

MUJS 4470 and 5430 Syllabus

John Murphy

Fall 2012 | last updated 2012-08-28

Welcome to MUJS 4470, History of Jazz, and MUJS 5430, Graduate Review of Jazz History. The catalog describes this course as “A chronological survey of the major styles and artists of jazz, from African acculturation in the New World to the present”.

My contact information is available on the Blackboard Course.

MUJS 4470 is crosslisted with MUJS 5430, Graduate Review of Jazz History. Graduate students in MUJS 5430 will attend all class meetings of 4470; do all the graded work for 4470; meet a graduate standard for their research papers; and meet occasionally during the 8-8:50 time on a MWF to discuss additional readings and pedagogical topics.

According to the catalog, the prerequisite is MUJS 1470 with grade of C or higher. Jazz studies majors must have earned an A or B in MUJS 1470 before taking this class (I will check). I do not enforce the prerequisite for non-majors because students with majors other than jazz studies are often advised to take this class as an upper-division elective.

This course is required for jazz studies majors. Students with other majors are welcome. Prior knowledge of music in general and jazz in particular is expected. Students can do well in this class regardless of major if they have regular attendance and good study skills. If you are new to jazz and would like suggestions of short books you can read to learn a lot about jazz in a short time, let me know.

There is no required text. We will use the library.

We will use these core readings and listening to get started in our work in Unit 1. There will be additional reading assignments.

1. Mark Tucker’s article “Jazz” in Oxford Music Online. Available via the library electronic resources. Find Oxford Music Online in the list of electronic resources. Search on the word *jazz*. The historical article by Mark Tucker should be the first search result. The text begins: “Writers have often portrayed the history of jazz as a narrative of progress”.
2. *Jazz: The Smithsonian Anthology*. Available for streaming via the library’s audio reserves (<https://audioreerves.library.unt.edu/>).
3. Barry Kernfeld’s chapter “Epilogue: An Introduction to Style” from his book *What to listen for in jazz*. Available via the library’s electronic reserves (iii.library.unt.edu/search/r). For the course password, use 57805230. The audio CD that accompanies it will be available via the audio reserves.

Our learning goals are:

1. To understand that the word *jazz* has a history, and that studying the history of jazz involves studying what the word and the music have meant to people over time in various places;
2. To understand the history of jazz in terms of musical style and historical context;
3. To understand the contributions of important jazz artists;
4. To improve your ability to listen aesthetically and analytically to jazz performances;
5. To improve your ability to make and evaluate arguments about jazz history;
6. To understand how jazz relates to other kinds of music, including Western classical and traditional music and various kinds of world music;
7. To understand the contributions of jazz to U.S. and world culture;

8. To be able to find high-quality print and audiovisual information about jazz in the library and on the web, think critically about it, and write a research paper;
9. and To understand jazz history from the perspective of historiography. History is the narrative of past events. Historiography is the critical study of how histories are written.

Here are our learning activities: In Unit 1, working all together using direct instruction (me telling you about it) and constructivist learning (you learning independently and sharing what you learned with the class): learn the Standard Narrative of Jazz History, the five major styles (New Orleans jazz, swing, bop, free jazz, fusion), how to put new works into stylistic and historical context using listening supported by research. In Unit 2, we will study two topics in depth. The first topic is the music of Henry Threadgill. We’ll choose the second one together. Unit 3 is an independent research project. You will choose your topic according to my guidelines. In Unit 4, we’ll study the current jazz scene and current debates.

The graded work is the following:

- Unit 1 40%. Demonstrate mastery of the core readings and listening, other assigned readings, material presented in class. Tests include short answer, listening, and essay questions.
- Unit 2 20%. Study two topics in depth. One test on each topic. Tests include short answer, listening, and essay.
- Unit 3 20%. Research project, written in standard academic style, with citations. 2.5% for the topic statement; 2.5% for the bibliography and outline; 10% for the first draft; 5% for the final draft. Deadlines are strict.
- Unit 4. Study current music and debates. Questions on this unit will be included in the final.
- Final exam 20%. Comprehensive final exam.

The grading scale is A=89.5–100; B=79.5–89.4; C=69.5–79.4; D=59.5–69.4; F=59.4 and below.

I will give the final as scheduled on the UNT final exam schedule: Monday, December 10, 8–10 a.m.

This course is important because it will enable you to get to know a lot of music and musicians; to make and evaluate arguments about jazz history; to develop the knowledge, concepts, and listening skills that will support your other activities in jazz and other music; and to further your understanding of jazz as an aspect of U.S. and global music and culture.

Some of the documentary videos we will watch could contain profanity. If you are concerned about this, I invite you to discuss the matter with me.

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 in order to reach your maximum level of understanding. The maximum number of unexcused absences allowed is four. Students who have five or more unexcused absences will receive the final grade of F or WF. Excused absences will be given for College of Music activities for which an excused absence form has been filed; excused absences for illness or other serious reason, which must be documented

by the Dean of Students (deanofstudents.unt.edu). Other kinds of excused absence request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. For occasional illness that does not require medical care, use one of your four allowed unexcused absences.

I expect you to:

1. take responsibility for your learning in this class
2. attend every class, arrive on time, and stay the entire time
3. communicate effectively
4. contribute to the discussion, either in class or on Blackboard Learn
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 grade book
9. to let me know if there something I can do to help you do your best work

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 on Blackboard. All my office hours are by appointment. To make an office hour appointment, send several times that work for you and your cell number to julie.bice@unt.edu.
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. apply the syllabus policies fairly to all students

We will follow UNT's policy on academic integrity, which can be found at vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm.

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.

You may record class under these conditions: You ask permission in advance. It's for your own use only during the semester. It is never put on the web or shared in any form.

Because I accept assignments electronically, I receive many files from students. When 20 students send files labeled roughdraft.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, or they won't be graded.

1. your last name
2. hyphen
3. 4470 or 5430 depending on the class you are in
4. hyphen
5. one-word description of the assignment
6. filetype suffix (examples: .doc, .docx, .odt, .pdf, .txt) Example: last-1234-uessay2.pdf.

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 (like %20) that make the filename harder to read.

You may benefit from using naming conventions for the files on your computer. It makes finding and organizing files easier.

If UNT classes are canceled because the university has to close due to weather or for some other reason, we will use Blackboard and stay on schedule.

From the registrar:

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress - Undergraduates: A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility. If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course being doing so.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress - Graduates: A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility. If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course being doing so.

(end registrar text)

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

I participated in UNT Ally training in Fall 2010 in order to learn more about creating an environment for learning characterized by 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."

This syllabus is subject to change with notice.