

Jazz Styles & Analysis Syllabus Fall 2009

MUJS 5780.001, MWF 10-10:50, 3 SH, room 263

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Office hours: Mon. 2-3, Tues. 11-12, Wed. 3-4, Thur. 11-12, Fri. 1-2 and by appointment

Course description from the catalog

The stylistic elements of the various eras of jazz history; theoretical analysis of significant musical qualities of influential musicians of the different periods of jazz.

Who should take this class?

This class is required for master's students in jazz studies. Students taking it as part of a related field for a master's or doctoral degree in another major are welcome and should see me during the first week so that I can find out about your background in jazz.

Learning goals

By participating fully in this class, you will be able to:

1. continue to develop your aural and analytical skills
2. understand jazz styles analytically
3. understand how the analysis of jazz can serve the needs of performers, listeners, music analysts, historians, and educators
4. make accurate transcriptions of jazz performances
5. analyze performances aurally and using transcriptions
6. understand significant publications on jazz analysis, past and present
7. write analytical prose to accompany your transcriptions and analyses

Topics

1. studying a recent article on jazz analysis to find out what skills an author needs in order to write it (weeks 0, 1)
2. review of aural skills and jazz theory (week 1)
3. survey of jazz analysis: overviews of jazz analysis, analysis of a standard, a solo, interaction in a solo, and a large ensemble piece, pedagogical labels (weeks 2-4)
4. Technology for jazz analysis: pitch analysis, timbral analysis, rhythmic analysis (week 5)
5. *Charlie Parker Omnibook* project: redoing and adding to selected transcriptions using today's methods (weeks 6-10)
6. Study of this book and the music analyzed in it:
Hodson, Robert. 2007. *Interaction, improvisation, and interplay in jazz*. New York: Routledge. (weeks 11-15)

Required Text

Hodson, Robert. 2007. *Interaction, Improvisation, and Interplay in Jazz*. New York: Routledge. Available in UNT bookstore and on carrel 406 in the music library. If you are not familiar with a carrel, it is a numbered library desk on the 4th floor (406 is along the north wall) where the book is placed. You can use it there but not check it out. If you take it to a copier, please return it to carrel 406 afterwards.

Grading

Evaluations of some recent graduate classes of mine have pointed to the need to avoid having a large percentage of the graded work due at the end of the semester. This schedule of assignments aims to spread the graded work more evenly throughout the semester. We will not use class time for tests. Professional scholars do not work with someone watching them and a time limit (except for publication deadlines), so I will offer you that same consideration by making all of the tests except for the final take-home tests with a mix of short-answer and essay questions. The tests will be distributed after we have discussed a reading in class and will be due at the next class. You are responsible for turning the test in on time whether you were present when the article was discussed or not. Test questions will likely deal with parts of the article we did not discuss in class, since we will not be able to discuss every important concept in each reading. There will be a maximum of twelve questions on each test (one per half step). The final will draw questions from all of the course material and tests and will be given in a standard final exam format (proctored exam on Monday, Dec. 14, 2009 at 8 a.m.).

Test on Givan article and jazz theory	5%
Test on Martin and Kernfeld articles	10%
Test on Forte, roman numeral analysis, and Walser	10%
Test on Monson and Lajoie chapters, Coker & Riggs handouts	10%
Test on Benadon article	5%
<i>Charlie Parker Omnibook</i> Project	30%
Test on Hodson ch. 1	5%
Test on Hodson ch. 2	5%
Test on Hodson ch. 3	5%
Test on Hodson ch. 4	5%
Final exam	10%
Total	100%

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = 59 and below

Standard mathematical rounding to one place will be used when determining the final grade.

For example: 89.4 is a B, 89.5 is an A.

Calendar

When a reading is given as the content of a class meeting, I expect you to have read the article in advance of that class.

Week 0

8/28 introduction, syllabus, class policies, listen to and discuss "Bessie's Blues." Assignment: read this for 8/31:

Givan, Benjamin. 2007. "Apart Playing: McCoy Tyner and 'Bessie's Blues.'" *Journal of the Society for American Music*, 1/2:257-280. Available online via the UNT library or scholar.google.com.

Week 1

8/31 Study Givan 2007

9/2 Study Givan 2007; review jazz theory & aural skills

9/4 review jazz theory & aural skills

Week 2 Overview of jazz analysis, weeks 2-4

9/7 no class, Labor Day

9/9 Martin, Henry. 1996. "Jazz Theory: An Overview." *Annual Review of Jazz Studies* 8: 1-17. [ARJS is shelved with the books, not with the bound periodicals. Make your own photocopy or scan.]

9/11 Kernfeld, Barry. "Improvisation III: Jazz" in Grove Music Online.

Week 3

9/14 Allen Forte on "Alone Together" (handout)

9/16 Roman numeral analysis of "Stella by Starlight"

9/18 Walser, Robert. 1993. "Out of Notes: Signification, Interpretation, and the Problem of Miles Davis." *Musical Quarterly* 77/2: 343-365. Available online via the library.

Week 4

9/21 Monson, Ingrid. 1996. "Grooving and Feeling." Ch. 2 of her book *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 26-72. Available on carrel 406. Also a good book to buy and read all of. Available at amazon used & new from \$12.98 on Aug. 27, 2009.

9/23 Lajoie, Steve. 2003. *Gil Evans & Miles Davis: historic collaborations: an analysis of selected Gil Evans works, 1957-1962*. Rottenburg: Advance Music. The chapter on "Blues for Pablo." Library use only; ask for it by call number at the circulation desk.

9/25 Pedagogical labels: Jerry Coker, "Devices Commonly Found in Improvised Solos," in his book *The Teaching of Jazz* (Rottenberg, Germany: Advance, 1989), pp. 85-89; James Riggs, analysis of Cannonball Adderley's solo on "Corcovado" (handout).

Week 5 Technology for jazz analysis

9/28 pitch analysis: Transcribe software demo; seventhstring.com (\$50, Mac/Win/Linux)

9/30 timbral analysis: Raven software; <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/brp/raven/RavenOverview.html> (free, Mac/Win/Linux)

10/2 rhythmic analysis: Benadon, Fernando. 2009. "Time Warps in Early Jazz." *Music Theory Spectrum* 31: 1-25. Available online via UNT library.

Week 6 Charlie Parker Omnibook project, weeks 6-10

10/5 the importance of the CPO and the need for this project

10/7 critical review of selected CPO transcriptions

10/9 critical review, continued; design of our project; intellectual property concerns

Week 7

10/12 Listen to Parker-Desmond interview; guided tour of Steve Larson's article "The Art of Charlie Parker's Rhetoric."

10/14 student work samples, workshop format

10/16 student work samples, workshop format

Week 8 workshop format: we'll consider together 2 or 3 cases from your ongoing work per day

10/19
10/21
10/23

Week 9 workshop format, continued

10/26
10/28
10/30

Week 10 we finish our project and put it in its final form and discuss intellectual property again

11/2
11/4
11/6

Week 11 Study of Hodson 2007, weeks 11-15, working slowly through his arguments and listening to the music being analyzed

11/9 Ch. 1, "Jazz Improvisation: Theory, Analysis, Context, and Process" pp. 1-40
11/11 Ch. 1 continued
11/13 Ch. 1 continued

Week 12

11/16 Ch. 2, "Harmony and Interaction" pp. 41-74
11/18 Ch. 2 continued
11/20 Ch. 2 continued

Week 13

11/23 Ch. 3, "Form and Interaction" pp. 75-114
11/25 Ch. 3 continued
11/27 no class, Fall Break

Week 14

11/30 Ch. 3 continued
12/2 Ch. 4, "Breaking Down the Boundaries" pp. 115-178
12/4 Ch. 4 continued

Week 15

12/7 Ch. 4 continued
12/9 review for final exam
12/11 Reading Day, no class

Finals week

Final exam on Monday, Dec. 14, 2009 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Attendance

Attendance at all class meetings is required. For each unexcused absence up to 5, one point will be deducted from your final course grade on the 100-point scale. The only excused absences I will accept are UNT-sponsored activities, illness requiring medical attention, or other serious situations. If you have 6 or more unexcused absences, you must drop, immediately, or I will drop you administratively with a grade of WF (withdrew while failing).

Final exam

The final exam will be given only at the UNT scheduled time. Please arrange your travel schedule accordingly.

Transcribe

In the Music Computer Lab you will find the Transcribe program (Mac & Windows), which you will find very useful for transcription. It can vary the speed of a recording and, when you have selected a region of the sound file, it gives a graph of the pitch spectrum, which helps you identify the pitch. You can buy your own copy for \$50 at seventhstring.com.

Be Creative

Artistic representations of your analytical findings are welcome. This can include (beautiful) handwritten notation, Finale scores with lots of text comments or notation in color, graphic representations other than staff notation, spectral analyses of timbre, video animation, and ...

This class and your comprehensive exam (for Jazz Studies majors)

You will have questions based on this class at your master's comprehensive exam. You'll be expected to know about pedagogical and theoretical approaches to jazz analysis and to be able to cite examples of authors, publications, terminology, and recorded performances that have been analyzed in the jazz literature (and analyzed by you). A successful response to a master's exam question shows a secure grasp of concepts and a quick recall of relevant supporting information. The extent to which you can do this at your master's exam will determine whether you will pass the exam, pass the exam with a required review exercise, or fail the exam.

Evaluation of the course

The standard UNT course evaluation will be done at the end of the course. If you have comments or suggestions for improving the course before then, please share them with me.

Academic honesty

Academic honesty means presenting only your own ideas as your own, and giving credit for the ideas of others when you use them in your academic work. No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated in this class. Students are expected to follow the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline. Plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade for the course and the opening of a case with the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities. I have known students who are not sure what plagiarism is. If you have any doubts, please ask me about it. Another resource is the book *Doing Honest Work in College* by Charles Lipson.

Students sometimes ask whether they can get help from someone else on an assignment. I am grading **your** work. You must get permission from me in advance before you have someone else read and comment on your work, even if it is just reading to catch typos. Having your paper written by

someone else, writing a paper for someone else to submit as their own, and submitting as your own a transcription you didn't do are serious violations of academic honesty.

My expectations of students:

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) arrive for your office appointments on time
- 4) communicate effectively
- 5) put in the time outside of class that is necessary for you to reach your maximum potential

What students can expect of 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) begin and end class on time
- 3) allow time for questions and discussion in class, and to limit discussion if necessary so that we can reach our goals
- 4) be prepared for class
- 5) be available outside of class in the office and by email
- 6) have realistic expectations about the workload
- 7) be willing to modify what we do in class in order to help you learn better

Students with disabilities & other special situations

Students with disabilities that affect their work in this class are invited to speak with me privately. The same goes for students who have a special situation, such as child-care issues, work issues, or transportation problems.

Recording class

You may record class under these conditions:

1. you ask permission in advance
2. it's for your own personal use only
3. it is never put on the web or distributed to anyone besides you

Flu season

If UNT has to cancel classes due to a flu outbreak, we will communicate electronically and keep on schedule.

Laptops & small computing devices

You may use a laptop or other small device in class only if it is for class purposes.

This syllabus is subject to change with notice.