

## **MUJS 4120 Vocal Jazz Styles**

## **MUJS 5490 Advanced Jazz Improvisation**

**Tues/Thurs 11:00 – 11:50 am, Room 292**

**Instructor: Jennifer Barnes**

**E-mail: [Jennifer.barnes@unt.edu](mailto:Jennifer.barnes@unt.edu)**

**Phone/Text: (661) 713-0260 (emergency only, please)**

**Office: MU 346**

### **Prerequisites:**

- Two semesters Vocal Jazz Techniques
- Passed Upper Division Exam
- Pass ICE (undergrad); pass FIPE for Grad. Improv students

Absences are limited to two for the semester, regardless of excused or unexcused. Any missed assignment must be made up within 1 week, by appointment in instructor's office.

Each assignment/performance will be graded (posted on Blackboard) and is determined by the quality of preparation and the musicality of the assignments, in the case of performances. The final semester grade will be calculated from:

- Attendance and class participation – 15%
- Assignment grades, averaged – 60%
- Mid-term (10%) & final exam (15%)

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

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

Although this syllabus is a guide to our plan for this class throughout the semester, the final word on scheduled assignments, due dates, and specific content for each assignment will be on **Blackboard**, 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 between **every class** to verify each assignment's content and due date.

**Course content:** Vocal Jazz Styles serves as the final class experience for the vocal jazz program, and

is taken in the semester prior to the vocal jazz senior recital. The course focuses upon putting together the skills that have been collected throughout the curriculum and having an artistic and musically holistic (and REALISTIC) view of using those skills. Advanced Jazz

Improvisation (for graduate student vocalists) will require additional work and a higher level of performance on the same material as that of the Vocal Jazz Styles student's assignments. Areas of focus include, but are not limited to:

1. **Performance and improvisation** in three styles of jazz:
  - Swing tunes and blues
  - Fast tempi tunes, including syllabic and lyric improvisation
  - Ballads, featuring lyric improvisation
2. **Piano skills**
3. **Creating programming for recitals, concerts & gigs**

**Approximate course content schedule (see BLACKBOARD for updates!):**

**Week 1**

- Tues 8/30 First meeting; discuss purpose and goals of class
- Thurs 9/1 Blues handout. "Shape" handout.  
ASSIGNMENT: Play blues bass line @ 2 & 4 = 50 - 60 with good time feel by Tuesday. Play r.h. comping figures the same. (Not together yet.) Also, solo 3 choruses of blues on "McDuff's Groove", demonstrating blues vocabulary.

**Week 2**

- Tues 9/6 Due: Piano single-handed blues assignment & blues soloing. Discuss "book" and organization methods.  
Programming for concerts, clubs, etc. What makes a good set.  
ASSIGNMENT: Put blues together w/ 2 hands (2 & 4 = 50 - 60)
- Thurs 9/8 Due: Piano blues – 2 hands. Programs/set lists/performance aesthetics, Part 2.

**Week 3**

- Tues 9/13 Programs, pt. 3. ASSIGNMENT:  
Create a 60-min program with instrumentation notes, solo orders, arrangement ideas, etc., using the notes we discussed about programming.
- Thurs 9/15 Due: Mock concert program.  
"Methods of Shedding Changes" handout. "Chord Surfing" handout.  
ASSIGNMENT: Shed changes to "Autumn Leaves" (undergrad) & "Alone Together" (grad)– voice & piano.

**Week 4**

- Tues 9/20 (No class – Jazz Singers off campus for Richland College gig)
- Thurs 9/22 Due: Autumn & Alone – play changes. Explore changes & pitfalls of these changes.  
ASSIGNMENT: Changes to "Autumn" & "Alone": prepare a 2 chorus solo, with the first chorus accompanied, second a cappella.

### **Week 5**

- Tues 9/27 Due: “Autumn”/”Alone” – 2 chorus solo. Explore motivic development techniques. ASSIGNMENT: “Autumn”/”Alone”: Two choruses improv: motives ONLY for 1st chorus, free on the 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Thurs 9/29 Due: “Autumn”/”Alone”, Motivic development assignment. ASSIGNMENT: Shed “Have You Met Miss Jones”/”Joyspring” – voice & piano.

### **Week 6**

- Tues 10/4 Explore “Miss Jones” & “Joyspring”.  
ASSIGNMENT: “Miss Jones-1” @ 120 – 2 choruses (1<sup>st</sup> accomp, 2<sup>nd</sup> aca)  
Also play changes at minimum 55 bpm (2-feel bass line).
- Thurs 10/6 Due: Play “Jones” changes at minimum 55 bpm (2-feel bass line). Sing 2 choruses @ 120 (1<sup>st</sup> accomp, 2<sup>nd</sup> aca). Workout “Jones” @ 160. Discuss midterm.  
ASSIGNMENT: Choose swing tune for midterm to be approved. “Miss Jones-2” @ 160 – 2 choruses (1<sup>st</sup> accomp, 2<sup>nd</sup> aca)

### **Week 7**

- Tues 10/11 Due: “Miss Jones-2” @ 160. 2 choruses (1<sup>st</sup> accomp, 2<sup>nd</sup> aca) Discuss rhythmic tools for faster tempos. Approval of swing tune for midterm.  
ASSIGNMENT: “Miss Jones-3” @ 180 – 2 choruses (1<sup>st</sup> accomp, 2<sup>nd</sup> aca)
- Thurs 10/13 Due: “Miss Jones-3” @ 180 – 2 accompanied choruses  
ASSIGNMENT: “Miss Jones-4” @ 200/230 (Styles/Grad).

### **Week 8**

- Tues 10/18 Due: “Miss Jones-4” @ 200/230. 2 accompanied choruses  
Workout “Miss Jones” faster. ASSIGNMENT: “Miss Jones-5” @ 200/230 (Styles/Grad).
- Thurs 10/20 Discuss current artist reports – draw due date. Workout on “Jones” – fast.

### **Week 9**

- Tues 10/25 Due: “Miss Jones-5” @ 220/264. 2 accompanied choruses
- Thurs 10/27 MIDTERM EXAM: Play and sing a swing tune with a simple arrangement (some improv required somewhere!) ASSIGNMENT: “Corcovado” – shed piano/voice.

### **Week 10**

- Tues 11/1 Due: “Corcovado” on piano. Discuss bossa improv – diminished chords.
- Thurs 11/3 Due: “Corcovado” on voice (see Bb assignment).  
Work “Spain” & “Chega de Saudade”

### **Week 11**

Tues 11/8 Due: “Spain”/“Chega” on piano

Thurs 11/10 Due: “Spain”/“Chega” – voice

ASSIGNMENT: Bring favorite “meaty” ballad.

## Week 12

Tues 11/15 Ballads – listen and discuss. Piano skills for ballad playing.

Thurs 11/17 Current Artist Reports (2).

## Week 13

Tues 11/22 Due: ballad with lyric interpretation, melodic improvisation.

Discuss Final Exam:

1. Choose an up-tempo (220-260) selection to sing/blow over – 3x thru the form w/ intro & ending; (1<sup>st</sup> time is melody, 2<sup>nd</sup> time blowing, 3<sup>rd</sup> time melody)
2. self-accompany on a ballad – ONCE THROUGH THE FORM
3. accompany assigned partner on a medium swing tune – twice thru w/ intro and ending (2<sup>nd</sup> time thru is improv 1<sup>st</sup> half, melody 2<sup>nd</sup> half).

ASSIGNMENT: Pick up-tempo tune to work on fast lyric presentation.  
(Styles: 230, Grad: 275 bpm)

Thurs 11/24 (No class – THANKSGIVING.)

## Week 14

Tues 11/29 Current Artist Reports (2). FIPE/GIPE master class. Assignment: Prep up-tempo tune with fast lyric presentation.

Thurs 12/1 First presentation of up-tempo lyric tune.

## Week 15

Tues 12/6 Due: Second grade on up-tempo lyric delivery. FIPE/GIPE prep;

Thurs 12/8 FIPE/GIPE mock juries; Q & A – recital discussion.

## Week 16

Tues 12/13 FINAL EXAM/PERFORMANCE (open to the public – invite friends!)  
11 a – 12:30 p.m.

### 1. Office of Disability Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

2. **Financial Aid 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 registered hours per term. 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.

3. 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. Please visit <http://financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for 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 being doing so.

4. **Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (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. 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.

5. 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. Please visit <http://financialaid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for 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 being doing so.

6. **Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. Any suspected case of Academic Dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the University Policy and procedures. Possible academic penalties range from a verbal or written admonition to a grade of “F” in the course. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. You will find the policy and procedures at: <http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>.

7. **Student Behavior in the Classroom**

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 Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities 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 classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at: [www.unt.edu/csr](http://www.unt.edu/csr).