold their binders. Students do not have computers or any digital devices. Professor C sits facing them from his office chair with his back to the computer on his desk (which he will use to play recordings in class). The half-drawn blinds let in natural light but block direct glare from the sun. The room is clean, but is the workspace of a busy musician; books, scores, stacks of papers cover every surface. Before class begins, one student gets a granola bar from the basket on Professor C's desk.

"Let's get out our scores," Professor C says as he sets up Spotify on his computer and closes the studio door. Once everyone has their St. Matthew Passion scores out, he says to the first student, "Go. Tell us about this first movement." The student shares what he learned about it, and his process for analysis. He opens a bible and reads what happens before the verses set in this first movement. Professor C advises all to write into their score the chapter and verse from which the text comes. He overviews the use of chorale, biblical, and Picander texts as well as the role of the Evangelist and the chorus. He praises the first student for going back to the biblical context. The group discusses the text. "Jesus is about the future," one says, "but the disciples are stuck in the here and now." "Bumbling idiots!" says Professor C, "but to be fair they are humans, they are us." The third student chimes in, "the chorales reinforce this." Professor C reinforces and expands on the student's point, addressing the dialogue between the congregation and Christ. The first student goes on to describe what happens next with text and the music, including a *secco recit.*, a "halo" of strings, and Jesus outlining the diminished triad. Professor C expands on this then reads the German and some translation. "How does he paint that?" The first student explains, "Well first of all, going back to the *recit.*, he opens in G Major but then he ends the

recit. in B minor, so that harmonic scheme... and then I see legato... lots of stepwise motion, and ...maybe if we take a look at the descending line in the bass, measures six, seven, eight...” answers the first student. Professor C discusses the rise and fall matching the questioning of the chorus, and the faster notes adding intensity.

Professor C prods, “Let’s go with the next *recit.* and next chorus.” “Late seating!!” the second student exclaims, and they all chuckle. The second student provides the overview of the following passages, including a *secco recit.* and the different role of the chorus. He points out text painting (“*Hohenpriester*” and “*Jesum*” on high notes) and that the next chorus, for double choir, shows the disciples as bumbling idiots again. Professor C interjects to correct, “these are the high priests!” and goes on to tell the story. He really makes the drama of the story come alive, and then asks, “How does the music portray that?” The second student points out that Bach sets it antiphonally, with one group saying something and the other saying “me too!” Professor C says more about the text setting (rioting of the people set to sixteenth notes, etc.). What is the nature of the music itself?” “It’s kind of bubbly.” “Yeah! [chant-singing] Bum bum bum bum it’s formal. It’s formalistic. There’s no contrapuntal subtlety to it. It’s just antiphonal, and it has this kind of scholastic quality to it; it sounds like an etude. Look at the way the flutes are written. And they just go back and forth. [chants text] Just very square, almost purposely unmusical. It’s characteristic of these limited vision people, so Bach gives them limited vision music.” Student two points out the simplicity of the harmony in contrast to the chromaticism from before. “Alright, let’s listen to this much,” Professor C says as he presses play on the Spotify track on his computer. The music plays on a small speaker bar on the computer monitor, yet the sound is good and enough for this small room. The students and the professor all follow along in their scores.

When the excerpt they discussed finishes, Professor C stops the music and gestures to the third student, “You’re up!” She then summarizes the story and the musical features of the next movements. The type of detailed discussion they had about the first section continues in a similar fashion over the next hour and a half. They discuss the music and text in detail, then they listen to a performance. Interspersed throughout the discussion on analysis, they talk about other aspects of the work (e.g., staging, connection to our lives today or current events, orchestration, articulation, ornamentation, the role of recordings in score study, conducting transitions, tempi, interpretive decisions about affect) At one point they listen to two contrasting recordings and discuss the different choices that could be made with continuo instrumentation.

Throughout the class, when one person talks, the others look at their score with intensity and focus. The students, informed by score study, contribute to the discussion with a mix of confidence and calm. Professor C speaks with passion and intimate knowledge of the score. When a question excites him he engages intensely with eye contact and scoots forward in his chair. “Does that have any bearing on how you do the chorale afterward? Of course it does!!... Boy oh boy! Don’t do this vanilla! This chorale is the culmination of a long stretch... Now listen, let’s see how John Elliot does it.” As the recording ends and class time comes to an end, Professor C wraps up, “So that’s the first half of the first half. On Thursday [conducting class] let’s plan to conduct these first fifteen.”

Background and Viewpoint of Professor

After a student’s graduate choral literature coursework is complete, Professor C wants them to use “that ability to analyze a piece of music, and to put together a good sequence of rehearsals that can lead to a great product. I think if you do the analysis correctly, it should

inform your own rehearsal and conducting process in a very important way.” Even though Professor C teaches choral literature and conducting in two separate classes, he sees them as intertwined. In choral literature, he might ask the students, “How would you rehearse that? What does that mean for the sequence of the way that you would prepare that?” Likewise, in conducting class, they apply their score study and analysis from choral literature class to the interpretive decisions and gesture in the conducting class. He also hopes that over time they might be in a collegiate position to teach a graduate choral literature course and pass on the skills learned in his class.

The graduate choral literature courses at University C include a lot of extended reading. Professor C utilizes the reading to ensure students understand style. In the classical methods semester, because most choral conductors are not string players, they do not have the experience with orchestral or chamber music settings to have an innate sense of the style. In class they have a thorough discussion on the dance forms, rhetorical gestures, form, and periodicity of the music. He does not usually have quizzes on the reading; he tries to treat the graduate students more like colleagues.

Professor C downplays the importance of teaching octavos. He believes that a graduate choral literature class should not waste time on contemporary music that is all homophonic with an added 2nd chord because anybody can do that and understand it. “How many people can do St. Matthew or B Minor of St. John? I think it's worth the effort to study and then aspire to it. Where do you start? You have to start now. You should have started yesterday.”

His own graduate school experience greatly influences Professor C’s approach to teaching choral literature. He took four semesters of choral literature organized by chronology and sometimes by special topic. They spent a great deal of time on analysis. One semester his

professor spent the entire term analyzing the music of Berlioz and Liszt. Professor C did not particularly enjoy the music, but he learned a great deal about orchestration, and he learned how to find structure in music that does not reveal itself easily in that way.

“I have to say I've done almost none of that music in my own career but that doesn't mean it wasn't valuable. I think that taught me a lesson that even music that the students won't necessarily get to [conduct] soon, if ever, can still be really, really valuable. So I always make it a point to teach... the Beethoven *Missa solennis*. I've never conducted the Beethoven *Missa solennis*. I've never even prepared it...but I think it's incredibly important to know that piece. I've studied it very hard myself and I try to help people understand it because I think that that opens a lot of gateways to the 19th century; and it also looks back to other times and places as well, just as Beethoven conceived the piece as sort of a look backwards as well as a monumental look forwards...and since the likelihood of it being programmed by you is small, I think that in a way almost makes it more important that you have some sort of close encounter with it as a student in your graduate study program.”

Professor C's viewpoint on the value of the major works guides the selection of what to include in his choral literature courses. He chooses very few shorter, easier pieces. When covering Mozart's works, he does not spend time teaching the *Missa Brevi* or *Vespers*. He prioritizes the *C-minor Mass* and the *Requiem* and leaves the rest to be projects for the students. By teaching the larger works, he hopes to inspire students and to give them the tools to then go learn the smaller works on their own. He also wants to “prepare them for, we hope, a career that would include a Bruckner *Te Deum*, as opposed to just a Bruckner *Locus Iste*.” Similarly, he

teaches the Mahler symphonies so if his students are ever asked to prepare them in the future they will not be starting from scratch.

Professor C believes passionately in doing the major works and teaching the big pieces. He sees that most graduate students have plenty of experience with things like contemporary octavos, motets, and madrigals; but very few have experience putting together larger works. They may have sung them, but not thought about them globally like a conductor. Professor C wants his students to know how to analyze the score and think like a conductor. He wants his students to be unafraid to program the large masterworks of history. “If doctoral grads (the best of the best) don’t do the major works, who will? You just have to roll up your sleeves and say, ‘Do I have anything to say with this piece?’ If I do, then by God I have to do it.”

UNIVERSITY D

Course Structure

The choral literature curriculum at University D consists of a four-semester sequence organized by style period: Renaissance, Baroque, Classical-Romantic, and then as Professor D says, “that other period that doesn't have a name yet-- we used to call it 20th Century, [but] can't do that anymore.” Class meets twice a week for one hour and twenty minutes. Students earn two credit hours per semester. When Professor D first arrived at the university, the choral literature sequence consisted of a two-semester survey. “The idea here was basically to start from the Grout survey course and deal with choral music exclusively, but put it into a historical context. The first semester went from essentially Middle Ages, to the extent that they're relevant, up

through the end of the Baroque. The second semester I started with Classicism and went as far as I could get into the 20th Century, which was never all that far.” The course did not go into great depth, but functioned more as an overview. They did not spend time analyzing music or comparing different works in the same genre (e.g. comparing masses of different composers). The main goal was for the students by the end of each semester to be able to identify music through listening and to be able to list names of compositions by various composers.

Years later, with the addition of a new faculty colleague, Professor D jettisoned the two-semester overview and replaced it with the current two year, four semester structure. “It was getting more and more difficult, if not impossible, to find people that could cram two periods into one semester. Now it's difficult to do one in one semester depending on how deep you're into it.” The four-semester choral literature sequence complemented their new four-semester conducting sequence. The style periods of the concurrent courses match. For example, while Professor D’s colleague teaches Conducting of Baroque Music, Professor D teaches Baroque Choral Literature.

Given the time limitations of each semester and the inherent dilemma of what repertoire to include in the course, Professor D tailors each semester according to what the students know and do not know. Two rounds of assessment aid him in determining this. The first assessment is part of the doctoral audition, and the second assessment is at the beginning of each semester course. These assessments are meant to be straightforward and non-threatening.

At the audition, potential students take a choral literature placement exam. They receive a list of ten composers and must write down several pieces by each composer. Then they get a list of ten terms or concepts and they write what they know about each item. Lastly, they write one

page about the content of one of their recent concert programs and how they made their selections. This also affords Professor D the opportunity to see their writing ability and style.

The second assessment takes place on the first day of class. The students take a diagnostic exam so the professor can identify what gaps in knowledge they have. For each topic on a provided list, the students rate themselves as 1) Excellent; 2) Good; 3) Fair; 4) No Knowledge. Then they write one page on something they rated themselves as “Good” and one on something they rated themselves as “Fair.” In this way Professor D can see if the student’s diagnosis is accurate. “One year I remember very well that it was shocking that nobody knew any Haydn masses!” Naturally that semester included a focus on that body of repertoire. “I think it’s very good to come at the beginning and say, ‘We’re going to decide. It’s your class. I could choose it all, [but] I want to know what you don’t know.’” Professor D also sets some priorities based on what he wants to be sure they learn. In the Renaissance semester, for example, his top priority is helping the students understand modality and how modal counterpoint functions. The mix of students each semester also helps determine the content. In addition to choral conducting students, the class often includes graduate students in other areas (e.g. Music Education); they bring different experiences and interests to the class.

Professor D previously provided all course materials, but now also uses the new Alwes book, *A History of Western Choral Music*.⁸⁴ In addition, students read chapters from topical books held on reserve in the library. For example, at the beginning of the Baroque semester, students read from Chafe’s *Monteverdi’s Tonal Language*.⁸⁵ During the Renaissance semester, they read from books such as Bukofzer’s *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music* and Atlas’s

⁸⁴ Chester Alwes, *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 1* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

⁸⁵ Eric Chafe, *Monteverdi’s Tonal Language* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992).

Anthology of Renaissance Music.⁸⁶ Professor D also provides scholarly articles scanned from journals such as the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*. The articles are distributed electronically; this is the extent to which technology enhances the course. Professor D observes that students are more certain to read articles in this way than anything put on reserve in the library. “At the end of the semester, you're going to look at the reserve and nobody's checked it out.”

Class time at University D includes some lecture, but often features student presentations enhanced by instructor commentary. For example, in the Baroque semester, Professor D asks each student to present one Bach cantata. The students must talk about the cantata and how it relates to the required readings, including analysis of the form, harmonic structure, scoring, and text. Professor D emphasizes the importance of text in choral music, so students should have a good understanding of the poetry and how it agrees with the sonic ideas. “I tell people all the time, regardless of historical period, I say, ‘If you're going to look at a new piece, you start with the text. That's where the composer began.’” In the Renaissance semester, as another example, Professor D talks a lot about masses, motets, and madrigals; then the students present certain subgenres (e.g. Lamentations, Passions, Verse Anthems, Psalm settings, Gospel Motets). Again, text reigns in the Renaissance, but now students focus on the hierarchy of cadences as they are akin to various kinds of punctuation. By following certain elements like text through different style periods, Professor D shows similarities and differences in the analysis of music from different eras.

⁸⁶ Manfred Bukofzer, *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Music* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1950); Allan Atlas, *Anthology of Renaissance Music: music in Western Europe, 1400-1600* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950).

The choral literature courses at University D include a few types of assignments and evaluations. Students work individually and in groups to prepare presentations on works. In the Baroque semester, each group presents on a Handel oratorio and a French *grand motet*. To begin the semester, they each individually present on a book of Monteverdi madrigals. The bulk of the assignments are the in-class presentations, but Professor D gives other assignments occasionally. For example, in the Renaissance semester, students complete a transcription project, a textual analysis of a madrigal, and an assignment to demonstrate understanding of modes. The syllabus does not contain any listening assignments, but Professor D assumes students will listen independently to all the repertoire covered in the course. Students also demonstrate outside preparation (reading) by actively participating in class discussions. Students do not take tests or exams, but they do complete a term paper in the middle of each semester. Professor D believes student must know how to write. At the beginning of the semester students also submit a three-page paper on what they know about the essential elements of the style period for that semester. “It gave me a chance to go, ‘okay, this is what you think and now I’m going to present some other ideas to you.’ That’s what the whole class is.”

Observation: A Typical Day in Class

Graduate choral literature at University D takes place in a classroom with tables pushed together to form a big conference room table in the middle. Eight students sit on either side of the conference table with Professor D at the head of the table. As students enter the room and take their seats, everyone engages in pleasant conversation about lunch. Professor D passes around homemade baked goods for all to share.

The class consists of three student presentations, each on a different Bach cantata. Professor D prefers for the classes to be led by students as much as possible. “I think on the whole, that's more useful for them than I may enjoy. It's easier for me to talk, and they would love to have me just rant on and tell stories for two hours. They sit there and listen, and they're very entertained, but then they don't learn much. They learn more by getting their hands dirty and by doing it themselves and exploring pieces they don't know.”

Student #1 presents on Bach cantata number 23. She distributes a thick, stapled packet containing a one-page overview of the work, two pages of biblical texts, one page of other texts and translations, and then a photocopy of the score. Student #1 first goes over the information on page one of the packet. Professor D chimes in often by adding more detail to Student #1's commentary. For example, in response to the student pointing out the text from Corinthians, Professor D asks, “does this cantata have anything to do with that text?” A student points out, “Two singers, two oboes.” Professor D asks, “Why? Look up the Gospel lesson.” Another student finds it, “Two blind men!” Later as an aside, Professor D comments on the acoustic of St. Thomas.

Student #1 goes on to give the key of each movement as they are listed on the handout. Professor D again, “Question: What is the key signature of each movement?” The professor clarifies that it is modal, not in c minor and E-flat Major (even though they all have 2 flats). A review of modes, which they studied last semester, ensues. Professor D gives a quick overview of Dorian mode on the dry erase board. Student #1 identifies the movement as Rondo form, but the professor corrects, “It's not rondo. What is it?” Other students reply, “Ritornello, concerted music.” Professor D then expands, “Why a tenor-bass duet? Because the first duet was soprano alto. He's pragmatic, everyone gets a chance.” Student #1 pushes back, “in the book you

recommended, Durer says it could be Rondo.” A group discussion of concerted style follows, after which the student plays a recording from laptop speakers. While listening, Student #1 points out that the melody is in the soprano part and notes details of instrumentation. One other student has a laptop out but is not using it. Others all have packets, some have pencils to make additional notes. Everyone follows along in the score with the recording. Professor D has a published score in hand.

When the recording ends, Professor D asks the students what they find interesting about the harmony at the end. Students point out some chords and tonicizations, and the professor talks through the chord progression. “First time, simple chorale harmonization. What did Bach write a lot of? Chorale prelude. The second version goes faster and ends in F; the last verse ends in F but tags on the Amen to land in C minor, the tonal center.”

A student points out that this cantata was performed more than others were typically. Professor D expands on Bach’s situation in Leipzig (a different cantata each week) and then goes to the dry erase board to diagram typical cantata forms and lecture on the exegetic function of chorales. This concludes presentation #1.

Two more students each present a different Bach cantata in similar fashion but with a few variations. Student #2 uses a portable Bluetooth speaker to play an excerpt from a much later composition of Bach to show how he reused the same music. This second packet, in addition to an overview handout and a photocopy of the score, includes a scholarly article on the work. The highlight of student #2’s presentation is a group singing of the chorale, first on “pum,” then on text. After a lighthearted discussion about reading in different clefs (it is an old edition), Professor D shares how as an undergrad they sang that chorale out of context on tour. All agree it is an enjoyable chorale to sing.

Student #3 provides a handout with an overview, form, text and translations but emailed everyone in the class a score downloaded from IMSLP. The class reads the chorale on “dee” from scores on their computers. One more student opens a laptop and they all share with the exception of one student who looks at the score on their phone. Professor D once again has a published score in hand. They conclude the third presentation with a discussion of Bach’s relative happiness during his time in Leipzig and how this informed the mood of his music.

The word “presentation” is used loosely here. The student’s primary job is to provide the packet of information and the score. Though the students do lead the beginning of the discussion, it is the professor that directs much of the conversation thereafter. Professor D asks lots of questions, and has an easy way of flowing into a mini-lecture on any given aspect of the music or its context. Professor D sums up the day’s three presentations, “So you’ve seen three cantatas from the first year which represent a progression of the chorale being added more and more frequently, which leads to the 2nd year which are known as the chorale cantatas.” Following that with a strong endorsement of Bach’s *missae brevis*, Professor D ends class with time to spare.

Background and Viewpoint of Professor

After a student’s graduate choral literature coursework is complete, Professor D wants them to know what resources are available, and to develop a healthy skepticism about the printed score. He believes one must try as best as they can to understand the composer's intentions, considering the historical context, and not just rely on the printed music. The score may or may not be correct, so they spend time discussing how to determine what is a quality edition while perusing examples. What he wants them to know also depends on the prominent features of the style period. In the Baroque period, for example, he wants students to be able to identify whether

a piece is dance music or concerto. “If you can figure out what the composer was thinking and how [they] wrote the piece, that should tell you how to teach the piece.” If it is fugal, for example, he would begin by having everyone sing the subject together to clarify articulation. Then, when everyone sings on their own part, they know when their part should be prominent, and when to sing more softly. The conductor’s knowledge of the gestalt informs the rehearsal process. This unification of musicology and performance features prominently in Professor D’s approach to teaching choral literature.

Some aspects of the curriculum at University D come from Professor D’s experience as a graduate student. Professor D has an undergraduate background in voice, but then attended several different graduate programs, including a program in musicology, before settling on choral conducting. “I really am a musicologist who just spent his life trying to learn to become a choral conductor performer.” As a doctoral student, he was required to take a course in notation and transcribe Renaissance music, which now informs the transcription assignment he gives to choral literature students. This kind of academic approach helps to examine issues of performance practice, such as how to deal with meter change.

Professor D believes students must be active in their scholarship, discovering their own answers rather than just memorizing the ideas or answers of others. “Those are the things that you believe in wholeheartedly because you know that you discovered them.” To that end, Professor D employs the use of open-ended questions and assignments, a pedagogical strategy he gained from his experience as a graduate student. As an example, his musicology professor once gave a midterm on the music of Samuel Scheidt. Not knowing what might be asked on the test, the students spent two weeks learning everything they possibly could about the composer and his music. This resulted in them learning much more than if they had been given a discrete set of

facts to memorize. For the final exam, that same musicology professor told them to study the Well-Tempered Clavier of Bach and the complete works of Handel. Professor D values this kind of open-ended inquiry. This sometimes terrifies students because they don't know specific information to study. In response to this, Professor D explains, "That's not the point. The point is not to ask you a question that's so specific that you either know it or don't know it. It's to ask a question in such a way that we find out what you know. I'm not interested in what you don't know. It's embarrassing to everybody. I want to know what you know."

Professor D decides what to include in the choral literature courses based on what each group of students already knows. His goal is to help fill gaps in their knowledge. Years ago, doctoral students often entered the program with more conducting experience and therefore knew more repertoire. "It's still astonishing to me...how little repertoire some of the people...coming into the doctoral program these days know. It's not their fault because they haven't had that opportunity to get out and spread their wings and try things." Because there is such a vast repertoire and only so much time to teach it, Professor D utilizes another pedagogical strategy gained as a student in graduate school: that is to study prototypical pieces that exemplify different types of compositional style. To make economical use of time in the Baroque semester for example, rather than doing big works, they study cantatas because they serve as the template that Bach used to manufacture larger pieces. "We've got all the tools that we need to know about in six or seven movements instead of the Saint Matthew Passion. Saint Matthew Passion is a bunch of cantatas in a way." Hopefully by studying certain exemplars of each genre, students can then transfer what they know to other works of the same style. To do this, he chooses certain set pieces to cover every time, no matter the group of students, and then caters other selections based on their needs. This often depends on the constituency that semester and whether they are a

larger group, an individual independent study, more music education students, or more conducting performance students. Another issue that affects what material they cover is the pace of the group of students. If the syllabus indicates a certain topic to be discussed one day, but they need more time on a previous topic, Professor D will take more time, even if it means perhaps sacrificing something that they might have covered otherwise. He believes the syllabus should not be cast in concrete, and there is no absolute right or wrong in terms of what must be contained in the course. Lastly, the academic specialties of the professor also help determine what should be covered. “You have to play to your strengths.”

Professor D sums up his teaching philosophy nicely. “My mentor...used to say to me all the time, and I wind up saying it to my class every semester, ‘I know you're here because you're expecting me to give you all the answers. I can't do it and I wouldn't even if I could because then they wouldn't be your answers. They'd be my answers. You have to discover your own answers.’ The real task for a teacher is to ask the right questions. If you ask the right questions, then you let them find out their own answers and just try not to get in the way.”

UNIVERSITY E

Course Structure

University E offers a two-semester survey of choral literature for master's degree students that meets three times per week. Students earn three credit hours per semester. The first semester begins with the Renaissance and ends around the year 1800, and the second semester covers the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. University E offers these courses every other year,

and on the alternate years, most students opt to take a one-semester choral literature seminar as an elective. The seminar topics vary each year, from surveys of genres (e.g. the history of the oratorio, or the history of the requiem) to special topics like “Politics and Choral Music in the Twentieth Century.” For doctoral students, Professor E prefers an individualized curriculum that focuses on gaps in the student’s knowledge rather than on broad surveys. Doctoral students study fewer scores but go much more in depth. Because doctoral students of Professor E cover choral literature outside of a traditional class setting (that is, during individual lessons), the following discussion focuses on the master’s survey.

Professor E does not require a text book, but does assign readings from provided materials or books held on reserve in the library. Professor E also distributes lecture notes consisting of topical outlines, style traits, and overviews of composers and their compositional output. Students receive a listening list of close to 100 pieces with which they should be familiar each semester, and they must bring scores from the choral library to class.

The choral literature courses at University E include tests, presentations, and homework assignments to enhance and assess student learning. Students take a test at the end of each unit (e.g. one test each for Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and Romantic). Tests include short answer and multiple choice questions, “drop the needle” listening examples, an essay question, and score identification. For score identification, students analyze a score they have not seen before and determine who they think the composer is and how it fits into the narrative of stylistic development. Professor E explains this approach: “I’m less interested in whether they get it right, in that they know it’s Palestrina, than the can say, ‘It’s likely to be a late Renaissance mass because I see the mass text, I see that it’s in five voices, I see that the cadences, the bass lines begin to look like 4-5-1. I see that there’s imitation but some phrases don’t have it.’ All those

things should point someone to say it's a late Renaissance mass. And if they say it's Victoria, full points. What I'm really interested in is not the right guess but the process.”

Students give brief presentations every one or two weeks throughout the semester, and one larger presentation at the end of the semester. Professor E now prefers presentations over papers because assigning big papers results in having to teach mechanics of writing (taking time away from the teaching of *content*), while presentations allow students to convey what they have learned in a more communicative and convincing way.⁸⁷ The brief presentations last approximately ten minutes and allow students to demonstrate understanding of themes and concepts. For example, in the second semester, each student presents on a different “-ism” (e.g. expressionism or impressionism). The larger presentations assigned in the second semester last twenty minutes, and students present a twentieth-century American major choral work.

Homework assignments include programming exercises, where students prepare programs for hypothetical choirs and situations assigned by the instructor, and reading assignments to prepare for class discussion. Reading assignments from books in the library serve a dual purpose: first to convey content and clarify understanding of different topics, and second for students to become acquainted with the leading scholars in the field so that in the future they know where to go back and find good scholarly sources. The regular homework assignments also include activities such as the students comparing four Bach cantatas, two each from *Jahrgang 1* and *Jahrgang 2* and summarizing their findings in a paragraph or bullet point form. To ensure

⁸⁷ Doctoral students, on the other hand, sometimes do some more writing in their independent studies, depending on their strengths or professional trajectory. That is, if a student intends to be in a professional position to publish, then they will work on writing during the degree; but if a student never intends to write another paper in their life (say they are going into church music), then writing will not be emphasized for them.

the students understand the main points, Professor E also sometimes asks students to answer some guiding questions related to the reading.

Professor E utilizes technology in choral literature classes in three ways. First, listening playlists are created on Spotify and Naxos. Though their students find it easier to just use Spotify, Naxos contains more of the early music recordings that Professor E prefers the students to hear (e.g. the Hilliard Ensemble). Second, lectures often include PowerPoint slides of visual art related to the music being discussed. Third, Professor E invites experts on certain topics to present remotely via video chat.

A Typical Day in Class

Though this study did not include a site visit to University E, Professor E described during his interview how they spend class time. He uses a traditional lecture format for semester one and the first half of semester two. The second half of semester two (i.e. the Twentieth Century unit) consists primarily of student presentations. The special topics seminars on alternating years blend both traditional lecture and student presentations. Professor E emphasizes that, though most days contain a lecture, they utilize a highly interactive, Socratic style. Thus, each class begins with about ten minutes of questions that require students to show comprehension of the previous lesson or homework. If none or few of the students can answer a question, then that reveals what needs to be re-taught. Professor E calls on each student every class so it becomes an expected part of the class culture. The lecture format allows the class to move quickly enough through the material, while individual questioning and slides of contemporaneous visual art break up the monotony and keep students engaged.

One dilemma all instructors of choral literature face is how much class time to devote to encountering the music itself through listening. Professor E expects most of the listening to occur outside of class time but finds that guided listening in class helps the students not to miss anything important. In addition to the limitations on time, the other difficulty with listening in class is that students, even motivated students, often tend to disengage rather than actively listen. To counteract this, Professor E, instead of just listening to recordings, chooses videos of live performances whenever possible to better hold the interest of students.

Background and Viewpoint of Professor

After a master's student's choral literature coursework is complete, Professor E wants them to have a general picture of the development of music history through the lens of choral music. Through a culminating oral exam, students at University E demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the arc of music history. For these exams, Professor E does not prefer testing discreet factual things that students either get correct or incorrect, as that only shows what they do *not* know. Professor E wants to see what they *do* know and feels a conversation is the best way to do that. "It's in totality, after an hour, do we feel like they have a good understanding of every period and every genre, at a level that means that they'll continue to grow in those ways?"

Professor E prefers to begin each course with an overarching view of the style, and then to place specific works into that framework. "One of the things that I believe and find true from my own experience is that we learn choral literature like we learn most things musically: in a non-additive way. [...] I don't think we learn music or music history by learning one fact, and then the next fact, and then the next fact, then at the end, we have a whole bunch of facts that we

can put...into a big arc. It seems to me the way most of us really learn is that we [first] get a glimpse of the big arc, then we figure out how to put the facts in there. The facts are remembered and make more sense if we know from the beginning something about their relationship to each other.” In the nineteenth century, for example, they begin with an overview of romanticism, and then throughout the entire unit they discuss pieces in terms of how they relate to that aesthetic.

Professor E believes that the master’s degree is more about breadth, and the doctoral degree must be more about depth. In a survey course on such a vast repertoire, naturally only a representative few works receive analysis. “You have to know that you are not going to hit every piece you love or every piece that you think is important. [...] It's a balancing act in terms of hitting all the important corners of the historical story, but with enough depth to excite the students [to go on and learn some of the other works too].” At the doctoral level, Professor E wants students to know how to go deeply into a score. They focus quite a bit on score study. "When I'm no longer around, how are you going to continue to further and deepen your education, in this beautiful art we have chosen as our profession?"

Professor E’s background as a student informs the way he structures choral literature courses today. In the choral literature courses Professor E took as a master’s degree student, the instructor surveyed practical works that could be performed by various types of choirs. This approach benefits students because they finish with a nice collection of programmable repertoire. As Professor E went on to teach choral literature courses to master’s degree students, he settled on a different philosophy than his teacher. That is, rather than choral literature courses being about practical small-scale works, the courses became a study of the choral art itself and the development of choral music as a genre. This opens up the possibility to study large-scale works.

For example, Professor E believes in the value of encountering the Bach B Minor Mass in graduate school, even if the students are not likely to go on to conduct it any time soon.

Professor E discovered that teaching the course was the best way to truly learn the material. Through teaching the material, he learned what he knew and did not know, then vociferously read and studied to fill the gaps. By the time he began a doctorate degree, he had been teaching choral literature for many years, so his mentor taught him choral literature as an independent study in which they worked to enhance his weaker subjects. This is exactly how Professor E teaches his own doctoral students now. Professor E's displays a true passion for choral literature. "[Choral Literature] is one of the things I love the most. I love the performing, and I love the teaching of conducting, but I do love teaching Choral Lit. My life has been so enriched by encountering these pieces. I love letting other people find that."

UNIVERSITY F

Course Structure

The choral literature curriculum at University F consists of four semester courses organized into two surveys and two topical courses. The first semester of a two-semester survey begins in the late middle ages and ends in 1792 (after the death of Mozart); the second semester goes from the nineteenth century to the present. The third semester course traces the development of choral literature and performance practice in Latin America and the Asia-Pacific regions. The fourth semester course, entitled *Music of the Great Liturgies*, traces "the development of Jewish and Christian liturgies, and attendant music, from inception to the

present.”⁸⁸ The survey courses meet twice a week for one hour and twenty minutes, and the two topical courses meet once per week for one hour and fifty minutes. Students earn two credit hours per semester.

Professor F requires students to acquire a few types of course materials: books, “Course Readers” (multiple volumes of copied articles; available at school bookstore), online sources like Grove, and some study scores of significant works of the periods (e.g. Monteverdi *Vespers*, Bach *Mass in B Minor*, and Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*). The books required depend on the semester. For the first-semester survey, students read from André de Quadros’ *Cambridge Companion to Choral Music*. In the second-semester survey, students read from Nick Strimple’s *Choral Music of the Nineteenth Century* and *Choral Music of the Twentieth Century*.⁸⁹ The third semester Pacific Rim course, taught by Professor F’s colleague, utilizes a list of twenty-eight sources including books, scores, and articles, many of which students receive digitally via the university’s course management system, Blackboard. The instructor also provides scores and recordings. In the fourth semester Liturgies course, Professor F requires three books: Bard Thompson’s *Liturgies of the Western Church, Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol. I: Latin* by Jeffers, and *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol. IV: Hebrew* by Nash and Jacobson.⁹⁰

The choral literature courses at University F include several types of assignments to enhance and assess student learning: quizzes, exams, papers, presentations, and occasional small

⁸⁸ Course syllabus, 2014.

⁸⁹ These books are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, and full reference information for these texts can be found in the bibliography.

⁹⁰ Ron Jeffers, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol 1: Latin* (Corvallis, Or: Earthsongs, 1988); Ethan Nash and Joshua Jacobson, *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol. 4: Hebrew* (Corvallis, Or: Earthsongs, 1988); Bard Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church* (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1961).

weekly assignments. Students also earn about 10% of their grade from active participation in class discussion based on their knowledge of the assigned readings. Midterm and final exams include a variety of listening, matching, short answer, multiple-choice, score ID and/or essay questions. Professor F distributes listening lists at the beginning of each semester, and these examples along with any composers and repertoire listed in the syllabus might be included on the exams whether they have been covered during class time or not. Final exams also have a take-home portion in which students list fifteen compositions from the period that seem especially significant; they then annotate the list with one or two sentences for each work to describe its significance. The in-class portion of the final exam is cumulative. In addition, at the beginning of each survey semester, every student takes responsibility for two works. On one of the pieces they must write a concise (5-page) paper discussing the music and issues a conductor will encounter with the work. For their second piece, students must plan a twenty-five-minute presentation with the object of convincing the class of the music's worth. Professor F warns them to be prepared to be interrupted for comments and questions. One difference in the *Great Liturgies* semester is that the presentation is replaced with a creative project: to create an interfaith or ecumenical liturgy for a citywide memorial service and explain their choices. In the *Pacific Rim* semester, the instructor requires no presentation or creative project, but the term paper is expected to be twice the length (ten pages) and focused on a single composer and the composer's compositional output.

A Typical Day in Class

Though this study did not include a site visit to University F, Professor F described during his interview how they spend class time. Every class taught by Professor F begins with a

listening or score identification quiz. The examples may not be known by the students, but based on what they see/ hear they must identify the musical epoch and the geographical area from where the music came. Professor F explains that “sometimes it's hard to tell the land of origin. There are usually reasons for this, and that provides opportunity for discussion. We discuss it right then. There are anywhere from three to seven examples that I play. I play one minute each, and then after we've done all of them, I take them in and we go over how everybody answered, discuss what it was, and start giving them hints about what you can listen for to tell you if it is early 19th century or late 19th century, these sorts of things. That's what the listening quizzes are about.” The remainder of class is a traditional lecture format, or, later in the semester, student presentations. Another important feature of the choral literature classes at University F is that they regularly host guest lecturers, often international authorities, to enhance the educational experience for the students.

Background and Viewpoint of Professor

After a student's graduate choral literature coursework is complete, Professor F wants them to know what he considers the basic standard repertoire. Students, especially master's students, often enter the program with very little experience with the choral canon, and they need to spend lots of time listening and becoming familiar with the great choral works of history. He believes it is good for all to know the Beethoven *Missa Solemnis* and Mahler 8, for example, whether they ever conduct them or not. Professor F wants students to be able to talk intelligently about the repertoire, including instrumental and stage works composed around the same time as the choral piece. “Oftentimes, a choral work may be colored by other pieces by the same composer that were written on either side of the choral piece you're doing. You need to know

about that and see if there's any connection from one piece to another, or what was going on in the life of the [composer]. Why did the composer write it? Are there things in the music that would have come out differently if the composer's life was different? I think it's very important to know stuff like that when you're going to conduct a piece. It helps you understand what is going on in the music, why it is a certain way.”

Beyond knowledge and familiarity with the choral repertoire, Professor F wants students to develop a curiosity about the music, and the critical tools to judge if a piece is well-written or not. He encourages students to ask, “Is it worth doing? Is my audience and are my performers going to benefit ultimately from doing this piece?”

SUMMARY OF CHORAL LITERATURE CURRICULA AND PEDAGOGY

The descriptions of graduate choral literature sequences above provide several examples of course design and implementation. The research questions of this study will frame the following summary of the findings.

Subject Matter and Course Organization

Research Question 1: What subject matter is included in graduate choral literature courses?

Research Question 2: How many courses are included in graduate choral literature sequences, and how is the subject matter divided and organized among the courses?

Most of the university choral literature sequences consist of four semester courses primarily organized by style period. The way each school groups the style periods varies. Universities A and D both group the Classical and Romantic periods together in one semester, with the Renaissance, Baroque, and Twentieth Century periods each receiving a full semester on their own. Universities B and C offer a full semester on a special topic (University C) or score study (University B), leaving three semesters to overview the style periods. Therefore, they not only group the classical and romantic periods together, but also the Renaissance and Baroque periods, with the remaining semester to cover the contemporary/ twentieth century period. University E, which only offers master's degrees, requires a two-semester survey dividing the literature around the year 1800, but most students opt to take the third semester special topic choral literature course as an elective. University A requires master's degree students to take three of the four semesters offered (this allows the three-summer master's degree students to complete the requirement), but most full-time students opt to take the fourth semester. The special topics or score study semesters at Universities B and C provide an opportunity to explore a particular genre or a small number of major works in depth. As an example of the former, students might spend the semester studying the development of the mass, motet, or oratorio. Special topics courses tend to change from one year to the next per the interests of the instructor and needs of the students. University A includes some more in-depth score study of major works too, but this occurs in the doctoral seminar, a related but separate course. This illustrates one way University A integrates all the coursework in the comprehensive course of study.

University F structures its choral literature courses a little differently. A survey of the style periods occurs over two semesters, divided around the year 1800 (like University E), and then two unique courses comprise the other two semesters. The first is a study of the choral

music from Latin America and the Pacific Rim, and the second is entitled “The Great Liturgies” that examines music from the Jewish and Christian traditions throughout the development of choral music. This structure allows them, for example, to spend more time on the Bach B Minor Mass in the survey course, and then study the Passions in the Liturgies course. Since so much choral music of history comes from the church, the Liturgies course puts this vast repertoire into its Jewish, Catholic, Lutheran, or Anglican context.

The choral repertoire is incredibly and increasingly vast. Within each of the choral literature courses, whether a style period survey or special topics course, time allows for only some repertoire to be included. Professor C and E prefer to spend class time on larger works (e.g. Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis*), even if the students never have the chance to conduct them in the future. They believe the analysis of the larger works informs the students’ approach to smaller works from the same period. Professor D values the opposite approach, therefore the class time at University D consists of analysis of more small-scale works. Student analysis of these pieces will provide the tools they need in the future to approach the large major works if they do indeed encounter them in their careers. Professors A and B employ a combination of both these approaches. Class time is often spent reviewing small-scale works, but then certain major works warrant more detailed analysis and discussion. They also assign students to make presentations on large works to fill some gaps in their repertoire knowledge. Whichever approach instructors use; they aim to equip students with the tools to analyze and contextualize music they might encounter in the future.

Table 1: Choral Literature Curriculum and Textbook Overview

University	Semester Organization	Required Textbooks
A	Four semesters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Renaissance</i> 2. <i>Baroque</i> 3. <i>Classical/ Romantic</i> 4. <i>After 1900</i> (only 3 semesters required for MM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choral Repertoire</i> (Shrock)
B	Four semesters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Survey 1450-1750</i> 2. <i>Survey 1750-1900</i> 3. <i>Survey 1900-now</i> 4. <i>Score Study of a handful of major works (selections vary from year to year)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choral Repertoire</i> (Shrock) • <i>Performance Practices in the Classical Era</i> (Shrock) • <i>Choral Music in the Twentieth Century</i> (Strimple)
C	Four semesters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Renaissance and Baroque</i> 2. <i>Classic and Romantic</i> 3. <i>20th Century and Contemporary</i> 4. <i>Special Topics (topics vary from year to year)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choral Performance: A Guide to Historical Practice</i> (Plank)*
D	Four semesters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Renaissance</i> 2. <i>Baroque</i> 3. <i>Classical-Romantic</i> 4. <i>20th Century to Present</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A History of Western Choral Music</i> (Alwes)
E	Three semesters for master's degree students: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Renaissance to 1800 (required)</i> 2. <i>19th and 20th Centuries (required)</i> 3. <i>Special Topics Seminar (elective)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No textbook required</i>
F	Four semesters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Late Middle Ages to 1798</i> 2. <i>19th Century to Present</i> 3. <i>Latin America and Asia-Pacific</i> 4. <i>Music of the Great Liturgies (Jewish & Christian)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cambridge Companion to Choral Music</i> (Quadros) • <i>Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century</i> (Strimple) • <i>Choral Music in the Twentieth Century</i> (Strimple) • <i>Liturgies of the Western Church</i> (Thompson) • <i>Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vols. I & IV</i> (Jeffers, et al.)

*The Plank book is not a choral literature text book, but is the only book Professor C requires students to purchase. The students at University C read extensively from musicology books on reserve in the library.

Course Materials

Research Question 3: What textbooks, articles, or other resources are used in graduate choral literature curricula?

Two of the six schools surveyed in this study, Universities A and B, require Shrock's *Choral Repertoire*, a choral music compendium. University A also assigns extensive readings from journal articles. University B adds Shrock's *Performance Practices in the Classical Era* in their "1750-1900" semester, and Strimple's *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* in their "1900-now" semester. University F uses both Strimple's *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* and his *Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century*. Because their curriculum includes music from the western tradition as well as from other cultures, University F includes the *Cambridge Companion to Choral Music* (ed. Quadros) which addresses both western historical music as well as music from various other parts of the world. In addition, its course on the "Great Liturgies" requires Jeffers' *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol. 1: Latin*, Nash and Jacobson's *Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vol. 4: Hebrew* and Thompson's *Liturgies of the Western Church*. Two schools require no choral literature textbook at all, but assign readings from journal articles and books on reserve in the library. One of those schools, University C, also requires students to acquire Plank's *Choral Performance: A Guide to Historical Practice* because, especially in the Renaissance and Baroque semester, they deal not only with literature but also a lot of performance practice issues. After many years of not

requiring a textbook, University D now uses the brand new Alwes books, *A History of Western Choral Music, Volumes I and II*.⁹¹ Some programs require readings from musicology books or journals, while others emphasize more articles from ACDA's *Choral Journal*. University B also provides outstanding papers and handouts created by previous years' students.

Class Time

Research Question 4: What do teachers and students do during class time in graduate choral literature courses?

Most of the university choral literature programs in this study spend class time in a combination of instructor-led discussion, student-led discussion, student presentation, and listening to recordings while looking at scores. Three of the six also include formal lecture, but each of the professors that lecture do emphasize the importance of engaging students through questioning and/or limiting the time in each class devoted to lecture to provide time for more student-centered activity. In other words, none of the teaching models presented here consist solely of the traditional lecture format where students passively listen and take notes. Professor D does not plan any formal lecture, but often ends up doing some impromptu lecturing in response to a student question. Professor E spends a lot of time lecturing because he feels it is the only way to move quickly enough through the material, but he begins each class with a Socratic approach where he asks questions of each student to ensure that they remember the information from previous classes and prepared for the current class by completing the reading assignments. Professor F similarly uses a lot of time for lecture, but begins every class with a listening quiz to

⁹¹ Publisher information for all these books can be found in the bibliography. Full overviews of each of the choral literature textbooks can be found in chapter 5 of this document.

spur group discussion. Four of the six programs studied administer exams during class time, and all six emphasize student presentations throughout the curriculum.

Assignments and Assessment

Research Question 5: What is required of graduate choral literature students outside of class time?

Research Questions 6: What types of assessments are used to measure student learning in graduate choral literature courses?

The most common expectation for students outside of class time is to listen to recordings and look at scores of the repertoire studied that semester. Though they do this during class too, there is not enough time for them to look at everything together. Some professors give specific listening assignments (e.g. compare these two motets), and all expect general listening to familiarize themselves with the repertoire. Some provide a specific list from which a traditional “drop the needle” test will be given. Professor B prescribes a more thorough process; that is, students at University B should listen to recordings, play through the music on the piano, sing through each voice part, and do some score analysis for every piece in the anthology and repertoire list pulled from their choral library. As they go through this repertoire they also keep a listening journal wherein they briefly note their reaction to each piece. In contrast, Professor D does not include a listening expectation in the syllabus, but simply assumes that student will independently listen to everything they cover in class.

Aside from listening assignments, other types of work to be done outside of class include score study and analysis (especially at University C), paper writing, small homework assignments, special projects, a database, and preparation of student presentations. When students at University C lead discussion on a certain movement of a larger work, they distribute a handout detailing their score analysis. Rather than a prescribed score study method, the students may choose whatever approach they wish so long as they can explain their analysis to their peers. Four of the six programs assign papers, though only Professors A and D explicitly state that their goal is to develop writing skills. Professor C only requires a paper in semesters where the students do not have too many presentations. Professor E stopped requiring papers because he found he spent most of the time correcting mechanics of writing rather than grading academic content. Students at University B create an annotated database each semester that contains every piece from the anthology they use, all the pieces of the packet they pull from the choral library, and any additional compositions they feel are important to include. This goes together with the prescribed listening/ familiarizing they do with this repertoire. Students at University C also produce a similar project, though instead of a database they create an annotated list. Special projects include the creation of hypothetical concert programs and transcriptions of early music. Professors B and C both value time spent in the library with important musicology and choral literature books. While both require reading, University B students also create a bibliography from the extensive list of books provided. After reading or skimming through each book, they write a two or three sentence annotation. In this way, they become familiar with what has been written before and who are the leading scholars of certain genres or composers.

Student presentations vary in size and scope. Presentations can be individual or group presentations. Some presentations are short, twenty-minute overviews of a certain composer's

output, and some are full-length presentations where the students present for an entire class. Other presentations function more like a discussion led by a student who has become an expert on a given composition or composer. In any case, they provide a handout to include things like the text and translation, background of the composer and composition(s), a chart detailing musical features, discography, and source list. These handouts become a part of the collection of resources that students keep for future reference. In classrooms equipped with a projector, the students often create a slideshow presentation that includes photos, related paintings, bullet-pointed information, and embedded videos. Almost always, students include listening to recorded excerpts of the music featured in the presentation. While choral literature courses often only have time to superficially cover a lot of repertoire, student presentations provide a mechanism for students to delve into certain material with greater depth.

Table 2: Choral Literature Assignments

University	Papers	Exams	Presentations	Sample of Other Projects
A	✓	✓	✓	N/A
B		✓	✓	Repertoire database; Listening Journal; Annotated Bibliography
C	✓		✓	Annotated Repertoire List; Renaissance edition
D	✓		✓	Renaissance Transcription
E		✓	✓	Programming for Hypothetical Choirs
F	✓	✓	✓	An interfaith or ecumenical program for a citywide memorial service

Considering Course Design

Research Question 7: What underlying philosophical or practical considerations affected the design of the graduate choral literature courses?

A fundamental conflict of breadth versus depth influences how a professor designs a choral literature course sequence. With only so many hours of class time per semester, instructors must choose what to include and what to leave out of the syllabus. The professors interviewed for this study settle this conflict in a few different ways. One solution is to combine several semesters surveying one or more historical style periods, and to reserve one semester to go in depth on a small number of masterworks or to trace a genre through the centuries. Often, these in-depth semesters provide flexibility in the curriculum to cater the material to the strengths and weaknesses of the current group of graduate students. Another solution is to present overviews of genres/ composers/ style periods to the group and then assign small-group or individual presentations to afford students the opportunity to go more in-depth on a certain subject. Giving students the chance to lead class enhances the curricula because, as Professor E notes, teaching the material results in deeper learning.

Other practical considerations include the overall degree structure and background of the instructor. For schools that coordinate a doctoral seminar, conducting class, conducting lessons, and/ or practicum experience with the choral literature courses, certain elements like performance practice can be covered outside of the choral literature class. In the case of University A, the sequence of courses must also coordinate with the summer master's degree program so those students stay on track. The educational background of the professors themselves influence the course design, as they often incorporate strategies or approaches gained

from their own experience as a student. Professors with a graduate student background more heavily focused on analysis or writing feature more analysis or writing in the courses they teach. Those whose teachers in graduate school guided their choral literature education with a more individualized approach are more likely to individualize the curriculum for their own students.

The professors interviewed in this study have different approaches to another philosophical consideration, whether to examine more practical small works or more significant larger works. One point of view maintains that students should examine smaller works that exemplify milestones in stylistic development; the approaches to these pieces can then be applied to larger works. For example, Professor D spends class time on cantatas and trusts that students can use the same skills and understanding to study the Passions. Students also benefit because they will most likely be able to program this music in the future. The opposite approach is to examine more major works with the belief that the analytic approach to these can also be applied to smaller works. For example, Professor C spends class time on the Bach Passions and trusts that students can apply the same skills and understanding to study the cantatas. A similar consideration is how to frame the course material. Whereas some professors present monumental pieces throughout history and how each represent an incremental development of style in an additive way, others prefer to begin with the big picture of stylistic development and then show how each piece fits into that overall arc.

Technology

Research Question 8: Is technology used to enhance graduate choral literature curricula and, if so, how?

For the most part, professors use very little technology in choral literature courses. Most commonly, classes utilize online streaming services to play recordings for the class, though some still play compact discs as well. Projected slideshow presentations make up the next most common use of technology, though two of the university classroom settings do not have the necessary projector or computer connection available. Professor E uses video chat to bring in virtual guest speakers on a topic of their specialty. Students at University B use database software to create their repertoire database. Interestingly, Professors B and C purposefully limit technology in class; they value pencil and paper as tools to better focus in class and synthesize the course material. The most digitized program, University A, has gone almost entirely paperless and provides all course materials, including syllabi, lecture notes, score samples, audio files, and reading assignments in a google drive folder. Students at University A commonly share their student presentation materials via this same method. They also now take their exams via laptops in class and submit via email to the professor. Many of the professors humorously admit to their own personal limitations when it comes to the deployment of technology.

Chapter 5

CHORAL LITERATURE TEXTBOOK REVIEW

The graduate choral literature programs in this study use several books for required reading. While some reading assignments come from books on performance practice or musicology (or chapters from them), this chapter will center around the books that focus specifically on choral literature. A review of choral literature textbooks reveals different ways to organize the subject matter and examples of what repertoire can serve as exemplars of each style period. For some authors, they are the output, in book form, of a career teaching and thinking about choral literature. Thus, they serve as models for any professor who needs to design a graduate choral literature course.

The graduate choral literature programs in this study utilize Nick Strimple's *Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century* and *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century*, Dennis Shrock's *Choral Repertoire*, Chester Alwes's new *A History of Western Choral Music Volume 1 and 2*, and the *Cambridge Companion to Choral Music* edited by André de Quadros. For anyone who teaches graduate choral literature, familiarity with available text books will inform their own decision about what book(s) to use in their courses. To that end, each book will be described in terms of content, organization, writing style, and use of citations. Three of the authors (Chester Alwes, Dennis Shrock, and Nick Strimple) agreed to be interviewed for this study, and their comments included below provide valuable insight into the books themselves as well as the teaching of choral literature. Over the course of interviewing university professors and book authors, three older books received frequent mention as the only texts previously available: Homer Ulrich's *A Survey of Choral Music*, Percy Young's *The Choral Tradition*, and the

Penguin Press classic *Choral Music: A Symposium* edited by Arthur Jacobs. In this chapter I will review each of the books previously or currently used in graduate choral literature courses in the United States.

Books to be reviewed in chronological order:

Young, Percy M. *The Choral Tradition; An Historical and Analytical Survey from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day*. London: Hutchinson, 1962.

Jacobs, Arthur. *Choral music: a symposium*. Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963.

Ulrich, Homer. *A Survey of Choral Music*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973.

Strimple, Nick. *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century*. Portland: Amadeus Press, 2002.

Strimple, Nick. *Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century*. New York: Amadeus Press, 2008.

Shrock, Dennis. *Choral Repertoire*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Quadros, André de. *The Cambridge Companion to Choral Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Alwes, Chester. *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 1*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Alwes, Chester. *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 2*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Table 3: Choral Literature Textbooks

University	Required Textbooks
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choral Repertoire</i> (Shrock)
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choral Repertoire</i> (Shrock) • <i>Performance Practices in the Classical Era</i> (Shrock) • <i>Choral Music in the Twentieth Century</i> (Strimple)
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choral Performance: A Guide to Historical Practice</i> (Plank)*
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A History of Western Choral Music</i> (Alwes)
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No textbook required</i>
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cambridge Companion to Choral Music</i> (Quadros) • <i>Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century</i> (Strimple) • <i>Choral Music in the Twentieth Century</i> (Strimple) • <i>Liturgies of the Western Church</i> (Thompson) • <i>Translations and Annotations of Choral Repertoire, Vols. I & IV</i> (Jeffers, et al.)

*Not a choral literature book.

The Choral Tradition by Percy Young (1962)

Percy Young’s 1962 book, *The Choral Tradition*, though outdated today, remains a quality survey of historic choral literature. A British composer, conductor, and musicologist, the author seeks to put the music in historical context, reveal elements of style throughout the eras, and address issues of performance practice. Young states in the Introduction that his goal in providing historical context is that the choral musician becomes so familiar with the political, religious, philosophical, and cultural surroundings of the music, that “the past, as such, ceases to exist”.⁹² His mission is also to educate choral singers so that they may be “flexible and adaptable

⁹² Percy M. Young, *The Choral Tradition; An Historical and Analytical Survey from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (London: Hutchinson, 1962), 9.

to all kinds of music...”.⁹³ For each era, he addresses style and characteristic tone in general terms. Young also discusses performance practice issues of individual pieces, including tempo, rubato, and accompaniment. Larger works receive more detailed treatment. Short examples of the music illustrate the compositional elements discussed in the text; yet Young too often makes general statements about a composer’s writing without providing any example to illustrate what he means (e.g., “Carissimi had the rare ability to express new ideas without recourse to the recondite.”;⁹⁴ or “...we can discover in the majority of [Schubert’s] liturgical works the naïve subjection of will and feeling to both fear and love of the traditional deity that distinguishes the simple, impressionable mind.”).⁹⁵ His writing style also comes across as old-fashioned in this way.⁹⁶

Young organizes the information by century, beginning with the sixteenth century and ending with the twentieth century. Each chapter begins with a summary of the cultural trends that contextualize the work of the composers. In place of a chapter on the eighteenth century, he includes two composer-focused chapters: The Period of Bach and Handel (Chapter 3) and The Period of Haydn and Mozart (Chapter 4). Young divides the nineteenth century into two chapters. The first chapter on the nineteenth century highlights the rise of choral societies and choral singing in England, America, Germany and Scandinavia. Young notes how the concert hall supplanted the church as the main place for choral singing and therefore the rise in prominence of secular poetry for texts.⁹⁷ In the second chapter on the nineteenth century, Young lays out a scathing indictment on the poor quality of choral music in the latter half of the century,

⁹³ Young, *The Choral Tradition*, 14.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁹⁶ He also favors the term “ejaculating” when referring to repetitive or imitative counterpoint, 33 and 71. This would probably not fly in today’s classroom.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 218.

and then highlights the great achievements of the period (e.g., Verdi's *Requiem*) before using only a few pages to gloss over "Some French Works," "Progress in America," and "Other Schools" (i.e., nationalist movements in Hungary and Scandinavia).

Young focuses discussion more on general description of musical features, and less on detailed theoretical or formal analysis. He highlights major composers, like Palestrina, and some of their most iconic works as exemplars for each style period. Short examples of the music illustrate the compositional elements discussed in the text. For most composers discussed in *The Choral Tradition*, brief biographical sketches trace their upbringing and career by way of places lived and worked. Sometimes the biography just places a composer in cultural context (liturgical Rome vs. expressive Venice), but in the chapters on Bach and Handel, or Mozart and Haydn, the biographies serve to compare and contrast the lives and music of two contemporaries. The composer-centric chapters are especially interesting in the way the author organizes the topics (e.g., performing forces, socio-political context, or genres like cantata, oratorio, or mass) and explains the two composers' varying approaches. Young writes several pages about a few major composers of each style period, and those deemed second-tier composers might receive one extended paragraph. In addition, Young overviews selected collections of works for their influence on a given genre (e.g. *The Triumphs of Oriana*, and Monteverdi's books of madrigals). Entire genres, like the Calvinist psalm settings, receive passing mention or exclusion entirely.

Imagine writing an overview of the eighteenth century in 1762 that would miss the entire choral and operatic output of Mozart. Likewise, a twentieth-century chapter published in 1962, the same year as the premier of the Britten War Requiem, and without the works of composers such as Tavener, Adams, or MacMillan is obviously insufficient today. Nevertheless, Young offers a thoughtful perspective on the various philosophies and techniques of twentieth-century

composers to date, and he examines the major influences (e.g. *moto proprio*) and trends of the time.

Young includes no citations in the text, but footnotes appear regularly for two purposes: to add parenthetical information not central to the chapter, or to refer the reader to other essays or articles for further reading. A bibliography lists sources grouped alphabetically for each chapter. A helpful Index of Principal Works lists all the pieces detailed in the body of the text and includes the vocal/ instrumental forces required. The General Index lists composers, including their birth and death years, lesser-known works only mentioned in the book, and various other names and topics.

Young's *The Choral Tradition* certainly warrants inclusion in a choral library as a reference, but the publication date alone precludes it from being the primary textbook for a graduate choral literature course today. Furthermore, several books reviewed below easily supplant Young's in terms of readability and comprehensiveness.

***Choral Music: A Symposium* edited by Arthur Jacobs (1963)**

Published just one year after Young's *The Choral Tradition*, Arthur Jacob's *Choral Music: A Symposium* contains twenty-two chapters, each addressing different topics in the history of choral music. As editor, Jacobs curates a wide-ranging collection of essays, each written by a different British or American musicologist. Jacobs himself was a British music critic, translator of opera, and musicology professor at the Royal Academy of Music. Because of the broad range of subject matter, each writer approaches their assigned topic in their own way, but different chapters do share some common characteristics. They include an overview, detailed description of a few more significant works, and some social context. Throughout the volume,

writers emphasize large works like oratorios at the expense of omitting smaller works like part songs.

Jacobs organizes the chapters primarily by chronology and then geography. After beginning with the “Choir and People in the Later Middle Ages” in chapter one, the readers trace the influence of the Franco-Flemish school in Italy, jump to Tudor England, and then follow the emergence of the Baroque period in Germany, Italy and France, and England. Bach receives a chapter of his own, as does Handel (and contemporaries). Chapters on the Viennese Classical Period and post-Handelian England and America complete the first half of this volume. The author of chapter eleven discusses Beethoven and Berlioz in the context of the French Revolution, and the following four chapters each tackle a genre of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: oratorio/cantata, mass, and choral-orchestral works (one chapter for the continental composers, and one for English composers). After a chapter addressing Slavonic Nationalism, four “revolutionaries” of composition share chapter seventeen: Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Bartok. Next comes an overview of contributions by French composers straddling the fin de siècle (Debussy, Faure, et al.) and a description of “Modern English Composers” (i.e. Walton, Howells, Tippett, and Britten). The author of chapter twenty divides twentieth-century composers into serialists and traditionalists, and chapter twenty-one’s author offers an interesting essay on the coming of age of American choral music. It features the known (Ives, Copland, Barber, Dello Joio, and Schuman) and mentions myriad composers popular in the 1960’s but now rarely known or performed (Vittorio Giannini, Roy Harris, Wallingford Riegger, to name a few). In the final chapter, the editor expounds on his dim view of choral music’s declining status in Britain. Jacobs ponders the untethering of “choralism” from the church and the uncertainty of its place in modern secular society; he then concludes that we

ought not to suppose “that the changes of the future must necessarily be for the worse.”⁹⁸ He would be pleased to know that choral music is indeed alive and well today.

The text contains no citations, but the final pages of the book contain a comprehensive list of recommended books on all the topics and composers discussed. The appendices include a translation of the Latin mass text and an explanation of continuo. The outdated resources at the end of the volume include recommended printed editions of scores and recommended gramophone record albums. Each chapter provides an informative and well-written essay, but because the book has so many different authors, the result is a book with no connective tissue or overarching grand narrative of the development of choral music. The main weakness of this book today is the publication date. Like the Young book, it is too old to include major composers of the second half of the twentieth century, and lacks the historical perspective to know which “contemporary” composers will stand the test of time. The strength of this book remains the easy readability and wide variety of well-researched subject matter.

***A Survey of Choral Music* by Homer Ulrich (1973)**

A Survey of Choral Music by Homer Ulrich became one of the most widely used graduate choral literature course textbooks for a generation. Ulrich founded and chaired the University of Maryland’s Department of Music. For decades his book was the only, most up-to-date text that attempted to trace the development of choral music from pre-Renaissance times to the modern day. Any attempt at this task requires a bit of audacity, yet Ulrich acknowledges in the preface that “no single book can possibly account for every work in this vast field...”⁹⁹ He narrowed selections by choosing those works that are pivotal to the stylistic development of choral music,

⁹⁸ Arthur Jacobs, *Choral music: a symposium* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963), 396.

⁹⁹ Homer Ulrich, *A Survey of Choral Music*, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973), v.

whether they are still performed or not. The result is a good book that is “partly historical, partly analytical, but always descriptive.”¹⁰⁰

Ulrich organizes the information by style period and genre. That is, within each historical period, Ulrich describes the development of choral music within each genre (e.g., mass, motet, oratorio, etc.). Thus, analyses of various oratorios and mass settings appear in most chapters, while discussion of madrigals and chanson appear in only one, “Secular Music, 1450-1600.” The Introduction in Chapter 1 sets the stage by defining choral music broadly (“music written in parts designed to be performed with several voices on each part”) and explaining its historic role as sacred music.¹⁰¹ After a succinct explanation of the role of music in the ancient Catholic church, Ulrich details the early techniques (isorhythm and cantus firmus) utilized by early innovators and creators of choral music, i.e., music sung in parts as opposed to plainchant. He then uses composers Machaut, Dufay, Dunstable, and Binchois as archetypes of the various genres of early polyphonic writing. Thus, Ulrich establishes a pattern for the entire book whereby he discusses the exemplary composers and their works within each genre (e.g., mass, motet, anthem). Those the author chooses as major composers get their own heading, while other composers and their music fall under headings like “Other composers,” or “French Composers.” Types of works defined not by genre but by form and text, like settings of the *Te Deum* or *Stabat Mater*, group under “Other Forms.” On one occasion Ulrich devotes a section (and heading) within a chapter to an important socio-political/ liturgical development, “The Council of Trent.” More often, Ulrich provides context through overviews at the beginning of each chapter. These chapter introductions provide expositions on major musical developments (e.g., the *seconda prattica* in Chapter 6, the prominence of orchestral music in Chapter 10); or they place the music in history

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 1.

by reviewing the major religious or political movements of the time (e.g., Luther and the Protestant Reformation in Chapter 4, the Enlightenment in Chapter 8, Romanticism in Chapter 9).

Composers' biographical details, when included, are generally limited to birthplace, early musical training, professional positions held, and/ or lists of choral works composed. Analysis of choral works typically consists of a description of form, key areas, texture, orchestration/ voicing, and text. Though it is not difficult to read these details in prose, this reviewer would find the information much more quickly accessible in a table format. The same could be said for many of the books reviewed in this chapter, though admittedly some description does require complete sentences and paragraphs. For instance, Ulrich discusses how the Liszt mass for men's voices fits nicely into the bounds dictated by the Cecilian Movement, while his large and elaborate *Gran Mass* exemplifies his use of theme transformation.¹⁰² When Ulrich shares his opinion about a composer's writing, he is balanced and straight forward. For instance, he praises Schubert's "sheer melodic beauty," yet critiques his fugal writing as "'correct' but little more."¹⁰³ Ulrich expresses such opinions as matter of fact. Musical examples appear as illustrations of what the author discusses in the text. When composers reappear in one section of a chapter after another, like Berlioz does in the consecutive Requiem Mass, Secular Oratorio, and Choral Symphony sections, it has a spiraling effect that in the end helps the reader retain more information. The way composers reappear in one section after another creates a clearer picture of how the major composer's writing style manifests itself across multiple genres.

Ulrich includes no citations or endnotes, nor does he refer to sources in the body of the text. A Selected Bibliography includes books to which he referred, significant general references,

¹⁰² Ibid., 150-151.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 147.

and books for further reading. Due to the frequency of certain liturgical Latin texts, translations for the most common ones make up five appendices. In addition, the book contains a helpful glossary of terms idiomatic to choral music, the selected bibliography, a list of music sources, and a detailed index.

It is obvious to see why Ulrich's *A Survey of Choral Music* became a popular textbook for choral literature courses in the United States. The way the information is organized, the readability, and the author's own insights in describing the repertoire make it still a valuable book for today's serious choral conductors. The 1973 publication date, however, limits its usability as the textbook for a modern choral literature course. Like the Young and Jacobs books discussed above, the twentieth century chapter is incomplete. Fortunately, we now have more recent publications to fill that gap.

***Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* by Nick Strimple (2002)**

***Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century* by Nick Strimple (2008)**

Because they are by the same author and similar in style and format, the next two books will be reviewed together. Nick Strimple, professor of music at the University of Southern California, wrote *Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century* (2008) and *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* (2002) in reverse chronological order. In the twentieth-century survey, he delves into the eclectic styles that culminated or developed during the first part of the century, and criticizes the lack of creative direction in the final years, dubbed here the "Post Modern World." In fact, throughout both books the author is quick to belittle many popular works, and to dedicate more space to lesser-known or forgotten composers' works. Strimple unabashedly shares his informed opinions about certain repertoire. For example, he writes of Orff that the

Carmina Burana is “devoid of expressive subtlety,” and that his subsequent works retained the same style “with ever diminishing effect.”¹⁰⁴ For others he offers opinions other than his own. For instance, when sharing the reception history of Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms*, Strimple writes how one reviewer describes the piece as “just another experiment,” while another praises it as “a revelation of God’s love.”¹⁰⁵ It does make for some entertaining reading (and in-class lecturing, one can imagine). In his interview, Strimple asserts that “a writer has to use his or her own critical capacity to choose what's good and what's bad. The real tricky issue is that there are some pieces that have to be included because of their popularity. You can't ignore them.”¹⁰⁶ He continues, “I think when I state an opinion, it's very clear that it's an opinion. ... Also, I want to write in a way that people remember it. They don't have to agree with it. I want my students to form their own opinions about music. ... If I say something that they don't agree with, I want them to be able to articulate their disagreement and stand up for their own point of view, and then we'll have a discussion about it. It's not just a matter of the professor speaking ex cathedra. That carries over into my writing, too.” He clearly knows the repertoire and writes with an engaging style. Strimple notes, “Amadeus Press is not a textbook publisher. They publish things that are for people who really love music, whether they are amateurs or professionals. They didn't want it to appear academic, but they wanted it to be scholarly.” He brings together academic sources and personal artifacts collected during his own lifetime in the profession. He refers to sources in the body of the text, and a bibliography provides ample sources for further reading. Note that Amadeus Press, and therefore these books, cater to a general audience.

¹⁰⁴ Nick Strimple, *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* (Portland: Amadeus Press, 2002), 35-36.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 135.

¹⁰⁶ Nick Strimple, phone interview by the author, March 16, 2016.

Strimple organizes the material by country of origin. He further defines the eras in both books in terms of wars and religious or philosophical movements (the Napoleonic Wars, the American Civil War, the World Wars, the Enlightenment, the Catholic Church's *moto proprio*, to name a few). The *Nineteenth Century* book begins with chapters on what one would typically find in a music history book: Austria, Germany, France, and the British Isles; Nationalism and the appropriation of folk song. The *Twentieth Century* book follows a similar route but with an extended stay in the United States and the inclusion of additional regions previously not yet on the map of the choral music (or political) world. The unique contribution of these books is the inclusion of so many composers (especially those from Eastern Europe and the Pacific Rim) previously unknown by the mainstream choral musician. His inclusion of music from Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America is admirable but they receive relatively little attention. In every chapter, myriad minor composers receive mention. Major composers might have many pages dedicated to their works, with small pieces simply listed and larger works described with details of orchestration, form, and style. These books are rich with composers and choral literature, put into context by a great scholar, and colored by his informed opinions and enjoyable writing. The index of each book contains names only, but extensive Works Lists, organized by voicing, provide a valuable resource for concert programming.

Both Strimple's *Choral Music in the Nineteenth Century* and his *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* make a significant contribution to the field. Part of his motivation for writing these books came from the lack of any current books on the topic. The Jacobs book was out of print, and Strimple felt that the Young and Ulrich texts, while the information they contained was good, were not complete surveys. "It's what's not there that you wonder about." One can appreciate why professors of graduate choral literature often assign these books as required

reading. They contain an engaging and thorough narrative of the last two centuries of choral music. Strimple reflects on his other motivation for writing:

“There is a sense that one has contributed to the profession in hopefully a meaningful way. We all want to make a contribution to life. There's a saying that the meaning of life isn't found, it's made. You create your own meaning out of life. If you're writing a book, especially an academic book, you're hoping to cast new light on issues that haven't been dealt with adequately before. The hope is that your discussion will add positively to the further discussion in the hopes of eventually reaching clarity in some way. That's meaningful, you feel like you've done something that's been helpful.”

***Choral Repertoire* by Dennis Shrock (2009)**

To write a one-volume book that encompasses the entirety of the Western choral canon is a daunting task indeed. Dennis Shrock's *Choral Repertoire* makes an admirable attempt; this book is a reference that should be on the shelf of every choral conductor. It contains information on five hundred composers and five thousand choral works. Dennis Shrock served as choral director and taught choral literature at several universities, most notably the University of Oklahoma. To enhance the usefulness of this text, Oxford University Press recently released an anthology called *Choral Scores*, edited by Dr. Shrock, intended as a companion to *Choral Repertoire*.¹⁰⁷ As the old Norton Anthology already includes most of the “war horses,” the *Choral Scores* contains some of the works not readily available elsewhere. Regarding the anthology, Shrock says, “One of the most significant aspects about this book, I think, is the

¹⁰⁷ Dennis Shrock, *Choral Scores* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

scholarship of the scores itself. So whether it's the B Minor Mass, or Brahms Requiem that includes his own markings from his own conducting score, it's just the most scholarly up-to-date edition of the music. Though it's not a performing edition...the conductor can see exactly what the composer wrote without any editorial innovations. For the Renaissance, it included text underlay and *musica ficta*, and for the Baroque repertoire it included standard ornamentation...although these were editorial and are clearly marked to be editorial.” The textbook and anthology together provide a rich resource for students of choral literature.

Shrock organizes *Choral Repertoire* first by era then by country. The Medieval Era receives the lightest treatment at only fourteen pages, but the author establishes the format to be followed throughout the book. A description of the era creates the context for the composers whose entries follow. In the remaining chapters, the overview of the era is followed by a description of the choral scene in each individual country. The introductions to each geographical area include lists of the least important composers in prose. Entries of the more significant and major composers follow in chronological order by birth year, each receiving their own section heading (with birth and death years). These composers each get their own biographical entry, usually including their birthplace, musical training (noting teachers and pupils), places of employment, where they lived and travelled, and information about their musical oeuvre. Each entry lists the composer's musical works in terms of how many of each genre or form they wrote. For instance, “Binchois composed thirty-four mass movements, twenty-eight motets, six Magnificats, one Te Deum, forty-nine rondeaux, and eight ballades.”¹⁰⁸ The author then goes on to describe in more detail the stylistic features of their most prominent works. The most important composers receive extended prose about their life and work, and their

¹⁰⁸ Dennis Shrock, *Choral Repertoire* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 24.

entries end with lists of their works, including catalogue numbers, year of composition, voicing, instrumentation, performance length in minutes and sometimes additional commentary. Some larger works receive more complete annotation, such as Charpentier's and Handel's oratorios. These repertoire lists are not necessarily comprehensive. Shrock states in the Preface that the selections are meant to be representative, and that he guided decisions on what to include based on "their being acknowledged as artistically superior works of art, on their presence in programs of credited ensembles, and on their existence in scholarly editions."¹⁰⁹ He arranges them either by familiarity (from most familiar to least), by date, or alphabetically, depending on what he thinks is most helpful to the reader. Much of what guides the repertoire selection is simply the author's lifetime of encountering the repertoire. The book contains no printed music examples which provides more room to include as many composers as possible. It also leaves room to expand for a second edition that will likely have about a dozen more composers who have made an impact in recent years.¹¹⁰

A glossary of terms idiomatic to historical choral literature helps those unfamiliar with some of the terminology. The Composer Index impresses with not only each composer's primary entry, but also with page numbers where they are mentioned in entries of other composers or eras (whose names are shown in parenthesis). This detailed approach to indexing helps the reader quickly draw connections from the work of one composer to another. Shrock includes zero citations. Nor does he include a bibliography or any suggestions for further reading. He considers all this information to be common knowledge. Others might contend that people do not commonly know about Gottfried August Homilius, or that his oratorio *Ein Lämmlein geht und trägt die Schuld* is a one-hundred-minute work scored for SATB solos, SATB chorus, two flutes,

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., v.

¹¹⁰ Dennis Shrock, phone interview by the author, April 15, 2016.

two oboes, two bassoons, strings, and basso continuo. In his interview, Shrock explains his methodology. He says the synopsis reviews of each era (e.g. the Protestant Reformation) he wrote based off his own knowledge. Composer dates and biographies come from sources like the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* which he believes do not need to be cited.

Strimple explains further:

“When it comes to, ‘This composer wrote so many of this, and so many of that,’ it was just me counting, and I wanted to count because I didn’t want to rely on somebody else, and I couldn’t because a lot of that information is outdated. Take, for instance, Haydn masses: forever and ever, and ever, everybody says Haydn wrote twelve masses, six early, six late—well, no. He wrote fourteen masses; there were eight early ones and six later ones. It’s not a matter of citing other information, it’s just either general information, or me, and then I’d be citing myself, which would be pretty silly.”

To be accurate, the title might instead have been “Choral Repertoire of the Western Classical Canon.” The author does not attempt to include music from outside the European-American tradition. Composers from South America appear only in the sections on “Spain and the New World” in both the Renaissance and Baroque era chapters, but they were essentially writing in the same idiom as their colleagues in continental Europe. Shrock does not discuss choral “art music” that has emerged from South America, Africa, or Asia in the last century. Nevertheless, the breadth and depth of Shrock’s *Choral Repertoire* make it an important, necessary, and informative book for graduate choral literature courses.

Part of Shrock’s motivation for writing the book came out of necessity. He says, “It’s something that I needed for my programming, and I probably am the person who uses it most.”

Another motivation was to give young people a framework for the choral canon and an ability to navigate the vastness of the repertoire. Unlike the books above, the publisher of *Choral Repertoire* intended for it to be used by professionals more than the general public. Nevertheless, they find that choral enthusiasts purchase the book too. Shrock explains the choral enthusiast as “the person who hears something on the radio, or goes to some program, and likes something and wants to know more about the composer, or this composer, Mozart, ‘Oh, I love The Requiem, I just heard it. What else did Mozart write?’ That has been a considerable use. I'm not surprised, but I'm gratified and happy that that has been the case.”

Shrock believes the most exciting thing about writing books is what he learns in the process. “It is exciting beyond belief. I'm learning while I'm helping other people learn too.” He also feels a responsibility as conductor and a scholar to share what he learns. “We need to further the choral art and we need to disseminate the information as widespread as we can. I say to...young people, ‘write!’ Find something that's interesting and put it out there.”

***The Cambridge Companion to Choral Music* by André de Quadros (2012)**

The *Cambridge Companion to Choral Music* is a unique collection of essays by a wide array of choral professionals. A conductor and ethnomusicologist from Boston University, André de Quadros, organizes the chapters, each by a different author or authors, into three parts. Part One is a “choral literature textbook” in the traditional sense in that it traces the historical development of the Western choral tradition. Part Two explores the history and current scene of choral music across the globe. Part III is a practically-oriented section for today’s choral conductors. In his introductory chapter, de Quadros explains his perspective on the global nature of choral music today. He describes his rationale for the format of the book in this way: it is not

an encyclopedia, but instead attempts to show how the Western choral ensemble got to where it is today, both in the West and around the globe. In addition, he hopes the *Companion* will “honor choral activity and contribute to its advancement” by including the chapters on pedagogy.¹¹¹ Comprehensive endnotes contained in the back of the book provide a plethora of source citations and additional commentary. A selected bibliography provides plenty of additional resources for further reading and research.

Whereas other books about choral literature approach the material through the lens of either composers or genres, Part One of the *Cambridge Companion* reviews the history and development of choral literature by tracing the history of choral ensembles themselves. In this way, the reader encounters the genesis of polyphony by learning about who sang this early music, and how. The reader discovers the history of early notation, clefs, and transposition as motivated by the vocal ranges of the available singers in that time. A discussion of female singers introduces the music and historical context of Vivaldi. In Chester Alwes’ beautifully-written chapter on nineteenth-century choral music, a narrative of socio-political movements frames the rise of amateur singing. This is how the reader arrives at the repertoire written for both the large choral societies and the part songs for small gatherings. In Chapter Four, Nick Strimple describes the diverse approaches to composition in the first part of the twentieth century, and he reflects on the impact of the world wars (with a fascinating summary of music written in the shadow of the Holocaust). Then he concludes by lamenting the dearth of originality in music at the end of the century. This chapter is essentially a condensed version of Strimple’s book on twentieth-century choral music reviewed above. Part One of the book concludes with a chapter entitled “The nature of chorus,” wherein Paul Hillier explores the

¹¹¹ De Quadros, *The Cambridge Companion*, 2.

meaning of choral singing. He traces the origins of choral singing from ancient Greece, through the opera theater, the school playground, and ultimately the concert hall of today. Along the way he reflects on the nature of choral singing as musical play, and the purpose of being in community with others.

Part Two consists of nine chapters, each a description of choral music from different parts of the world. Like Chapter Two, which described the history of choirs from a Euro-centric view, each of these chapters attempts to show the history of choral singing from the viewpoint of their respective culture. This proves challenging in Africa, which has virtually no pre-colonial documentation of any kind. They all paint a picture of the choral landscape of today, including children's choirs, academic, religious, and professional choirs. In some cultures, where group singing/ chanting is a central part of their communities, the authors try to focus just on the choral music scene in the western art music sense, as this volume does not attempt an ethnomusicological survey. In fact, most of the histories begin with the introduction of hymns and other music brought to these nations by western Christian missionaries and the blending of these important styles with indigenous traditions. Each chapter addresses the status of professional organizations, if they exist, or the difficulties in establishing a choral singing community in places with religious restrictions or political turmoil. Students of choral literature will find the lists of composers and choirs from each region of the globe to be most interesting for future research and concert programming.

Finally, Part Three includes six chapters intended for today's practicing choral directors. Franciso Núñez writes about his Young Peoples Chorus of New York City as an exemplar of multiculturalism. Chapter sixteen presents a case for exploring different kinds of vocalism to suit multicultural repertoire, while in Chapter Seventeen Doreen Rao reflects on the meaning of

“authenticity.” After these three chapters with a global viewpoint, the final three return to the world of Western Art Music and the topics of podium leadership, rehearsal planning, and rehearsal techniques.

After reading the Cambridge Companion to Choral Music, one cannot help but marvel at the globalization of choral music today. In addition to the reports from different parts of the world, the chapters on authenticity and the nature of chorus intensify the reader’s wonderment of what it is to be in ensemble with others. As a text book for choral literature courses, Part One certainly contributes a rich perspective on the development of the genre. For the choral literature course sequence at University F (which emphasizes world musics), part two of this book makes it a good fit for their course of study. It lacks, however, the comprehensiveness of the Alwes, Shrock or Strimple books reviewed in this chapter. For that reason, those studying the Western choral canon will find the Cambridge Companion to be most suitable as a supplementary, but valuable, resource.

***A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 1* by Chester L. Alwes (2015)**

***A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 2* by Chester L. Alwes (2016)**

From time to time a brand-new book becomes an instant classic. The two volumes of *A History of Western Choral Music* by Chester L. Alwes will undoubtedly fill that role as they find a place in university libraries nationwide and become required reading for university students. The books are largely the output in book form of the author’s career teaching and thinking about choral literature.¹¹² Dr. Alwes, Professor Emeritus of Choral Music and Music Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, intends for the books in part to help meet the

¹¹² Chester Alwes, interview by the author, Mahomet, IL, May 21, 2016.

“challenge of effecting a synthesis between academic knowledge and performance.”¹¹³ Thus *A History of Western Choral Music* is a valuable tool for all practicing choral conductors. Most especially, professors and students of graduate choral literature will surely value this engaging narrative and analysis of historical choral music from the Middle Ages to contemporary minimalism.

Alwes organizes the information by genre, style period, or country of origin, depending on the topic. The chapter organization, at least until the twentieth century, is not unlike the old Penguin book edited by Arthur Jacobs. In *Volume 1*, he divides Renaissance music of the Continent into sacred and secular genres. However, Renaissance music of England is covered in a separate chapter due to its unique development. The Baroque era is organized by nationality, beginning with Italy and ending once again in England before circling back to Germany with a chapter dedicated solely to J.S. Bach. In a valuable chapter on the French Baroque period, the author encourages performance of this often-overlooked genre of music, citing recent availability of modern performance editions. The 11th chapter is a fascinating essay on the difficulties of defining the Classical era. Alwes demonstrates the overlap of style periods in the eighteenth century (noting that beginning and ending dates depend on geography) while drawing a philosophical connection from the Romantic period back to the Baroque. Through that lens, the final chapters of *Volume 1* cover the symphonic masses, requiem masses, and sacred music of both the Classical and Romantic periods.

Volume 2 continues with one chapter each on the four remaining genres found in both the Classical and Romantic periods: oratorio, part song, dramatic music, and the choral symphony. In each of the following chapters Alwes examines a different “-ism” that musicologists use to

¹¹³ Alwes, *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 1*, Preface.

describe and categorize music as we move from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century: French impressionism, serialism, nationalism, and neoclassicism. Next, in the 10th chapter he examines post-war avant-garde music, and in chapters ten through twelve he organizes composers and their music by geography: the European periphery, America, and the British Isles. The final chapter, entitled “The New Simplicities,” examines aleatoricism and minimalism.

Volume 1 begins with an overview of medieval modality and Catholic liturgy, then proceeds to detail the metrical organization of isorhythmic motets. Alwes notes that the modal, metrical, and liturgical legacy of this early music continues to influence music across style periods. These characteristics reappear in the analysis of music throughout both volumes. In addition, he addresses aspects of form, texture, text setting (especially as it pertains to poetic meter), and, in the twentieth century, questions of tonality and atonality. Short musical excerpts illustrate the compositional architecture discussed in the text, but Dr. Alwes suggests that readers gain access to scores. Several of the book’s endnotes contain suggestions for scholarly editions. Many of the works discussed are already included in popular anthologies such as Ray Robinson’s *Choral Music: A Norton Historical Anthology* or Dennis Shrock’s recently published *Choral Scores*. Readers can access most other scores in the Petrucci Music Library online (www.imslp.org).

To read the books from beginning to end allows the reader to trace stylistic trends and developments through history. Those wishing to go directly to a chapter on a specific topic will also be satisfied with the author’s consistent pattern that puts music in context, covers the topic with clarity, and finishes with a succinct yet thorough summary. Throughout both volumes,

major composers receive only the necessary biographical treatment to give context for their music. Stylistic analysis of important representative works receives primary attention.

Detailed analyses of each genre's seminal works give valuable insight into important compositions while providing a model for conductors to examine different scores from the same era. In his interview, Alwes explains, "I'm trying to give you a variety of approaches to the stuff just like I do in the classes that I teach. No one method works for everything."¹¹⁴ Minor composers receive only passing mention, but lists of lesser-known names offer a great resource for those who want to explore a genre more fully. In this way, Alwes has provided a unique contribution to our choral field by resisting the compulsion to create a compendium—we already have that resource available in the Shrock text. Rather, Alwes has organized the content according to his own esteemed priorities. He admits that he never actually covers everything in his book when teaching choral literature courses due to limitations on time. The chapter on dramatic music, for example, consists of material he has never taught in class but felt obligated to include in the book. He includes a discussion of the avant-garde composers not because he expects many people to perform that music, but because of how it affects and provides context for more conservative music written in its wake.

The endnotes at the back of both volumes provide citations, and many also offer additional explanation of the topic at hand or refer interested readers to other sources with greater depth. Some of these sources, though perhaps decades old, are the definitive articles on a given composer or genre; others refer to more recent research.

A History of Western Choral Music, Volumes 1 and 2 by Chester L. Alwes is a welcome addition to the literature on choral music. Choral conductors will appreciate these books for their

¹¹⁴ Chester Alwes, interview by the author, Mahomet, IL, May 21, 2016.

clear narrative and methods of analysis whether they use it as a textbook, a reference work, or a guide to programming. These two volumes would be an outstanding textbook for a graduate choral literature course. Alwes says, “It's of it's own kind. There's nothing else like it. It attempts to do what it does for better or for worse.... It is my life. It is what I did for 30 years. It is the residuum of those classes and what I learned. I learned an awful lot. I didn't know all that when I started and [through] the act of teaching and advising and research...you learn a lot.”

Choral Literature Text Book and Author Interview Summary

The books used by each of the graduate choral literature programs discussed in the previous chapter (see Table 3) fit well with their curriculum. Two schools use none of the above. At University C, they spend much of their time on analysis of major works, and none of these books share that same focus. It makes sense that they would not use of these books and instead read from musicology texts. At University E, the professor's lecture notes, in lieu of a textbook, provide overviews of stylistic development, and his fast-paced lecture style works well to move quickly enough through the subject matter to cover it all in two semesters. The other four schools do use one or more of these books. The inclusion of a more diverse repertoire in the Strimple book and the *Cambridge Companion* make them a good fit for University F and their unique curriculum structure (Pacific Rim). At University B where a goal is breadth of exposure, use of the Shrock books and the Strimple allow the students access to a large body of repertoire. Shrock's *Choral Repertoire* organizes by country, which matches the subject matter organization of University A. The structure of the Alwes books allow Professor D to cater the course to the strengths of the current students, as each chapter is both self-sufficient on its own while also fitting into a broader narrative of stylistic development. Professor D could handpick the chapters

most needed for each cohort of students. They also match Professor D's strategy of choosing exemplars of the repertoire for analysis in hopes that students can then apply the same approaches to similar pieces. Professor A believes in the same strategy, so if University A were to adopt the Alwes books too, it might prove to be a good fit. Every professor of graduate choral literature must choose the textbooks and/ or course materials that align with their curricular goals.

For those that would consider writing a book of their own in the future, the three esteemed authors interviewed for this study offer some advice. Chester Alwes cautions us to think long and hard before taking on such a big project: "What you have to know is just amazing, or you have to do an awful lot of work." Nick Strimple notes that you must be willing to be edited and not take it personally. He says "you do what is suggested and then see if it isn't better." Dennis Shrock encourages anyone interested in writing to "take the plunge." He believes we have a responsibility to transmit knowledge to those that come after us. Shrock also finds that through writing one can learn so much information and how it all relates. Alwes concurs that writing helps to fill gaps in the author's knowledge base. Strimple notes that "there's also a financial benefit if the book is popular, but I don't know of anybody that writes academic books thinking of financial gain. People do it because they want to add to the body of knowledge about their field." Almost three decades passed between the publication of Ulrich's *A Survey of Choral Music* in 1973 and Strimple's *Choral Music in the Twentieth Century* in 2002. Hopefully the next author of a choral literature book will not make us wait that long, and she will have the perspective to affectively describe the choral music of the first decades of the twenty-first century.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION

In this study, several themes emerged from professor and author interviews and observations. They will be discussed below. In addition, the most recent national conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization (NCCO) featured a panel discussion on the teaching of choral literature.¹¹⁵ The insights and commentary from those esteemed panelists will be included in this discussion. They include Dr. Sharon Paul (University of Oregon), Dr. Edward Maclary (University of Maryland), Dr. David Rayl (Michigan State University), and Dr. Giselle Wyers (University of Washington). The themes will be grouped into two categories: curriculum-related, and pedagogy-related.

CURRICULUM-RELATED THEMES

Breadth vs. Depth

The overarching consideration in curriculum design is *breadth vs. depth*. What should one include in the study of choral literature? The professors and authors interviewed for this study regularly reference the vastness of the choral repertoire. When it is impossible to cover every piece of music and every aspect of historical context, how does one choose what to include in a study of choral literature? Some universities coordinate the entire graduate conducting

¹¹⁵ Sharon Paul, Edward Maclary, David Rayl, Giselle Wyers, “Teaching Choral Literature at the Graduate Level” (Panel Discussion at the Sixth National Conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, Portland, OR, November 14, 2015).

curriculum so that certain topics can be covered in tandem with the choral literature class. For example, issues related to performance practice might be addressed in conducting lessons. Rehearsal strategies can be developed in conducting lab or podium time with university ensembles. In the case of the University of Oregon, they host the Oregon Bach Festival where students gain a tremendous amount of experience with performance practice.

Programming choices for university choral ensembles also provide an educational opportunity. Collegiate choral directors might use programming to teach literature. Giselle Wyers, in the NCCO panel discussion, explains, "I think everybody teaches choral literature all the time in terms of the repertoire that we're singing." In rehearsal, students will learn about the repertoire selection itself, its place on the continuum of stylistic development, and about issues of performance practice. This might be one of the most effective ways to provide depth; furthermore, the singers who go on to be choral conductors themselves will be highly likely to program that same piece in the future.¹¹⁶ The infusion of choral literature study into ensemble rehearsals might be an especially good way to see knowledge and understanding internalized and put into practice.

Sharon Paul spoke in the NCCO panel discussion about how she teaches choral literature in a master's program and therefore is interested more in breadth than the depth one might try to achieve in a doctoral program. She gives very creative, open-ended assignments to expose her students to broad swaths of a given genre. When studying the English madrigal, for instance, her students will read about the English madrigal, get together and sing English madrigals, and then present to the class a sales-pitch using English madrigals in the advertising campaign. She apparently sees a lot of ads for love potions and dating services! To select just the right songs,

¹¹⁶ Diddle, "Repertoire Selection Practices," 76.

students look at a lot of madrigals to choose the right ones for their advertising campaign. She sometimes also requires that they complete assignments like this without the use of technology, meaning they must go to the library and peruse collected works. Through this assignment, students encounter so much music that they begin to get a broad overview of the genre.

Course Structure (Surveys vs. Special Topics)

Overall course structure (surveys vs. special topics) at each university plays a large part in how the professors navigate the issue of breadth vs. depth. Survey courses naturally offer more breadth than depth. Quickly moving from one topic to the next, professors in survey courses cover a lot of material. University A's course structure consists of four survey courses, and more in-depth study comes from students writing style analysis papers and preparing presentations for the doctoral seminar. University F's unique course design (two survey semesters, one semester on music of the Pacific Rim and one on the Great Liturgies) allows students there to achieve a different kind of breadth (i.e. study of music from outside Europe and America). The Great Liturgies course also gives extra depth as students might cover, for example, certain works of Bach in their survey course, and then cover others in the Liturgies semester. University F provides a model for how professors could rethink the traditional organization of subject matter. If one accepts, like some in the musicology pedagogy field, that grand narratives, style periods, and "the canon" are all just constructs, then one becomes free to be creative and synthesize materials in new ways. Special topics courses naturally provide leeway for this kind of creative thinking, but even the structure of surveys could be reexamined. Rather than starting at the beginning of a style period and working forward chronologically, some in the musicology field start at the end and work backwards. For example, in a choral

literature class, students could begin with a twentieth-century neo-classical work and trace its influences back by looking at the use of fugue in the Nineteenth Century (e.g. Brahms), Eighteenth Century (Mozart, then Handel and Bach), then back to the use of imitative counterpoint in the Renaissance. In his interview, Chester Alwes notes that, “history is never written using straight lines. When we categorize stuff, we tend to look at these neat packages, and when something doesn't conform we just kick it to the side of the curb-- that misses the point!”¹¹⁷

Universities B and C both offer three semester surveys for breadth, and then provide depth in the fourth semester through a special topic or score study course. University E also offers a special topics semester as an elective. In score study semesters, professors typically select a small number of major works for students to analyze in greater depth. In special topics courses, students do a “deep dive” into a certain topic or genre (e.g. the motet, the use of parody). Their study remains focused on that narrow topic as they trace its appearance through history. In his interview, Dennis Shrock reminisced about a great benefit of this approach: how much he learned as a professor when researching these hyper-focused topics alongside his graduate students.¹¹⁸ According to Chester Alwes, “when you teach a course, you tailor the contents to the time that you have and the students you have.”¹¹⁹

Organization of Subject Matter

Within a survey course, one decision a professor makes is how to organize the subject matter. Should the repertoire be organized chronologically, or by genre, composer, or country of

¹¹⁷ Chester Alwes, interview by the author, Mahomet, IL, May 21, 2016.

¹¹⁸ Dennis Shrock, phone interview by the author, April 15, 2016.

¹¹⁹ Chester Alwes, interview by the author, Mahomet, IL, May 21, 2016.

origin? It depends on the style period, though even how to define the beginning or end of a style period proves to be problematic. The organization of choral literature textbooks provides a guide for how one might organize the material, and professors might want to choose the books that align with their priorities. For some eras, it makes sense to organize by geography to see the influence of one region on another. In the modern era, grand linear narratives break down into several developmental threads (the “-isms”). At other times, professors and book authors organize around individual composers (e.g. Bach and Handel, Mozart and Haydn). Others go genre by genre, tracing each musical form (e.g. motet, mass, oratorio) chronologically from its origins to the modern era. Whatever the organization strategy, professors and students benefit from establishing a conceptual framework on which individual composers and their works can be contextualized.

Major Works vs. Small-Scale Works

Choral literature professors must also decide whether to spend class time on major works or small-scale practical works. Approaches may differ if working with master’s students as opposed to doctoral students. Master’s students might need more focus on pragmatic repertoire they will be able to program upon graduation, whereas doctoral students might benefit more from exposure to larger works. David Rayl explained at the NCCO panel discussion that he focuses a little bit more on smaller works because the choral literature classes on Michigan State University combine master’s and doctoral students. His doctoral students focus on larger works in a separate seminar.

The quintessential masterwork mentioned time and again in interviews with professors and book authors was Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis*. They believe studying a work of this caliber

gives students analytical tools they can apply to other repertoire. Also, they believe studying the Beethoven is just “worth it” even if the students are not likely to ever conduct it. Likewise, they claim that studying the major works of each period enables students to apply what they learn to the smaller pieces from the same time. Dr. Maclary in the NCCO panel discussion, said that “knowing the B minor mass-- it’s just a life obligation!” He also acknowledges that the time spent on large works is time that cannot be dedicated to a more pragmatic set of skills or piece of literature that that student might do. He says, “Pieces do fall off the syllabus. You just cannot do it all no matter how you try and shape it.”

On the other hand, some professors have adopted the opposite approach. They spend class time on smaller works in the belief that students can apply the same analytical skills to the major works. Professor D, for example, would rather spend time on Bach cantatas than on the Passions; he believes if you understand cantatas then you can transfer that understanding to the larger works. Dr. Wyers uses a blended approach where she pairs a large work and small work of each master composer. For Benjamin Britten, for instance, she might do the *Flower Songs* and then the *War Requiem*. In any case, whether studying large works or small, all professors talk about the importance of being able to take the analytical skills students develop in one setting and apply them broadly to other works of the same style period.

More Repertoire vs. Greater Depth

An issue related to the broad question of “breadth vs. depth,” professors must decide for each semester whether to cover more repertoire or fewer pieces in greater depth. As the amount of available repertoire continues to expand, both from newly composed music and newly discovered music from the past, how to decide what goes into a choral literature course becomes

even more difficult. When this newly discovered music includes previously unknown female composers, or composers from outside the western tradition, this could lead to new narratives about the linear development of style. Several professors indicate that the longer they teach, the less they try to cover. The trend seems to be for choral literature courses not to cover as many pieces as possible, but instead to examine representative works that exemplify each genre. Students can then independently apply what they learn to other pieces as they encounter them.

To ensure the survey course remains comprehensive, professors can assign projects that guide students through large amounts of repertoire. At University B, for example, students create a repertoire database, a listening journal, and an annotated bibliography. Through these assignments, completed independently outside of class time, students encounter large amounts of repertoire, do a lot of listening, and peruse dozens of library books related to choral literature. In only two years, students cannot possibly learn the entire canon of western choral music, but a well-designed survey can pique student curiosity and provide a scaffolding so that they will continue to build on the foundation they gained in graduate school. Dr. Paul describes the scaffold approach with a metaphor of the human body: she gives students a skeleton, and then they spend the following years adding the muscle and flesh.

At the NCCO panel discussion, the panelists responded to a question of how much they include women composers in their choral literature coursework. They mentioned several names of women composers, including Lili Boulanger, Meredith Monk, and Ethel Smyth, though it was acknowledged that women composers often receive mention as an afterthought or in relation to a male counterpart (e.g. Mendelssohn, and his sister Fannie Hensel). The difficulty, Dr. Wyers notes, arises because “women composers are rising and finding equality quite late in comparison to men.” Dr. Maclary has made efforts to include more women composers but claims to not do it

very well because he does not know the music as much. Dr. Rayl has been inspired by his students to talk more about women composers. He has a student writing about seventeenth-century Italian nun composers, and he is going to start incorporating them into his class. In his interview about his book, Dennis Shrock explains “I'm conscious of this [issue of including women composers]. I'm actually committed to it, and I have been in terms of programming. In the *Choral Repertoire* book, Oxford wanted to make sure that I included a fair number of women, and I did the best I could with Lili Boulanger, Amy Beach, and Thea Musgrave; but I didn't do it just to balance the scales. It had to be the standard repertoire first and foremost.”¹²⁰ The inclusion of women composers appears to be growing, if slowly, but the field of choral literature needs to make more progress in this area.

Writing as an Instructional Goal

As part of the overall choral literature course sequence, some choral literature professors set quality academic writing as an instructional goal. Others feel they do not have time to help students with the mechanics of writing because they need to focus on teaching the subject matter. To help alleviate some of the work load of grading and giving feedback, Professor A now asks students to review each other's writing first before turning in their papers. He finds that students learn to make their own writing better when they see the strengths and weaknesses in the writing of others. Perhaps a holistic methodology for teaching writing would aid the other professors in integrating writing instruction into their coursework. That is, they could set an end goal (e.g. students will write a choral literature article suitable for publication), pinpoint sub-goals (activities) that would lead to that end goal, and then include those activities across the four-

¹²⁰ Dennis Shrock, phone interview by the author, April 15, 2016.

semester course sequence. In this way, students continuously improve their writing and make regular progress towards competence in academic writing.

PEDAGOGY-RELATED THEMES

In Chapter two, this author reviewed the ideas and practices of the emerging pedagogy movement in musicology. As courses in choral literature most closely relate to courses in musicology, choral literature professors who adopt the successful pedagogical strategies from the latter (or who already use them) could find it beneficial for student learning. The professors of this study already use many, but not all, of these practices. As chapter four reveals, professors of choral literature approach their teaching in many of the same ways they experienced themselves as a student, but several of those interviewed indicated an interest in exploring new ways of teaching, and they shared how their teaching has evolved over time. Dr. Wyers develops and changes syllabi each year based on what the students' needs are.¹²¹ Dr. Rayl from Michigan State University often innovates his teaching strategies based on what he learns from his students.¹²² For the current discussion, the approaches reviewed in chapter two have been distilled and aligned with the pedagogical strategies or issues that also emerged as themes in professor/ author interviews and observations.

¹²¹ Giselle Wyers, "Teaching Choral Literature at the Graduate Level" (panel discussion, Sixth National Conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, Portland, OR, November 14, 2015).

¹²² David Rayl, "Teaching Choral Literature at the Graduate Level" (panel discussion, Sixth National Conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, Portland, OR, November 14, 2015).

Teacher-Centered vs. Student-Centered

Professors of musicology and choral literature often discuss the teacher-centered vs. student-centered classroom. The professors in this study make efforts to engage students during class. Even those that utilize the traditional lecture approach, Universities E and F, emphasize a Socratic method of questioning to involve the students in class and check for understanding. University B's seminar involves group discussion where all students participate with enthusiasm. Professor A creates a student-centric classroom through small group discussion, questioning, and active listening assignments. Student-led group discussion features prominently at Universities C and D.

At the NCCO panel discussion, Ed Maclary noted how he also sees student-led group discussion as an assessment tool to see if the students understood their extensive reading assignments (he also has them take and turn in notes on the reading to ensure they are prepared for discussion). All universities surveyed assign student presentations, an inherently student-centered activity. Giselle Wyers at the University of Washington tries to make her choral literature class like a seminar, but because there is so much to cover she finds lecture to be a useful way to ensure there are no gaps. She explains a typical class session as one third lecture, one third student mini-presentation, and one third guided listening with scores. Sharon Paul at the University of Oregon did more lecturing in the past, but found that it was not interactive enough. She explains that "my students weren't really getting the music in their heads and their ears and their hands."¹²³ Dr. Paul's interest in cognitive neuroscience led her to find really interactive assignments like the English Madrigal assignment described above. As another

¹²³ Sharon Paul, et al. "Teaching Choral Literature at the Graduate Level" (panel discussion, Sixth National Conference of the National Collegiate Choral Organization, Portland, OR, November 14, 2015).

example, when studying oratorio, she talks about the oratorio, students read about the oratorio, and they listen to oratorio. Then for the interactive in-class assignment, students tell their life story through oratorio choruses. To do that requires that they listen and look at lots of different oratorio courses to choose the right ones for their presentation. She says the students can be very creative with visual aspects of the presentation, and at times the presentations can be very personal and touching. This connection of choral literature to affective response can be a powerful pathway for learning.

Praxis (Action Learning): Assignments and Assessments

The Praxis (Action Learning) methodology described in the emerging musicology pedagogy movement section of chapter two provides an excellent model for teachers of choral literature when planning *assignments and assessments*. Many of the assignments given to choral literature students to complete outside of class could be classified as “action learning.” Paper writing, when done for the purpose of improving writing, helps students develop a practical professional skill, especially for those that will need to publish in the future. Other types of “action learning” assignments observed in this study include the creation of Renaissance transcriptions/ editions, doing a structural analysis, programming for hypothetical choirs, planning an ecumenical service, a listening journal, annotated bibliography, and repertoire database. All these involve developing practical professional skills and/ or the production of resources the students will be able to utilize throughout their careers. Another aspect of Praxis is assessment based on what they can do rather than what they know. Professors B and E both include a type of exam activity where students apply what they know to an unknown score, either arguing why it is not by certain composer or by pinpointing its epoch and geographic

origin based on the musical features in the score they associate with certain style periods. One could say that an oral exam (as opposed to a written exam) is more about “doing” than “knowing” in that the students must be able to articulate what they have learned, a professional skill that will serve them well as college faculty members. Some say these types of skills are more important than knowledge. Several of those interviewed espouse oral exams as affective assessment tools because one can find out what the student knows, not just what they do *not* know. On the other hand, some professors believe short answer test questions have their place; there are some things you just need to know. Aside from the examples above, the participants of this study tend not to design exams with Praxis as a guiding principal.

The NCCO panel discussion, on the other hand, revealed several pedagogical strategies that involve action learning. To include contemporary octavos in choral literature, Dr. Maclary hands each student a pile of new octavos. Each week he asks students to choose the five best pieces, teach them to the class, and trade piles for the next week. They have a lively discussion about the merits of the music and they all learn together. Dr. Wyers shared an activity she did with her students where students divided into two groups and debated the question of whether to program the Haydn *Seasons* or the Haydn *Creation* at a hypothetical large college. Dr. Paul, in addition to the creative repertoire hunting activities described above, creates role play scenarios. Students recreate a dinner between two people that would never meet. For example, they might assume the roles of Monteverdi and Stravinsky and talk about text.¹²⁴ This kind of role playing is a commonly accepted practice in history (non-music) pedagogy.

¹²⁴ Sharon Paul, et al. “Teaching Choral Literature” (NCCO Panel Discussion).

Transmission of Information

As discussed in chapter two, transmission of information from teacher to student does not necessarily need to take place during class time. In fact, most information is already available online. If instructors use online platforms to deliver information, then class time can be spent applying this knowledge. This is commonly known as the “flipped classroom” model. Reading assignments to be completed outside of class function in this way. For example, the activity with which Professor A began the observed class (students listened to three pieces and engaged in discussion on each) provided an opportunity for students to apply what they learned from their reading assignments. Aside from reading assignments and lecture notes, the professors surveyed in this study typically transmit most information during class. Perhaps this is an area where choral literature professors might consider developing new strategies. For example, instead of a lecture being presented live in class, the lecture could be recorded and distributed digitally. Then class time can be spent questioning, discussing, and in student-centered activity. Similarly, listening assignments just for exposure or to gain familiarity (i.e. to prepare for a “drop the needle” test) could take place outside of class, while listening to recordings in class can be an active exercise guided purposefully by the professor.

Additionally, the information to be transmitted outside of class does not need to be strictly factual. Flipped classroom strategies can also be used to encourage group discussion and exchange of ideas. Sharon Paul has found a team journal to be an affective exercise. For example, while studying the reception history of the Brahms *Requiem*, Dr. Paul places a prompt, like George Bernard Shaw's scathing review, in the beginning of the journal, then the first person to get to the journal responds to that prompt. Then the next people that get to the journal respond to the prompt and to the other writing in the journal. After everyone contributes to the discussion,

the journal provides a kind of in-depth overview of the work. This activity can be done with an old-fashioned notebook in the library or via an online platform. That kind of deep discussion happening outside of class time is very valuable because class time is so limited.

Cross-Disciplinary Assignments

Some in the field of music history pedagogy suggest that cross-disciplinary assignments enhance learning. The choral literature courses at University C certainly include some Music Theory work in their structural analysis assignments, and University D includes some work on Music Theory, especially as it pertains to medieval modes. Aside from incorporating Music Theory, some of the universities surveyed coordinate the graduate choral literature curriculum with the concurrent conducting class or lessons. One interesting movement in music history pedagogy seeks to reintegrate emotion in listening and responding to music, using affective responses as a scaffold for learning. Choral literature professors in this study encourage emotional response when listening simply by modeling their enthusiasm for the music. Perhaps by more purposefully directing student response to the affective realm and tying it to, say, harmonic structure (e.g. “Listen to how this composer approaches the cadence. What is happening harmonically here? What kind of emotional impact could that have on you or an audience?”), professors can help students internalize the repertoire more deeply.

Discipline-Specific Pedagogy

Instruction in graduate choral literature pedagogy did not emerge as a theme in this study. Exposure to discipline-specific pedagogy might help graduate students prepare for a career in academia. One way that graduate students at the universities in this study do get practice with

teaching choral literature is through student presentations and student-led discussion. Though professors described these activities in terms of student learning, these student-driven classes also function as practice for college teaching. Dr. Wyers, in contrast, designs student presentation assignments with the explicit goal of helping students to become better lecturers. She gives them strict time limits that force them to work on pacing and prioritizing. She encourages students to organize their lecture using presentation software like PowerPoint in which the sound files and the visual files can be integrated in one place. These student lecture projects occur in the middle of the semester so that they can lead to the students' final papers. Dr. Wyers believes strongly in the importance of scholarly writing, and takes an active role in editing student work to improve their writing. Just like how professors could think holistically about the teaching of writing, universities that infuse pedagogical instruction in the choral literature course sequence might prepare students (future faculty members) well for their careers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The aim of this study was to describe the structure and content of graduate choral literature curricula and determine current approaches to choral literature pedagogy. In addition, a discussion of choral literature textbooks might help professors select the most fitting literature for the courses they teach. Furthermore, the way the book authors organize and sequence the material offers yet another model for how to organize the subject matter of a choral literature course. Any choral music educators might use these findings to enhance the way their students learn about choral literature, whether in a choral ensemble, choral methods course, or choral

conducting class setting. The primary aim is for those who teach graduate choral literature to discover in the findings ways they could innovate their own courses.

This paper is one of the first attempts at filling the void of literature on the topic of graduate choral literature curriculum and pedagogy. As such, it represents only the beginning of much inquiry to be done. Because this study does not consist of a broad survey of all graduate choral literature curricula, it does not reflect what commonly is incorporated in all graduate choral literature sequences across the country. Instead the results are shared as an example for other choral professors in hopes that they will find exceptional aspects of these models to transfer to their own settings. Recommendations for further study include a nationwide, comprehensive survey of graduate choral literature curricula and pedagogy. In addition, many other questions remain to be explored:

How can graduate choral literature courses better integrate music composed by more diverse populations, including women, American minorities and music from non-western cultures around the world? The African-American Spiritual, for instance, plays a prominent role on concert stages today but receives nothing but a passing mention in the programs surveyed in this study.

When it comes to the preserving and shaping of the choral canon, what role do graduate choral literature courses play? How do current college professors apply what they learned in graduate school to their current teaching? How do choral literature courses inform graduate's repertoire selection for their current college choir, school choir, church choir, community choir, festival choirs, or conducting class? How much choral literature do they include in their conducting sequence? How do choral literature courses inform the way they teach performance practice to their undergraduate students? If their choir includes music education majors, do they

overtly model methods for teaching historical repertoire? How does their choral literature experience in graduate school inform their current programming decisions? How do those decisions affect the future programming decisions of their students when they go on to become choral conductors themselves?

What do recent graduates of choral conducting programs feel were the best things about the curriculum? What do they wish they had learned more about? Are they currently engaged in new research or study to fill gaps in knowledge? What topics are they exploring? Do recent graduates of choral conducting programs feel proficient in performance practice of all the historical style periods? Do they feel confident in their ability to teach choral music from all historical style periods? Do they program "early" music? How much non-contemporary music do they program in a year?

When it comes to improving graduate choral literature pedagogy, what steps can we in the field take next? How are all collegiate faculty teaching choral literature? Are graduates who now teach on collegiate faculties teaching choral literature the same way they were taught? Or are there many innovative pedagogical strategies in practice around the country?

For those that have recently completed a graduate degree in choral conducting and are now teaching choral music in the secondary schools, how does their graduate choral literature experience inform their teaching and repertoire selection? With all these choral methods books that include basic information about historical style and lists of repertoire, does anyone use those repertoire lists for programming after graduation? In his interview, Nick Strimple posits that "American choral musicians get stuck in a rut that is created by their employment. High school teachers, for instance, really feel like they don't have any time to look at repertoire that they can't

use.”¹²⁵ The implication here is that busy practicing choral conductors stop expanding their knowledge of choral literature and only focus on music immediately applicable to their current conducting responsibilities. How can we as a profession help those school and church choir directors to continue to grow their knowledge of the vast choral repertoire and perhaps make discoveries or gain insights that are in fact applicable to their professional setting?

Though we now have several textbooks for graduate choral literature, they all focus exclusively on content. A textbook that focuses instead on graduate choral literature pedagogy might provide a needed complement to the existing publications. In addition to pedagogical strategies, a new textbook could also offer guidance on how to synthesize choral literature with related areas of study, like Conducting, Music Education, Music Theory, and Performance Practice.

In his interview, Chester Alwes says, “Oxford wanted me to...have a chapter about the last 50 years. I said, ‘No. This is not history. We’re too close to it. You can’t make assessment of history.’ In my own time, I’ve seen fads come and go. Some music as a teenager and in my 20s I just thought was slick stuff and just went over the moon about it, and now you’re lucky if you ever even hear a performance of that music.”¹²⁶ How will we make sense of the last fifty years? What new discoveries are still to be made about the past? What repertoire will be passed down to the next generations? Only time will tell. Choral literature professors will largely be responsible for the answers to these questions as they design graduate choral literature curricula and innovate pedagogical strategies to deliver this material to future generations of choral scholars.

¹²⁵ Nick Strimple, phone interview by the author, March 16, 2016.

¹²⁶ Chester Alwes, interview by the author, Mahomet, IL, May 21, 2016.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions for Professors of Choral Literature

1. How many courses are included in the graduate choral literature sequence at your school, and how is the subject matter divided and organized among the courses?
2. Given the time limitations inherent in a semester course, how do you choose what to include?
3. What do you want your students to know and be able to do when they finish their coursework in choral literature?
4. What is your background as a student of choral literature?
5. Does your experience as a student of choral literature inform the way you structure and teach the course today? If so, how?
6. What types of required reading do you include in each course?
7. How do you use class time? Describe a typical day in class.
8. What do you require of your students outside of class time?
9. How do you assess student learning?
10. Do you utilize technology for your graduate choral literature courses and, if so, how?

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions for Choral Literature Book Authors

1. What motivated you to write a book (or books)?
2. Who is your intended audience?
3. What is your background as a student and professor of choral literature, and how does that background inform your writing?
4. How did you decide on the organization of the subject matter and layout of the text (e.g. chapter order, notes, appendices)?
5. How do you decide what to include or not include in terms of depth vs. breadth?
6. How do you select primary and secondary sources?
7. Can you describe the editing process?
8. What did you learn through the process of writing the book?
9. What advice do you have for others interested in writing a book?

APPENDIX C

Choral Literature Textbooks Reviewed

Alwes, Chester. *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 1*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Alwes, Chester. *A History of Western Choral Music, Volume 2*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Quadros, André de. *The Cambridge Companion to Choral Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

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APPENDIX D
IRB Consent Form

Research Participant Information and Consent Form

EXPLANATION OF THE RESEARCH and WHAT YOU WILL DO:

You are being asked to participate in a research study entitled, “Graduate Choral Literature Curricula and Pedagogy.” The aim of this study is to determine what repertoire and information graduate choral literature courses include and how the instructors teach this material to their students. All choral music educators may use these findings to enhance the way their students learn about choral literature.

- Step 1- You will share with me the course syllabi and any other relevant documents for the choral literature courses offered at your university. You can send these documents to me via email or a link to a cloud-based storage folder.
- Step 2- We will conduct an interview in person or via Skype/ Facetime/ Phone. The interview will last less than 1 hour and will give us an opportunity to discuss how you design and teach graduate choral literature, and what philosophical or practical reasoning informed your design decisions. I will send you the questions in advance.
- Step 3- I will observe a choral literature class.
- Step 4- I will share the findings with you to make sure that what I have is accurate. You will have the opportunity to review the interview transcript to make sure your comments accurately reflect what you think.
- You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this research.

YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE, SAY NO, OR WITHDRAW:

Participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to say no. You may change your mind at any time and withdraw. You may choose not to answer specific questions or to stop participating at any time.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:

If you have concerns or questions about this study, please contact the researcher (Andrew Minear, Michigan State University College of Music, Music Building, 333 W. Circle Dr. East Lansing, MI 48824, minearan@msu.edu, 407-252-0134) or his supervising professor (Dr. David Rayl, Michigan State University College of Music, Music Building, 333 W. Circle Dr. East Lansing, MI 48824, rayld@msu.edu, 517-353-5340).

If you have questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University’s Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu or regular mail at Olds Hall, 408 West Circle Dr Rm 207, East Lansing, MI 48824.

DOCUMENTATION OF INFORMED CONSENT

By completing forwarding your classroom materials and completing the interview you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this research study.