

JAZZ IMPROVISATION

MUAP 1125 & 3125 | SPRING 2023

Undergraduate Course Syllabus

In Jazz, improvisation isn't a matter of just making any ol' thing up. Jazz, like any language, has its own grammar and vocabulary. There's no right or wrong, just some choices that are better than others.

-Wynton Marsalis

Course Description

Materials and practices for improvisation or extemporaneous performance in the jazz idiom. Students will study basic jazz harmony through the practical use of scale-chord relationships, jazz notation, ear training, rhythmic concepts, jazz style, and articulation. In addition, to learning the theoretical elements, students will be exposed to and responsible for learning jazz standards. Each student will be required to improvise on the instrument of his/her choice.

This syllabus was created to provide you with an overview of the learning expectations for this course. You can find additional details about class assignments and course policies on the Canvas Course Syllabus page.

Spring 2023 Class Times

- All students enrolled will meet once weekly as a group. Time TBD.
- Students will also receive individual instruction throughout the semester.

DR. SARAH ROBERTS

My office is in the Cowan Fine Arts Center room 2216. You can reach me at sroberts@uttyler.edu or 903.566.7387.

In person and virtual appointments can be scheduled. Please email or call for an appointment. My door is always open, so please do not hesitate to contact me!



Course Learning Objectives

Jazz is America's music. This course pertains to the longstanding traditions of big band and large ensemble jazz performing.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

- 1. Demonstrate rudimentary understanding of basic jazz chord notation and its various scalar components.*
- 2. Demonstrate knowledge of jazz style and important historical aspects as they relate to the appropriate subject.*
- 3. Apply proper jazz style and interpretation into performance practice.*
- 4. Recognize and use the appropriate rhythmic patterns and articulations for any given jazz style.*
- 5. Combine aural, written, and cognitive skills acquired to formulate unique interpretations of improvisation and evaluate their success.*

Required Course Materials

- Your instrument in good working order
- All music provided in class
- A pencil
- iReal app downloaded on any device
- Ability to notate music (finale, sibelius, noteflight)
- A recording device/way to record video

Teaching Methods and Assignments to Achieve Learning Outcomes

- A. Assigned repertoire, technical studies, and pedagogical concepts will be taught.
- B. Performance experiences will be achieved in a myriad of performance opportunities.
- C. Students will have the opportunity to apply pedagogical and rehearsal techniques during student-led sectional rehearsals.
- D. Artist performances and recordings of assigned repertoire may be analyzed and evaluated as performance models.
- E. Master classes with guest instructors may be offered as pedagogical enhancements.
- F. Through active participation, students will discover about each work to be performed the following (but not limited to): composer information, analytical evaluation, notational considerations, individual performance challenges represented, recordings reviewed working with composers, or other sources consulted in preparation for the performance.

Supplementary Materials

Additional instructional materials will be provided for students on canvas. It is the students' responsibility to become familiar with the course canvas page and frequently check for updates throughout the week.



[Link to UT Tyler Spotify Playlist](#)



Daily Grades/Assignments

- A. Quality and Consistency of preparation
- B. Consistency of preparation
- C. Consistency in progress
- D. Attendance/Punctuality

% of total Grade

40%

Playing Exams

- A. Performed at the end of each unit
- B. Demonstrate comprehension of learning objectives from unit
- C. Administered virtually
- D. Students will be responsible for recording and submitting

% of total Grade

40%

Midterm Exam

% of total Grade

10%

Final Exam

- A. Demonstrate chord/scale knowledge
- B. Demonstrate repertoire knowledge
- C. Perform transcription from memory

% of total Grade

10%

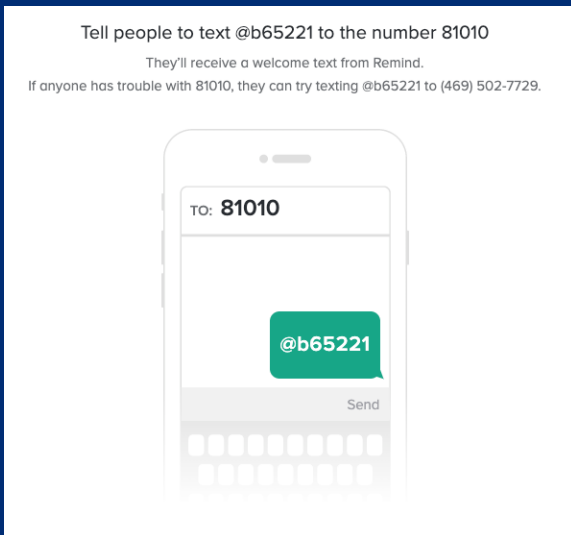


Grading Scale

- A 90%-100%
- B 80%-89%
- C 70%-79%
- D 60%-69%
- F Less than 60%

INFORMATION

Sign up for the Course Remind



Assignment Submissions

All assignments must be submitted by time/date listed on the course schedule. No late assignments will be allowed unless there are emergency situations and documentation is provided. I highly encourage you to start working on your assignments early. This ensures you have time to contact the appropriate person(s) if unforeseen technological issues impact your ability to complete the assignment. Technical problems, even if they are not your fault, do not automatically qualify you for an extension or a "do-over" for the assignment.

Make-Up Assignments

You will be given the opportunity to make-up missed quizzes, exams, and assignments for excused absences only. Excused absences include documented emergencies (e.g. doctor's note, subpoena) or school-related activity. Vacations, regularly scheduled doctor's appointments, and work schedules do not qualify as exceptional reasons and will not be accepted as an excused absence.

Policies

- Attendance is required at all rehearsals, masterclasses, recitals and concerts.
- Students will need to complete the Attendance form for every class they are in attendance.
- Please contact the instructor at least 24 hours in advance if you must cancel a lesson.
- Be on time and warmed up for each rehearsal. Bring all assigned music and your instrument and all parts in good working order.
- Each student is expected to practice his/her assignments on a daily basis.

It always seems impossible until it's done. - Nelson Mandela

Technology Policy

In order to ensure that you can participate in all of the activities within the course, you will need access to a smart device (phone, tablet, and/or computer). If you do not have a smart device available to bring to class, please email me and we can arrange for a rental device for class purposes.

Please also check out a USB microphone from the music office to assist in recorded assignments.

TRACK 1

For students who have never taken jazz improvisation

WEEK	TOPIC	EXAM
Week 1	Introduction/Placement	
Week 2	Making Melodies & Modes	
Week 3	Modes & So What	P.E. 1 - Melodies
Week 4	Modes & So What	
Week 5	Dominants & The Blues	P.E. 2 - So What
Week 6	Blues & Blues Melodies	
Week 7	Blues & Blues Melodies	
Week 8	Blues/ii-V-I Progression	
Week 9	ii-V-I Progression/ Autumn Leaves	P.E. 3 - Blues
Week 10	Autumn Leaves	
Week 11	Autumn Leaves	
Week 12	minor ii-V-i progression	P.E. 4 Autumn Leaves
Week 13	Blue Bossa	
Week 14	Blue Bossa	
Week 15	Blue Bossa	P.E. 5 - Blue Bossa

Schedule is subject to change at any time.

TRACK 2

For students who have completed track 1

WEEK	TOPIC	EXAM
Week 1	Blue Bossa	
Week 2	Blue Bossa	
Week 3	Blue Bossa	P.E. 1 - Blue Bossa
Week 4	Straight, No Chaser	
Week 5	Straight, No Chaser	
Week 6	Straight, No Chaser	P.E. 2 - Straight, No Chaser
Week 7	All The Things You Are	
Week 8	All The Things You Are	
Week 9	All The Things You Are	
Week 10	All The Things You Are	P.E. 3 - A.T.T.Y.A.
Week 11	Rhythm Changes/Oleo	
Week 12	Rhythm Changes/Oleo	
Week 13	Rhythm Changes/Oleo	
Week 14	Rhythm Changes/Oleo	P.E. 4 - Oleo
Week 15	Review tunes	P.E. 5 - Final Exam

Schedule is subject to change at any time.

TRACK 3

For students who have completed track 1 and track 2

WEEK	TOPIC	EXAM
Week 1	Introductions/Placement	
Week 2	<u>Caldonia - Louis Jordan</u>	
Week 3	<u>Caldonia - Louis Jordan</u>	
Week 4	<u>Caldonia - Louis Jordan</u>	P.E. 1 - Caldonia
Week 5	<u>Watermelon Man - Dexter Gordon</u>	
Week 6	<u>Watermelon Man - Dexter Gordon</u>	
Week 7	<u>Watermelon Man - Dexter Gordon</u>	P.E. 2 - Watermelon Man
Week 8	<u>Bye Bye Blackbird - Sonny Stitt</u>	
Week 9	<u>Bye Bye Blackbird - Sonny Stitt</u>	
Week 10	<u>Bye Bye Blackbird - Sonny Stitt</u>	
Week 11	<u>Bye Bye Blackbird - Sonny Stitt</u>	P.E. 3 - Bye Bye Blackbird
Week 12	Student's Choice	
Week 13	Student's Choice	
Week 14	Student's Choice	
Week 15	Student's Choice	P.E. 4 - ??

Schedule is subject to change at any time.