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# 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 F 11 - 11:50)

Instructor: Jennifer Barnes

Office: Rm 346

email: [jennifer.Barnes@unt.edu](mailto: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). While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19. Please contact me if you are unable to attend class because you are ill, or unable to attend class due to a related issue regarding COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with me *prior to being absent* as to what may be preventing you from coming to class so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class. If you are experiencing cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, or any of the other possible symptoms of COVID-19 please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center and write to [COVID@unt.edu](mailto:COVID@unt.edu). While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.
- 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 when you have them, volunteer to try

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



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” as you do that so that you and others will not be distracted by incoming data of any kind.
- 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.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Although this syllabus is a guide to our plan for this class, the final word on 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.

### Required Textbook:

*Vocal Jazz Improvisation: An Instrumental Approach (Intermediate & Advanced Studies)*, by Darmon Meader. *If you don’t own the book yet, I will take an order at the start of class.*



### Additional University policies:

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

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

**ADA Accommodation Statement.** UNT 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 a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students 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 ODA website at [disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu).