

MUSI 3364, sec. 01, CRN: 83690
Jazz Improvisation
MWF 11:00am – 11:50am
RM: 205, SHSU School of Music

Dr. Aric Schneller
OFFICE: GPAC Room 220H
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Required Texts:

The Jazz Language by Dan Haerle (for reference and assignments)

Course Description:

This course offers instruction in the following basic acquired skills for the beginning to advanced jazz improviser: 1. Ear training in the jazz idiom by playing jazz melodies in all 12-keys with melodic/rhythm embellishments, and “Call & Response” exercises; 2. Exposure to 5-3-7/9-7-3 jazz piano voicings; 3. Acquisition of ii7-V7-I/iiø7-V7(b9)-i cells/licks into one’s jazz vocabulary, in and out of tempo; 4. 4-step rhythm exercises; 5. Knowledge of one’s instrument by graded performance of all major / harmonic minor scales; & 6. Critical listening and memorized performance of idiomatic jazz language by transcribing (by ear & written) professional jazz solos/excerpts

Objectives and Learning Outcomes

Through exposure/work in this class and outside practice, students should:

- Begin to feel comfortable in improvising solos in the jazz idiom (i.e., jazz band and small group performance).
- Be able to thoroughly learn and competently perform an improvised solo in any jazz style according to one’s ability and proficiency.
- Begin to increase one’s number of jazz tunes (standards) to be learned/performed in a systematic fashion.
- Through the transcription process and basic piano voicing vocabulary, be able to begin composing arrangements/originals of jazz music.

Exams

There will be a required memorized performance of a transcribed solo (or portion thereof per Dr. Schneller’s approval) of the student’s choosing. As part of this exam, the student will provide a written transcription of this solo to be included in a compilation for the class at the end of the semester. Lastly, the student will be required to play all major scales from memory to be graded.

Grading criteria

- Because of the 3-step learning process (i.e., observation, imitation, & trial/error) and performance-based nature of this class, attendance and participation is required. EXCESSIVE ABSENCES and TARDINESS for regular class meetings and/or exams/performances will ADVERSELY IMPACT the student's final grade. Students with a valid reason and written documentation to be excused from class or exam must make up the missed class or exam at the discretion of the instructor.
- Students are responsible for making up all exams missed due to absence.
- Students will be allowed three free absences with no questions asked.
- Limited office hours are scheduled weekly for students who would like some extra help or need something explained in a different way. Feel free to stop by!

Assignments, Exams, and Grading Apportionment

Because of the subjective and objective nature of this class, it is the intention of the instructor to give all participating students the grade of "A" if the following criteria are met: 1. Attend all scheduled classes; 2. Practice and perform all class assignments showing improvement at the student's individual level; 3. Perform the transcription project in front of a live audience; & 4. Play all major scales satisfactory by the scale exam date (pass/no pass basis with the possibility of unlimited attempts to do so by the end of the semester if needed).

Subject to Change

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of course work/learning adjustments & extenuating circumstances.

University Policy Reminders

Students With Disabilities Policy

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities; accommodations for disabilities must be initiated by you. For a complete listing of the university policy, see: <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Visitors in the Classroom

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, age discrimination, and religion. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: <http://www.shsu.edu/titleix/>

Religious Holy Days

If you must miss class because of a religious holy day, you must present to me a written statement. I will then complete a form notifying you of a plan to avoid any grade penalties. Please follow the University's procedure found at:

<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

NASM Requirements for Notification of Related Health Issues in Music

NASM (National Accreditation of Schools of Music) requests that all students have access to three articles on health-related issues: Neuromusculoskeletal Health, Vocal Health, and Hearing Health. These documents will be included in this syllabus handout.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the right of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms that are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class. Additionally, please refrain from using cell phones, beepers, and other electronic devices and from eating or drinking during class. Drinking water from a water bottle is acceptable.

I look forward to teaching you this Fall-semester.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week	Dates	Units
1	Aug. 23	Introduction, text book, & historical overview with Class participation in playing and singing, “Bags Groove” by ear.
	Aug. 25	Continued introduction, discussion of syllabus, Dr. Schneller demonstration of jazz transcription, “Body & Soul” and scat-singing on “It Don’t Mean A Thing....” Discussion of YOUTUBE assignment. YouTube assignment of at least 1-jazz improviser for discussion. <i>The Jazz Language</i> must be purchased and brought to class by 9/1/16 for First assignment: Introduction & Chapter one.
2	Aug. 28,30 Sept. 1	CLASSES CANCELLED – HURRICANE HARVEY
3	Sept. 4 Sept. 6	LABOR DAY – CLASS CANCELLED YouTube assignment of at least 1-jazz improviser for discussion. <i>The Jazz Language</i> must be purchased and brought to class by 9/8/16 for First assignment: Introduction & Chapter one.
	Sept. 8	Continued: YouTube assignment of at least 1-jazz improviser for discussion. Bring textbook to class for attendance and first assignment: Introduction & Chapter one.
4	Sept. 11 Sept. 13 Sept. 15	Bentwater Performance – CLASS CANCELLED Assignment 1 due. Continued YouTube assignments. Continued YouTube assignments.
5	Sept. 18, 13, 15	Continued student Jazz Listening & class participation On “Autumn Leaves” in different playing styles, relative major/minor scales for continuance throughout the semester. Handout piano assignment on “Autumn Leaves.” Read Chapter 2 in TJL.

6	Sept. 25, 27, 29	Finish Student Jazz Listening Assignments & continue work on Autumn Leaves. Begin playing piano assignments in class. Learn lyrics to "Autumn Leaves." Go over chapt. 2 of TJL, and work on assignment for following week. Chapt. 3 to be assigned.
7	Oct. 2, 4, 6	Go over Chapter 3. Begin choosing solo Transcriptions for the semester. Begin learning Cherokee. Continue scale work, and begin learning jazz vocabulary (i.e., 11-V-I jazz licks/cells).
8	Oct. 9, 11 Oct. 12 Oct. 13	Transcriptions for the semester. Continue work on Cherokee. Continue scale work, and begin learning jazz vocabulary (i.e., 11-V-I jazz licks/cells). SHSU JAZZ CONCERT – REQUIRED ATTENDANCE, Thursday in the GPAC Concert Hall, 7:30pm. Finish choosing solo Transcriptions for the semester. Cherokee. Continue scale work (Major bebop scale, jazz vocabulary – ii-v-I licks/cells, and transcription.
9	Oct. 16 Oct. 18, 20	Continue scale work (Major bebop scale, jazz vocabulary – ii-v-I licks/cells, and transcription. Finish choosing solo Transcriptions for the semester. Cherokee. Continue scale work, jazz vocabulary – ii-v-I licks/cells, and Email MP3 of ½ speed recordings.
10	Oct. 23, 25, 27	Finish choosing solo Transcriptions for the semester. Cherokee - scale work, jazz vocabulary – ii-v-I licks/cells.
11	Oct. 30 Nov. 1, 3	Finish choosing solo Transcriptions for the semester. Cherokee with threads on chord tones, and Email MP3 of ½ speed recordings.
12	Nov. 6, 8, 10	Scales TBA, check work on transcriptions, group work. Scales TBA, check work on transcriptions, group work.
13	Nov. 13 Nov. 15 Nov. 15	Class Cancelled - Guest Trombonist John Fedchock at Klein Forest High School REQUIRED CLASS ATTENDANCE: NYC Jazz Trombonist - John Fedchock Visit REQUIRED ATTENDANCE: John Fedchock Master Class, 1-2pm, Recital Hall.

	Nov. 16	REQUIRED CLASS ATTENDANCE: SHSU JAZZ CONCERT – Thursday, GPAC Concert Hall, 7:30pm.
	Nov. 17	Discussion of John Fedchock visit. Scales TBA, check work on transcriptions, group work & rehearsals of transcriptions for performance.
14	Nov. 20	Scales TBA, check work on transcriptions, group work & rehearsals of transcriptions for performance.
	Nov. 22, 24	No School due to Thanksgiving Break
15	Nov. 27, 29 Dec. 1	Final Performances of Transcriptions in Class Final Performances of Transcriptions in Class
16	Dec. 6	Room: 205, 12-2pm. Group Final Scale Exam Jury.