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MUJS 3120/5174

VOCAL JAZZ TECHNIQUES



Description & Objectives of the Course

Vocal Jazz Techniques serves as the band-leading practicum for the vocalists in the UNT Division of Jazz Studies, and a band experience for the rhythm section, with the purpose of bringing together many facets of what it takes to be a successful professional jazz vocalist/leader OR a player. For vocalists, there will be equal emphasis on chart-writing and leadership skills on the bandstand. For rhythm section, the focus will be on being a productive and positive collaborator with the vocalists AND fellow band members.

By the end of this semester, you will have increased your skills in:

- Expressing what you want from a rhythm section verbally; receiving and interpreting instructions for the rhythm section
- Writing charts that are exact representations of what you want to happen musically in a performance; reading the charts well
- Having more confidence with general leadership skills during your performances; understand and empathize with what the vocalist's unique challenges are
- Doing all of the above while maintaining an outward projection in performance (to your audience) that is musically expressive and hides as much of the "behind the scenes" work going on as possible
- Giving constructive, supportive feedback to fellow musicians (instrumentalists and vocalists)

You will also expand your repertoire through exploring new songs and hearing the songs that others in the class choose to perform.

Course Information

T/TH 11 - 11:50 pm Rm. 282

Instructor: Jennifer Barnes

Office: MU 346

email: jennifer.barnes@unt.edu

cell: (661) 713-0260

Office Hours: By appt. - see office door or online for options

Course Attendance, Grading & Policies

- Due to the compressed and experiential nature of the class, **attendance is required at all sessions**. An absence that occurs without prior communication of the legitimate excuse will be marked **unexcused**. An unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by five points off the total grade for the semester. If additional unexcused absences occur, the final grade is subject to lowering by 5 points for each subsequent absence.
- Tardiness should be avoided at all costs — you are earning your reliability and punctuality reputation with your peers NOW! Being late will result in the lowering of the daily participation grade.
- If you are unable to attend class due to illness or personal emergency, please **email me before class**. **If the emergency or illness happens within one hour prior to class, please text my cell phone instead, as I will not check e-mail that close to the start of class.**
- **Rhythm section players must send a sub (at equal or better playing level) if they will be absent, and notify Prof. Barnes in advance.** Please be aware that you are being graded for not only your playing level, but also your attitude and positive contributions to the class in the same way you would in a lab band. It is imperative that you communicate with me *prior* to being absent so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class.
- Every student will be expected to participate in every class by being on time, listening attentively to the performance, taking notes, and offering feedback courteously and in a constructive, positive manner. Please be mindful that with a large number of vocalists in class, hearing everyone's voice in feedback at some point is the goal! Seek to truly listen to others and value their contributions as much as or more than your own at times.
- Each assignment/performance will be graded on Canvas; you may check your grades and discuss any questions about grading with me at any time. Performance grades are determined by the quality of preparation and the musicality of the assignments/performances.

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



- The final semester grade will be calculated as follows:
 1. Attendance and class participation – 20%
 2. In-class performances (including charts) – 60%
 3. Written assignments - 10%
 4. Final performance and written assessment– 10%
- Written homework assignments or charts 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:
 - **1 – 2 days late = 10% reduction**
 - **3 – 6 days late = 25% reduction**
 - **7 – 13 days late = 50% reduction**
 - **14+ days late = no credit**
- Please silence your cell phone prior to entering the classroom space and put it in an inaccessible place to avoid causing distraction to yourself or anyone else. The only exception will be when you use your phone as a recording device, in which case it should be used in “AIRPLANE MODE”.
- Laptops may not be used during class.

In-Class Performances, Assignments & Final Performance

- Class performances will be in three groups, with the first day having 2 performers, the second day having 3 performers, the third day having 2 performers. We will rotate in alphabetical order for each performance, and I will explain further in person! We will begin the first assignment in the order that follows.
 - **Group 1:** Scarlet Carus, Chloe Langford
 - **Group 2:** Cailyn Milner, Jae Park, Reece Robinson
 - **Group 3:** Naomi Warren, Justin Woods
- The next rotation begins with Group 1 as Chloe and Cailyn, Group 2 as Jae, Reece and Naomi, Group 3 as Justin and Scarlet, et.
- **All songs must be performed from memory, but you need a copy of your chart to look at and on which to make notes, and you may have notes for your talk-thru.**
- **Every chart assignment must be created using computer notation software, meeting the expectations laid out for chart creation and uploaded as a PDF to Canvas. In addition, you must bring 4 printed and taped copies** on your designated performance day. The chart must be uploaded BEFORE CLASS BEGINS, or will be considered late and graded accordingly.

- The performer must video record their performance (if using a cell phone, make sure there is sufficient memory). After each performance, the class will have a brief discussion, and all students will offer feedback in a constructive, respectful and professional manner.
- After each time a student performs, he/she will watch/listen to the performance and write a self-assessment prior to the next class (details will be on Canvas).
- Students must update and correct all charts for songs performed throughout the semester immediately after the performance date in order to solidify the corrections and suggestions made in class. More details on “book” requirements will be discussed in class.
- There will be a Syndicate lunchtime performance by the class members on April 3 (details will be on Canvas).

University policies & services

Academic Integrity Policy: <http:// facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity>

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

ODA Statement: disability.unt.edu

Retention of Student Records: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

The day-by-day syllabus will be on Canvas, as it will need to be flexible and allow for occasional adjustments throughout the semester.