

Take Part in Andrew's Schmidt's Dissertation Study!

Our director, Andrew Schmidt, has pursued his Ph.D. in music education at Georgia State University for the last two years. With your help, he will have data to complete his degree in the fall of 2024.

Participants in Summer Singers of Atlanta are invited to participate in Andrew's study investigating the effect of choral rehearsals on a singer's executive function. Executive function skills heavily influence job success, marital and relationship success, academic success, and public safety. It is often said that music makes you smarter, and research among instrumental musicians suggests there are cognitive benefits. More research is needed to clarify such benefits among choral singers, which is the focus of Andrew's work.

How Can I Participate?

If you are 18 or older, you can easily participate by simply agreeing to do so. Taking part in the study requires no additional travel or expense. You will participate in a few tests and surveys and take part in some specially designed rehearsal activities throughout the study. In total, your participation will require about three hours over 9 weeks. Consistent attendance is needed to collect the best data for this study, so those wishing to participate should only miss one rehearsal.

Finally, for the study to be possible, some participants will need to be available beginning at 6pm on Tuesdays rather than 7pm. Those who start at 6pm will end rehearsal early at 8:30pm rather than 9:30pm. Note: Yes! You can still participate if you're unavailable at 6pm.

What if I Don't Want to Participate?

You will have the full Summer Singer of Atlanta experience whether or not you choose to participate in the study. Suppose you sign up to participate, and things change in your schedule. In that case, you can freely and, without any fear of recourse, discontinue participating in the study. Summer Singers of Atlanta is, first and foremost, a place where friends and family come together to sing and partake in an amazing choral experience. Your voice and spirit are vital whether you're a part of the study or not.

Will Summer Singers Be Different This Year?

Andrew's research design will have little impact on the traditional SSA experience, but you may notice some differences. First, the study-participating singers will be assigned to two groups that rehearse together and separately each week. One group will begin rehearsing earlier and leave earlier than the other. Still, the entire chorus will rehearse together for most of the time. Second, you may notice extra attention given to vocal technique, or how we learn to sing. If you've worked with Andrew in the past, you already know what this might look like as he runs rehearsals a little like a voice lesson.

I Want to Participate, What Do I Need to Do?

If you choose to register online, there will be an extra box to click that lets us know you'd like to participate in the study. If you're registering by the paper form, there is a similar box to check on the registration sheet. You will then receive an email with an "informed consent form." Please read it carefully, sign it, and submit it electronically or bring it to rehearsal. Once you've returned the consent form, your study participation has begun!

What Will I Be Doing In the Study?

You will learn one of two vocal techniques designed to help you learn the concert music. Both groups will complete some online tests and surveys, watch videos, listen to recordings, try some activities, and have opportunities to ask questions and give feedback. A concluding survey will inquire about your experience as a participant. The "informed consent form" provides details about all the study procedures. ALL DATA WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL and will be destroyed within one year of its analysis. Your participation and name will remain completely anonymous.

Will I Get to Know the Results of the Study?

Absolutely. Time will be required to analyze and review the results, but Andrew will let SSA participants know as soon as they are ready. At the latest, this will occur in December 2024.