

Course Description & Objectives

PAGE 1

Attendance/ Grading/ Policies

PAGE 2

Policies/ Course Content

PAGE 3

MUJS 4120/5130/5490

VOCAL JAZZ STYLES/GRADUATE IMPROVISATION (VOCAL)



Description & Objectives of the Course

Vocal Jazz Styles serves as the final classroom curriculum course for vocalists in the UNT Division of Jazz Studies, with the purpose of bringing together many facets of what it takes to be a successful professional jazz vocalist once you will be leaving the program. There will be heavy emphasis on vocal improvisation skills at a high level, moving past “making the changes” and into content that is practical and relevant. Those graduate students who are enrolled for Graduate Improvisation will follow the same syllabus and curriculum for the class, but will use more advanced song selections for the same assignments, and often at different tempos. They will also meet one additional 50-minute period to further reinforce the more advanced topics of the class.

By the end of this semester, you will:

- Improvise both syllabically and using lyrics competently in a way befitting the voice on the blues, in static/modal harmony, at fast tempos, and straight eighth-note (Brazilian) grooves.
- Develop practice methods for practicing improvising over chord changes in a combination of theoretical and aural ways.
- Have researched some of the most important current jazz vocalists
- Be confident with concepts related to musical programming and performance aesthetics in recital, concert and gig settings.

Course Information

T/Th 11 - 11:50 am Rm. 292

(Grad Improv also meets
Fr 11:00 - 11:50)

Instructor: Prof. Jennifer Barnes

Office: Rm 346

email: jennifer.barnes@unt.edu

cell: (661) 713-0260

Course Attendance, Grading & Policies

- Absences are limited to two for the semester. If there is a medical emergency, the student and instructor will work out a modified due date for the assignment(s) missed ASAP. Other than a medical impossibility of singing, all assignments will be submitted by recording prior to class meeting on the due date or will be subject to a late penalty (see below). It is imperative that you communicate with me *prior to being absent* as to what may be preventing you from coming to class in order for the absence to be considered excused.
- Each assignment/performance will be graded on Canvas; the grade is determined by the quality of preparation and the musicality of the assignments/performances.
- The final semester grade will be calculated as follows:
 1. Attendance and class participation – 15%
 2. Assignment grades, averaged – 75%
 3. Final performance – 10%
- Homework, in-class performances or projects that are submitted late will be subject to a grade reduction off the total grade on the following scale, but will still be expected to be completed, since you must learn the material (exceptions will **only** be made for excused absences cleared in advance):
 - 1 – 2 days late = 10% reduction
 - 3 – 6 days late = 25% reduction
 - 7 – 13 days late = 50% reduction
 - 14+ days late = no credit
- My expectation for participation in this class is that you will be attentive, ask questions, volunteer to try things in class, and support others in class by giving positive and constructive feedback when they sing.
- Although use of a phone to record examples or performances in class is permitted and encouraged, please make sure that the phone is in “Airplane Mode”.
- Similarly, although you may use a laptop to take notes in class if you wish, please do not have any other content open on your screen during class, in order to be fully attentive and engaged in the learning process.

If you do well in this class, you too can be successful, like these people!



- Scheduled assignments, due dates and specific content for each assignment will be on **Canvas**, NOT this syllabus, due to adjustments that will invariably need to be made to accommodate the individual pace and level of this specific class. It is each student's responsibility to consult the online course to verify each assignment's content and due date.

Course content

We will have course modules that cover the following topics related to improvisation and performance skills for jazz vocalists:

- Programming for recitals, concerts, and other performance settings
- Review of methods of practicing chord changes, particularly for challenging transitions
- Improvising in the following specific musical contexts:
 - Blues
 - Modal jazz
 - Brazilian styles
 - Fast tempos
 - Odd meters
 - "Rhythm" changes

University policies:

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

Student behavior policy: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

Eagle Connect info: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA Statement: disability.unt.edu

Diversity Policy: <https://idea.unt.edu/diversity-inclusion>

Registration information: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>

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

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

Retention of student records policy: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

Financial aid and academic progress: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

Full list of student resources: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

Final exam schedule: <https://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/fall>

Academic calendar: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-registration-guide>

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

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