

# MUJS 5440 Introduction to Research in Jazz Studies

John Murphy

Fall 2011 Syllabus

## 1 Course information

**Course title** Introduction to Research in Jazz Studies

**Course prefix and number** MUJS 5440

**Semester** Fall 2011

**Syllabus version** 1.0 on 2011-08-25

**Schedule** Thursday 8:20-10:50 in 282

**Professor** John Murphy

**Office** 266

**Email** Please use the email tool in Blackboard for class-related email. My UNT email is [john.murphy@unt.edu](mailto:john.murphy@unt.edu).

**Phone** (940) 565-4344 [web3.unt.edu/murphy](http://web3.unt.edu/murphy) «This is a link

**Office hours** Monday 2-2:50, Wednesday 2-2:50, Thursday 3-3:50, Friday 11-11:50, and by appointment. To make an appointment, send me several times you can meet. I'll reply with the time that fits both of our schedules.

## 2 Syllabus changelog

1. 2011-08-25, version 1.0

## 3 Catalog description

5440. Introduction to Research in Jazz Studies. 3 hours. Bibliography, discography, interviewing; sociocultural aspects of research on jazz; scholarly writing; connections between jazz studies and musicology, ethnomusicology, and related disciplines. Prerequisite(s): MUJS 4470 or consent of college.

## 4 Course goals

This course is intended to enable you to:

1. Understand what research is, what makes a good research question, and how to join academic conversations by reading the arguments of others carefully, summarizing them accurately, and thinking critically about them.
2. Construct an argument of your own about a topic that is important to you.
3. Understand that learning to do research is more than just learning how to use research tools and write citations. It's also a matter of being socialized into one or more cultures of research, writing, and speaking.
4. Find and critically evaluate publications and recordings.
5. Understand conventions of scholarly use of intellectual property, and understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.
6. Do interviews and use them in research.
7. Understand social and cultural aspects of research on jazz.
8. Develop research skills in areas of music scholarship that are closely related to jazz studies.
9. Think critically and write clearly.
10. Go beyond the default. To most people these days, research means a web search. Students with master's-level expertise need to go beyond that.

## 5 Required Text

None. We will use the library.

## 6 Topics and assignments

Assignment guidelines and deadlines will be provided in separate documents that are found in the Assignment guidelines folder on the main Blackboard page.

**Unit 1** Weeks 1–7 Research skills and tools 40%

four assignments worth 10% each

**Unit 2** Weeks 8–10 Research project 40%

research paper 20%, review 5%, video 10%, journalistic profile 5%

**Unit 3** Weeks 11–13 Jazz studies and related disciplines 10%

two tests worth 5% each

**Unit 4** Weeks 14–15 Recent developments in jazz scholarship and review for final. No graded work.

**Final exam** Comprehensive exam 10%

A = 89.5–100 B = 79.5–89.4 C = 69.5–79.4 D = 59.5–69.4 F = 59.4 and below

The standard mathematical rounding principle will be followed: 89.4 is a B, 89.5 is an A. I do not assign or accept extra credit work. See Table 1.

Table 1: Grading scale

A	89.5–100%
B	79.5–89.4%
C	69.5–79.4%
D	59.5–69.4%
F	59.4% and below

## 7 Calendar

**Week 0, Aug. 25** Introduction to the class; syllabus and policies. **Unit 1:** Finding and working with sources. Basic skills: reading print and electronic texts, note-taking, operating system, interface, file system, browser, file format, search, Blackboard, library catalog, keeping track of passwords, Dropbox. Learning how to learn about technology. Separating content from formatting.

**Week 1** Bibliography, bibliographic search tools and software.

**Week 2** Bibliography continued. Citing sources, ethics of research, plagiarism, citation styles.

**Week 3** Reference books and scholarly monographs. Print and electronic periodicals.

**Week 4** History of jazz recording; Print and online discographies.

**Week 5** Using photos, film, and video for research purposes. Finding songs and scores.

**Week 6** Finding and using published interviews and oral histories. Doing an interview. Archives, printed musical sources, finding songs.

**Week 7** Research in support of teaching jazz history at the undergraduate level. Syllabus design, textbooks, finding audiovisual sources and using them in class.

**Week 8** **Unit 2** Research and writing; choosing and refining a topic in order to join a scholarly conversation; structure of a research paper.

**Week 9** Scholarly writing; using sources; making an argument. Journalistic profile/interview: examples, how to write one.

**Week 10** Scholarly critical review: examples, how to write one. How to make a short video for the web that conveys research content. Study examples, learn production techniques.

**Week 11** **Unit 3** Jazz Studies and related disciplines. Musicology: methods, publications.

**Week 12** Ethnomusicology: methods, publications.

**Week 13** Music theory: methods, publications. Music education, methods, publications.

**Week 14** **Unit 4** Recent developments in jazz scholarship.

**Week 15** Review for final, work on any research-related topics you are interested in that we have not worked on yet.

**Finals week** Final exam: short-answer exam on concepts, research tools, publications. Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2011, 8–10 a.m.  
Final exam schedule

## 8 This class and your comprehensive exam

Jazz Studies majors will have questions based on this class at your master's comprehensive exam. You'll be expected to demonstrate an understanding of how research is done, specific research tools, and publications.

## 9 Attendance

We will follow the UNT attendance policy. Article 7 says this: "Any instructor who so informs students in writing about the necessity of class attendance may request of the Registrar that a student be dropped from the course with a grade of WF upon the accumulation of the stated number of absences." I affirm the necessity of class attendance and establish the number of absences equal to two weeks of class meetings as the maximum number of unexcused absences allowed.

## 10 Participation

An important part of the university experience is formulating an argument, a comment, or a question and putting it out there for other people to respond to. I expect all of us to contribute to the discussion.

## 11 My expectations of you

I expect you to:

1. take responsibility for your learning in this class
2. contribute to class discussion as time allows
3. attend every class, arrive on time, and stay the entire time
4. communicate effectively
5. put in the work time outside of class that is necessary for you to reach your maximum potential
6. understand the syllabus policies, especially the attendance policy

7. be alert and engaged in class
8. let me know if there are any errors in your grade or attendance information in the Blackboard gradebook
9. to let me know if there something I can do to help you do your best work

## **12 What students can expect of the me**

You can expect me to:

1. treat every student with respect and the expectation that every student is capable of doing well in this class
2. be prepared for class and demonstrate the scholarly methods we are studying
3. communicate my passion for this subject and for learning in general
4. allow time for questions and discussion in class
5. limit discussion if necessary so that we can reach our goals
6. begin and end class on time
7. be available outside of class in the office and by email
8. have realistic expectations about the workload
9. be willing to modify what we do in class in order to help you learn better
10. speak with students who are chronically late so that they will stop disrupting the class with late arrivals and showing disrespect to the students who make the effort to arrive on time
11. apply the syllabus policies fairly to all students

## **13 Academic Integrity**

We will follow UNT's policy on academic integrity.

## **14 Evaluation of the class**

The official UNT evaluation (the SETE) will be done near the end of the class. If you have comments or suggestions for improving the course, please give them to me any time.

## **15 Recording class**

You may record class under these conditions:

1. You ask permission in advance
2. It's for your own use only during the semester
3. It is never put on the web or shared in any form

## **16 Naming convention**

Because I accept assignments electronically, I receive many files from students. When 20 students send files labeled `essay1.docx`, I have to spend time renaming the files to include the students' names. I require that students use these naming conventions to name the files for your assignments. The file name must have these elements, all in lowercase, in this order:

1. your last name
2. hyphen
3. course number
4. hyphen
5. one-word description of the assignment (for unit 1 essay 2: `u1essay2`)
6. filetype suffix (examples: `.doc`, `.docx`, `.odt`, `.pdf`, `.txt`)

Example: `last-1234-u1essay2.pdf`. You may benefit from using naming conventions for the files on your computer. It makes finding and organizing files easier. It's especially important to avoid including spaces in filenames. When you use a file with spaces in the filename on different operating systems, the space can be rendered with formatting characters that make the filename harder to read.

## **17 UNT closing**

If UNT classes are canceled, we will use Blackboard and stay on schedule. I will put class content on the website and we can use the discussion or chat tools for discussion.

## **18 Students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities that affect their work in this class are invited to speak with me privately. If you expect to have an accomodation made, you must give me the accomodation letter from UNT's Office of Disability Accomodation within the first two weeks of the semester. It must be submitted before any graded work is due.

## **19 UNT Ally**

I participated in UNT Ally training in Fall 2010 in order to learn more about creating an environment of mutual respect in my classes. From the UNT Ally website:

Ally Training educates and trains students, staff and faculty to create a safe zone for GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender) people at UNT. You don't have to be GLBT/LGBT to go through training. Ally training is for anyone who's interested. The goal is to achieve a culture where any person can study and/or work in an environment free of discrimination and harassment.

## **20 Subject to change**

All course policies and the calendar are subject to change with notice.