

Syllabus for Undergraduate and Graduate Guitar Lessons, 1526, 3526, 5530

Davy Mooney, Noel Johnston, Paul Metzger, Tristan Boh instructors

Davy Mooney office hours by appointment

Other instructors' office hours by appointment

Course Objectives

For Undergraduates:

- 1) To learn the repertoire of standards from the Great American Songbook, as well as jazz standards from the “common practice period” of jazz, i.e., from the bebop to contemporary eras
- 2) To develop reading ability through study of jazz and classical etudes
- 3) To improve technical ability on the guitar in the interest of better ease of execution of written material and improvisation

For Graduates:

- 1) To continue to progress in the three objectives above
- 2) To begin to develop an individual sound
- 3) To begin to compose original material

A note on graduate objectives two and three

Developing an original sound as a jazz artist is a long term—and extremely difficult—goal to achieve. As one progresses in the fundamentals of the jazz practice, as articulated by the undergraduate course objectives, the long-term goal of achieving one's own voice should always be in back of mind. This is, of course, a highly individualized quest, and one in which the instructor can only serve as a helpful guide. In my own practice, I have found that composing original material has helped me to find and hone this individual voice, so in many ways graduate objectives two and three are of a piece.

Recommended Texts

Personalizing Jazz Vocabulary, by Davy Mooney, Mel Bay Publishing

This book lays out my philosophy on learning how to improvise with classic jazz language. I recommend it to anyone who wants insight into how I learned to play this music, and how I think about teaching it to others.

Into the Labyrinth: An Anatomy of Position Playing for Jazz Guitar, by Davy Mooney, Mel Bay Publishing (**Required for MUAC 1526**)

This book describes my journey toward fretboard fluency. It is required for students in the first two years of lessons, as a supplement to the 25-minute lessons I offer. At the very least

it offers a roadmap of one way to figure out where all the scales, arpeggios, and other useful shapes are on the fretboard.

Jazz Guitar Reading and Improvisation Material:

Melodic Rhythms for Guitar, by William Levitt

Barry Galbraith Jazz Guitar Study Series:

- 1) The Fingerboard Workout
- 2) Daily Exercises in the Melodic and Harmonic Minor Modes
- 3) Guitar Comping
- 4) Play Along With Bach
- 5) Guitar Improv, by Barry Galbraith

Joe Pass's "Catch Me!," "Joy Spring," and "For Django:" Transcription and Analysis, by Davy Mooney

Bop Duets, by Bugs Bower

The Advancing Guitarist, by Mick Goodrick

Jazz Ear Training: Learning to Hear Your Way Through Music, by Steve Masakowski

Play Duets with Jimmy Raney, by Jimmy Raney (Aebersold vol. 29)

Classical Reading Material:

42 Studies of Caprices, by Rodolphe Kreutzer

Sonatas and Partitas for the Violin, by J.S. Bach

Saxophone Studies:

The Charlie Parker Omnibook, edited by Jamey Aebersold

14 Jazz and Funk Etudes, by Bob Mintzer

The Jazz Conception, by Jim Snidero

note: I studied the above classical violin and jazz saxophone material with Fred Hamilton for two years, and found it both illuminating and highly relevant to jazz guitar study. I hope to continue the Fred Hamilton legacy with this material!

Weekly Lesson Breakdown

Weekly lessons will be split into thirds, roughly, covering these topic areas: 20 minutes on reading material and etudes, 20 minutes on playing and improvising, 20 minutes on chord melody. These 20-minute periods can of course be adjusted depending upon individual circumstance. For Graduate students, review of students' original material may also occupy a significant portion of the lesson time. Weekly lessons will be graded, and these three main topic areas will be treated equally toward the weekly grade (each will compose 30%), with attendance, attitude, and miscellaneous assignments comprising the remaining 10%.

Repertoire/Tune List

In order to build a substantial, varied, and practically useful repertoire of pieces in the jazz idiom, students will be expected to learn approximately two tunes from each of the following categories over the course of the semester (the tunes in parenthesis are only suggestions):

- 1) Great American Songbook standard (Days of Wine and Roses, Dream Dancing)
- 2) Ballad (Easy Living, Darn That Dream)
- 3) Bebop head or intricate melody (Segment, Conception)
- 4) Brazilian/Straight 8ths groove (Ana Maria, Triste)
- 5) Jazz Standard (Moment's Notice, Along Came Betty)

These categories can be supplemented by other material as well, at the instructor's discretion. **For the final jury, students must have six of these tunes memorized and must create their own backing track for each.** I recommend creating a recording of yourself comping—a re-creation of the duo guitar style that we play in lessons. Use a metronome. Three to five choruses (depending on the type of tune) should suffice.

Transcription

The student will be expected to transcribe two **full** solos per semester, one for the midterm and one for the final jury. It is recommended that at least one of these solos be a guitar solo. **Both these solos should be computer notated, and the student must email a pdf of the computer notated transcription to their instructor and copy david.mooney@unt.edu.** For the final jury transcription, bring a hard copy of the transcription with you for Professor Mooney. The solo should be performed along with the recording, and the student should match the articulation and time feel of the soloist as well as the pitches and rhythms.

Chord Melody

The student will be expected to arrange two jazz standards for solo performance, in collaboration with the instructor, one for the mid-term and the other for the final jury. At least one of these should be a rubato ballad, which should be ornamented and embellished using techniques such as back-cycling, chord inversions, moving inner lines, single-note fills, and a variety of right-hand articulation techniques. **First year students may perform pre-written chord melodies, but second year through Graduate school and DMA students must arrange their own (with help from their instructor).**

Recording Lessons

Students are encouraged to record their lessons. Something that you or your instructor play during the lesson may be memorable or useful to you in the future. You also might want to chart your progress aurally over the course of the semester.

Tune Transcription

Given the varied quality of lead sheets of jazz tunes, you may be called upon to transcribe or correct a lead sheet of a standard tune. These lead sheets will be shared with the guitar department, and I encourage you to play these tunes on your gigs and add them to your repertoire.

Grading

The student must complete weekly assignments, in accord with all of the above course objectives and goals. A positive attitude and enthusiasm for the jazz practice are also key to a successful semester of lessons. Attendance at each week's lessons is mandatory, although in the case of illness or other unavoidable conflict absence may be excused. The instructor will make up any missed lessons, but student absences will not be rescheduled. **Each week's lesson will be graded (see "Weekly Lesson Breakdown" above) and averaged to make up 50% of the semester's grade. The mid-term transcription and chord melody will make up a further 20% of the semester's grade.**

40-Minute Lessons with Dr. Mooney

I wish there were a way for me to teach all of you privately, but the math doesn't work. I teach everyone during the semester of their senior and master's recitals, but I want to have more regular face-time with everyone in the department as they progress in their degree plans. So I will teach each of you one 40-minute lesson per semester, in addition to your weekly lessons with your instructor.

Guitar Departmental

The UNT jazz guitar departmental takes place every Friday, from 2 to 3pm, in room 262. You may be called upon to perform, space and time permitting: a short, **15-minute max**, 2-tune set. I recommend guitar trio, or quartet with horn or piano, with bass and drums. I will film these performances and they will be emailed to you. Seeing yourself perform live provides insight into the way your music is perhaps perceived by the audience—this is subjective and intangible, but it is helpful to put yourself in the audience's place, in some small way, by watching your performance. I recommend watching once or twice, analyzing strengths and weaknesses, but not getting overly obsessed with one performance. Jazz is an in-the-moment music, and the effectiveness of your playing will vary from day to day. I will also give you written comments on your performances, as will your private lesson teacher and other adjunct faculty who are present. **The music you play at departmental must be memorized. Attendance at guitar departmental is required. You will be allowed one unexcused absence. After that, your lesson grade will go down one letter.** Excused absences include illness, gigs, and other unforeseen circumstances, **but you have to communicate with me.**

Juries

The student will perform for a faculty panel at the end of each semester. The student will be required to perform a chord melody, a transcription, and to submit a video of a performance of one etude (which need not be memorized) from the semester's study. The video must be emailed to David.Mooney@unt.edu by the Wednesday of the week before finals, the traditional day that guitar juries are held. The student must also submit their six-tune repertoire list, and prepare a backing track **of guitar and metronome only** for each of the six tunes. One of these six will be chosen by Dr. Mooney and performed with the backing track. **The jury will make up the remaining 30% of the semester's grade.**

Barrier Exams

There are two jazz guitar barrier exams, that take the place of the Improv Continuation Exam (ICE) and the Final Improv Proficiency Exam for undergrads and grads (the FIPE and GIPE) which were discontinued in 2021.

Jazz guitar majors who want to progress from MUAC 1526 to MUAC 3526 (from Freshman/Sophomore lessons into Junior/Senior lessons) must pass the **UNT Jazz Guitar Scale and Fret Board Fluency Test**. And jazz guitar majors who wish to progress from MUAC 3526 into MUJS 4720, which is the Capstone senior recital class, as well as graduate students who want to progress from 5530 to 5535 (the Graduate recital class) must first pass the **Jazz Guitar Repertoire Test**. Both of these barrier exams will be offered during finals week and also at the beginning of each semester, so if for some reason you don't pass at the end of the semester you may try again at the beginning of the following semester so you don't get behind in your coursework.

DEFIBRILLATORS IN THE COLLEGE OF MUSIC

- Music Building: Across from the west side of the Music Commons, directly across from the elevator
- Music Building: Third floor hallway, across from the staircase that comes up from the Copy Room. Next to Room 322
- Music Building: Across from the Copy Room next to Room 293
- Music Building: Voertman Lobby by the big double set of doors that lead out to the courtyard
- Music Building: Main Office (247) under the student worker's desk
- Music Annex: Next to room MA117, near the triple set of doors on the east side of the building
- Music Practice Building North: First floor on the Avenue C side
- Music Practice Building South: First floor on the Avenue C side
- Bain Hall: First floor by the restrooms
- Murchison Performing Arts Center: Located off the main lobby, beyond the grand staircase, across from the single occupancy restroom (next to the public water fountains)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

See: [Academic Integrity](#)

LINK: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

See: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Link: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.

See: [Eagle Connect](#)

LINK: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. You can now request your Letters of Accommodation ONLINE and ODA will mail your Letters of Accommodation to your instructors. You may wish to begin a private discussion with your professors regarding your specific needs in a course. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access.

See: [ODA](#)

LINK: disability.unt.edu. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

Health and Safety Information

Students can access information about health and safety at:
<https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

Registration Information for Students

See: [Fall Academic Calendar Information](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Semester Calendar, Fall 2026

See: [Fall Semester Calendar](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Financial Aid and 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 hours registered. 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.

Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses.

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. It is recommended that 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 before doing so.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

LINK: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

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. Music scholarships require a 3.5 cumulative GPA. 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. It is recommended you schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college, an advisor in UNT-International or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

LINK: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

COUNSELING AND TESTING

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information:

See: [Counseling and Testing](#)

Link: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>.

For more information on mental health resources, please visit:

See: [Mental Health Resources](#)

Link: <https://disparities.unt.edu/mental-health-resources>

ADD/DROP POLICY

Please be reminded that dropping classes or failing to complete and pass registered hours may make you ineligible for financial aid. In addition, if you drop below half-time enrollment you may be required to begin paying back your student loans. See Academic Calendar (listed above) for additional add/drop Information.

Drop Information: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

STUDENT RESOURCES

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to:

See: [Student Resources](#)

Link: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

CARE TEAM

The Care Team is a collaborative interdisciplinary committee of university officials that meets regularly to provide a response to student, staff, and faculty whose behavior could be harmful to themselves or others.

See: [Care Team](#)

Link: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>

Additional Resources for Faculty

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (including sample statement for syllabi)

See: [Faculty Guide for the Use of AI](#)

Link: <https://guides.library.unt.edu/artificial-intelligence/AIfaculty>

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational

Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates.

See: [FERPA](#)

Link: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>