



JAZZ THEORY III

SYLLABUS - FALL 2026

MUJS 2400

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Office: MU339 (Office hours by appointment only)

CLASS TIMES

Mondays and Wednesdays

10:10 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

CLASS LOCATION

Music Building - Room 263

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Recommended: MUTH 1400, 1410, 1500, with grade of C or better and concurrent enrollment in MUJS 2410.

Restricted to Jazz Studies majors.

COURSE DESCRIPTION and OBJECTIVES

Catalog description: "Functional and expressive chromaticism, modal mixture, augmented 6th chords, and other advanced harmonic concepts with application to jazz, popular, and classical music. Advanced rhythmic analysis and training. Study of idiomatic jazz forms and common harmonic progressions."

What is music theory and why is it important? Is the study of jazz theory really necessary to be a viable, working jazz musician? Is this course the equivalent of taking calculus when all you really need to be able to do is balance your bank account and make sure you get the right amount of change at the grocery store?

We will explore these questions and many more with the intent of providing a practical understanding of jazz theory that will serve as a foundation for professional opportunities in music. This course will present a thorough exploration of the theoretical underpinnings of jazz performance and practice to include an emphasis on cross applications with improvisational and aural studies.

The learning objectives will be divided among five Units. These Units are generally coordinated with the structure of the Jazz Aural Skills III course. Each unit will be covered in roughly three weeks, but there is a lot of latitude built in to gauge actual classroom progress and flow. (See the section below, Semester Schedule)

UNIT 1 - Foundational Concepts – Relationships: Information, Language, Emotion, Cognition, and the Aural Experience

Students will examine, discuss, and demonstrate understanding of various fundamental concepts related to the above areas.

Students will review and demonstrate understanding of basic theory concepts, such as overtone series, pitch hierarchy, circle of fifths, nomenclature, and notation.

UNIT 2 - Tonality Studies

Students will demonstrate understanding of basic tonal, pitch, and intervallic relationships.

UNIT 3 - Rhythmic Studies

Students will demonstrate understanding of basic rhythmic relationships and patterns.

UNIT 4 - Chord/Scale Theory and Functional Harmony

Students will demonstrate understanding of basic chord construction.

Students will demonstrate understanding of chordal and modal relationships.

Students will demonstrate understanding of selected/related scale structures.

UNIT 5 - Linear Harmonic Movement (Progression) Studies

Students will be able to identify various standard harmonic progressions.

Students will be able to utilize standard harmonic analytical tools.

Students will be able to identify and analyze common resolutions and transitory material.

Students will be able to analyze common harmonic progressions.

Interspersed among these units will be related and/or supporting skills or concepts:

- Facts About Jazz Theory
- Relational Theory Concept
- Review of Foundational Theory Concepts
- Rhythm Concepts
- Basis for Tonality and Tonal Gravity
- Functional Harmony
- Harmonic Movements and Progressions
- Voice Leading and Guide Tones
- Harmonic Analysis Tools and Procedures

COURSE MATERIALS

1. You must have note taking materials, including a **music manuscript paper notebook**. Class notes are part of your participation grade!

2. Textbook(s) for the class is as follows:

- The **required** text for this course is *Jazz Theory Resources, Volume 1* by Bert Ligon. You must purchase this text.
 - Current UNT Bookstore pricing as of this syllabus is NEW/\$45.00; USED \$33.75; RENTAL (NEW)/\$38.25; RENTAL (USED) \$21.40 (See link below for actual pricing.)
 - You may find other, more economical options online, or alternatively via the University Library resources (Inter-Library Loan, etc.).
- The supplemental **recommended** text is *The Jazz Theory Book* by Mark Levine. You are not required to purchase this text.
- Texts can be purchased from the University Bookstore at this link:

[https://unt.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TBListView?catalogId=10001&storeId=71237&langId=-1&courseXml=<textbookorder xmlns=""><courses><course dept="MUJS" num="2400" sect="003\(14806\)" term="F26"></course></courses></textbookorder>](https://unt.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TBListView?catalogId=10001&storeId=71237&langId=-1&courseXml=<textbookorder xmlns=)

3. The required text was chosen primarily for its thoroughness, clarity, and sensitivity to the needs of the jazz theory student. Other texts certainly could have met these categories, but this text exceeds these criteria and does so at a very affordable price, which is a priority for me as an instructor who is also currently the parent of college students.

Despite the use of a required textbook, all topics and concepts will be introduced in respective class lectures throughout the course, and may incorporate outside supplemental material.

There is no shortage of jazz theory and related texts available to today's jazz student. Some of these texts may be referenced or utilized to supplement material or concepts presented in this course. You are not required to purchase or obtain these additional texts, but they may enhance your understanding and application of concepts presented in the course. A sampling of supplemental texts include the following (in no particular order):

1. *The Art of Music Copying* by Clinton Roemer
2. *Comprehensive Technique for Jazz Musicians* by Bert Ligon
3. *How to Improvise* by Hal Crook
4. *Jazz Handbook* by Jamey Aebersold
5. *Jazz Theory* by Dariusz Terefenko
6. *Arranging and Composing* by David Baker
7. *Jazz Improvisation for Keyboard Players – Complete Edition* by Dan Haerle
8. *The Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization* by George Russell
9. *Inside the Score* by Rayburn Wright
10. *The Berklee Book of Jazz Harmony* by Joe Mulholland and Tom Hojnacki
11. *A Thesaurus of Scales* by Nicholas Slonimsky
12. *Techniques of Twentieth Century Composition* by Leon Dallin
13. *Harmony, Volumes 1 & 2* by Allen Winold

4. Supplemental handouts, readings, recordings, or materials may be utilized and will be made available via Canvas in the module, "Additional Materials," or the applicable Unit.

5. You will need access to a **reliable notation software** such as Sibelius or Dorico to submit certain assignments or homework. Freeware or web-based software is discouraged as these options lack clarity and consistency. Professional notation software can be accessed via the CoM Computer Lab.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- Be ready for class to begin at 10:10 a.m. on class days. This means in your seat with your manuscript notebook, pencil, etc. ready to go.
- Be musically prepared for class.
- This course will be a minimal technology use environment. **Cell phone use is not permitted during class**, and phones should be put away, silenced and/or turned completely off. If you disrupt the instructional cycle in class with cell phone (or other technology) use, you will be called upon to adhere to the policy, and repeated infractions will result in direction for you to leave the classroom. See section on Student Behavior below.
- Course information will be disseminated in class, Canvas announcements, or Canvas page postings. Check often for updates and new information.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- Attendance is required for all class activities and is factored into your grade (see Grading Criteria below).
- Absences may be excused on a case-by-case basis with **advance notice**. **In the case of an excused absence**, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes or assignments.
- Absences that do not fall under Pregnancy and Parenting, Military Service, Religious Holy Days, and Official University Functions, as defined by the official University policy (see link below) are deemed a matter between the student and their faculty member. If the absence is an illness or extenuating circumstance that exceeds five (5) consecutive days, the faculty member may request for the student to provide documentation through the Dean of Students' office.
- If you miss class without prior notice it will be considered an unexcused absence until you communicate with the instructor. It is your responsibility to inform the instructor as soon as possible after an unexpected absence.
- It is important that you **communicate** with the instructor prior to any expected absence, so you can mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals.
- Concerning other extenuating circumstances, per official University policy, the decision to excuse any absence remains with the faculty member.

GRADING CRITERIA

The final grade will be determined according to the following criteria:

- Class participation, preparation, and homework - 20%
- Quizzes - 35%
- Assignments - 35%
- Final Exam - 10%

There is a final exam for this course.

The final course grade is weighted according to the above categories and graded on the following scale: A (90-100%), B (80-89%), C (70-79%), D (60-69%), F (0-59%).

The following factors will affect your grade in various measures:

- Professional attitude at all times.
- Quality and consistency of preparation for class exercises or assignments. All printed work must be neat, ordered, and legible.
- Timely submission of all assignments. Late work will not be accepted.
- Adherence to the attendance policy. Various materials and concepts will be presented in each class and at times information will move quickly. EVERY student will be called at some point for individual class participation both for demonstration or discussion. Be prepared!
- Chronic UNEXCUSED absences from class will result in the loss of a letter grade(s). This circumstance may require a meeting with the student, the instructor, and/or the Chair of the Jazz Division. These meetings will determine any subsequent actions to be taken. The extent to which your grade is affected by unexcused absences will be determined by the instructor after considering all pertinent facts surrounding the situation.

- Extra Credit: Extra credit is a privilege and not guaranteed. There may be opportunities to receive extra credit during the semester via special projects detailed by the instructor.

ASSIGNMENTS and QUIZZES

Each Unit will have one assignment and one quiz.

There will be five (5) Unit quizzes and five (5) Unit assignments. These will cover skills and concepts from class presentations and material covered in that unit. Each quiz may contain comprehensive material from previous units. Unit quizzes may be administered in class or via Canvas; SOME may be hybrid and include a class portion with an additional portion to be completed via Canvas; this may include a recorded submission. You may drop the lowest grade on your Unit Quizzes.

There will be at least five (5) short pop quizzes which will be administered in class. These will not be on the class schedule and will occur at random times. **If you are absent (unexcused) on the day of a pop quiz, you will receive a zero (0) grade for that quiz.** You may drop the lowest grade on your pop quizzes.

Unless otherwise instructed, quizzes will be taken individually via Canvas during class time. You may also be given an extended period of time to complete them. Pay attention to the AVAILABILITY date and the DUE date and time for each quiz. Your submission must be posted to Canvas by the due date/time. Quizzes may have specific parameters or components, so be precise and careful when reading and completing the test.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

The table below is the general schedule for the semester. All of this information will be presented, but class acquisition and flow will be taken into consideration. Class time may need to be adjusted to achieve class learning objectives.

Therefore, the **course content is subject to change** as necessary to meet the collective needs of the class based on actual progress and comprehension. The goal for the course is not simply to present information, have you memorize it, and then reproduce it on a test. Instead, we want to foster an engaging environment where you can be inspired to think critically about theory and build lifelong foundations of practical understanding.

In the event of any changes, you will receive notice in class and via Canvas of any necessary adjustments. **Dates for Exams, Assignments, and Transcriptions may adjust with delivery schedule of course content.** If any class change precludes the inclusion of certain information for an exam or assignment, the task will be altered accordingly.

NOTE: Students should NOT schedule an end-of-semester jury during one of our regularly scheduled class times.

GENERAL CLASS SCHEDULE – FALL 2026

WEEKLY SCHEDULE	READING/ASSIGNMENTS/QUIZZES/EXAMS
WEEK 1 – UNIT 1 Monday 17 AUG	Pre-assessment

• Introductory remarks, syllabus review, class overview, explanation of assignments and expectations, philosophy and purpose • Introductory exercise	
Wednesday 19 AUG • Relationships • Foundational Concepts, Language, Music & Emotion	<i>Pages 1-9</i>
<u>WEEK 2</u> Monday 24 AUG • Cycle – Spin Class	
Wednesday 26 AUG • Nomenclature and Notation • Exercises	Assignment 1 Due
<u>WEEK 3</u> Monday 31 AUG • Which Came First – The Chicken or the Scale?	
Wednesday 2 SEP • Various and Multiplied Scales	QUIZ 1
<u>WEEK 4 – UNIT 2</u> Monday 7 SEP - LABOR DAY - NO CLASS – HOLIDAY ROUTINE	<i>Pages 52-68</i>
Wednesday 9 SEP • Tonal Gravity	
<u>WEEK 5</u> Monday 14 SEP • Pitch Hierarchy	
Wednesday 16 SEP • Triads	Assignment 2 Due <i>Pages 69-94</i>
<u>WEEK 6</u> Monday 21 SEP • Pentatonic	
Wednesday 23 SEP • Blues	QUIZ 2
<u>WEEK 7 – UNIT 3</u> Monday 28 SEP • Rhythm of Life	<i>Pages 10-51</i>
Wednesday 30 SEP • The Elusive Element	Assignment 3 Due
<u>WEEK 8</u> Monday 5 OCT • Kitchen Sync	Class Notebook Check
Wednesday 7 OCT • Mix-Master	QUIZ 3
<u>WEEK 9 - UNIT 4</u> Monday 12 OCT • The Chord in the Stone	<i>Pages 108-134</i>

Wednesday 14 OCT	
Something is Fishy Around Here	
WEEK 10	
Monday 19 OCT	
Tippin' the Scales	
Wednesday 21 OCT	Assignment 4 Due
Tune Applications	
WEEK 11	<i>Pages 224-263</i>
Monday 26 OCT	
Connecting Notes	
Wednesday 28 OCT	QUIZ 4
Outlines	
WEEK 12 - UNIT 5	<i>Pages 179-223</i>
Monday 2 NOV	
- Root Movements - Guide Tones	
Wednesday 4 NOV	
- Common Progressions I Interlude	
WEEK 13	Assignment 5 Due
Monday 9 NOV	
Common Progressions II	
Wednesday 11 NOV	<i>Pages 151-178</i>
Resolutions & Turn-Arounds	
WEEK 14	Class Notebooks Due
Monday 16 NOV	Notebooks will be checked in class
Substitutions	
Wednesday 18 NOV	QUIZ 5
Analysis	
WEEK 15	
Mon 23 NOV - THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS – HOLIDAY ROUTINE	
Wed 25 NOV - THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS – HOLIDAY ROUTINE	
WEEK 16	
Monday 30 NOV	
Final Exam Review	
Wednesday 2 DEC	
LAST CLASS! - Conclusions and Consequences	

UNT OFFICIAL POLICIES/STATEMENTS:**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.

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>

(940) 565-4323

UNT OFFICIAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-039>

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.

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

HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

<https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

DEFIBRILLATOR LOCATIONS 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)

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

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

SEMESTER CALENDAR, FALL 2026

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

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE, FALL 2026 - See above

FINANCIAL AID AND SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Please visit the webpage and search for criteria for either undergraduates and graduates.

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

RETENTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

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

COUNSELING AND TESTING

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

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

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

ADD/DROP POLICY

See Academic Calendar (listed above) for additional add/drop Information.

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

STUDENT RESOURCES

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

<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.

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

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the Jazz Division Canvas page for contingency plans for covering course materials.

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.

eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The University of North Texas promotes the integrity of learning and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the University. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the University's actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence.

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

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Academic Integrity - Academic misconduct is present in an academic work wherever AI assistance has been used when unauthorized, or when authorized, has not been disclosed as required.

Expect changes - The developments around generative AI are in flux and the rules that are expressed in this syllabus may need to change on short notice. This may affect the contents of assignments, as well as their evaluation.

Generative AI Use Is Prohibited - The use of generative AI is strictly prohibited in this course.

General Writing - The use of generative AI tools is not permitted on any writing, arrangement, composition, or transcription assignments in this course. By submitting a writing assignment, you attest that you are the only and original author.

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

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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.

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

COURSE SAFETY PROCEDURES

Safety during rehearsals and performances is of the highest priority. Various procedures will be discussed in class to facilitate proper actions during a campus emergency.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ANY UNT or COURSE RELATED TOPIC please visit the university web pages.

<https://www.unt.edu>