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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.

By the end of this semester, you will be able to:

- Improvise competently in a way befitting the voice at fast tempos, blues, and straight eighth-note grooves.
- Develop practice methods for practicing improvising over chord changes in a combination of theoretical and aural ways.
- Have a grasp of who the most important current jazz vocalists (soloists and ensembles) are.
- Have more confidence with self-accompaniment at the piano.
- 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. 282

Instructor: Jennifer Barnes

Office: Rm 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

- 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 other assignments that were due in class must be submitted on the day due or will be subject to a late penalty. (see below)
- Each assignment/performance will be graded on Blackboard; 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 – 10%
 2. Assignment grades, averaged – 75%
 3. 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
- 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 plan to use your phone as a recording device, in which case it must remain in “AIRPLANE MODE”.
- Laptops may be used for note-taking and recording, but no other activities. Students found to be doing so will earn a failing grade for class participation for that day.
- **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 **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 to verify each assignment’s content and due date.

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



Required Textbook:

Vocal Jazz Improvisation: An Instrumental Approach (Intermediate & Advanced Studies), by Darmon Meader (audio examples by Darmon Meader and Rosana Eckert!). Available for purchase at the UNT Barnes & Noble Bookstore.

**Additional University policies:**

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/>

Final Examination Schedule: <http://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/fall>

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Bb for more specifics)
1	1/16	Introduction to class; Syllabus review; Intro to blues, transcription of chord changes.	"McDuff's Groove" #1
2	1/18	Blues vocabulary; soloing over "McDuff's Groove"; Intro to piano assignment format	"McDuff's Groove" #2. Upload piano performance of blues changes.
3	1/23	Blues performances; begin discussing song lists (Google doc); start discussion of programming.	Google doc songlist.
4	1/25	Programming discussion, Part 2.	Create a 60-minute thematic concert program.
5	1/30	Programming discussion, Part 3.	Turn in preliminary recital program
6	2/1	Methods of Shedding Changes; introduce "Alone Together" (Styles) & "I Remember You" (Improv)	Shed vocal improv. Upload piano changes.
7	2/6	Workout on changes - introduce motivic development.	Two choruses soloing
8	2/8	In-class performances; shed and prep for a cappella performances	Self-evaluation; prep for two choruses of accompanied soloing: one a cappella, one accompanied..
9	2/13	In-class performances; further motivic development.	Self-eval; prep for final motivic development performance; 1st chorus accompanied, 2nd a cappella.
10	2/15	In-class performances; start Darmon Meader vocabulary etude.	Self eval; practice Meader etude
11	2/20	Meader etude; Vocabulary & Licks	Meader etude

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Bb for more specifics)
12	2/22	Wrap vocabulary/licks; start "Miss Jones" & "Joy Spring"	Work changes for soloing. Upload piano changes.
13	2/27	Workshop and feedback on tunes.	Practice for first performance of "Jones/Joyspring". Upload changes.
14	3/1	First grade on "Jones"/"Joyspring" (120 bpm); discuss Midterm Performance Exam.	Self-eval; continued work at faster tempi; choose mid-term song selection and upload title for approval.
15	3/6	Workout faster tempo of "Jones/Joyspring"	Shed vocal improv. Upload piano changes.
16	3/8	Second grade on "Jones"/"Joyspring" (180 bpm)	Self-eval; continued work at faster tempi.
17	3/13- 15	SPRING BREAK	
18	3/20	Workout fastest tempos of "Jones/Joyspring" OR tune of your choice	Shed
19	3/22	Final grade on "Jones"/"Joyspring" OR tune of your choice at 220 (Styles) or 264 (Grad Improv)	Self-eval
20	3/27	Alternate tune fast tempo improv	Prep "Corcovado" - listening report to several recordings.
21	3/29	"Corcovado" - workout. Diminished scale work in Meader book.	Prep piano & soloing on "Corcovado"; upload changes.
22	4/3	Vocal performances of "Corcovado".	Self-eval; work "Spain" & "Chega"; upload changes.
23	4/5	In-class workshop on "Spain/Chega"	
24	4/10	In-class performances of "Spain/Chega" - #1. Discuss final exam.	Self-eval
25	4/12	Current Artist Reports (3)	Written assignment on listening to one of the artists.
26	4/17	In-class performances of "Spain/Chega" - #2. FIPE/GIPE discussion.	Self-eval
27	4/19	Current Artist Reports (3) (me gone)	Written assignment on listening to one of the artists.
28	4/24	Current Artist Reports (2); Prep for FIPE/GIPE.	Written assignment on listening to one of the artists.
29	4/26	FIPE/GIPE trial run #1; SPOT evaluation in class (please bring device)	Prep for final.
30	5/1	FIPE/GIPE trial run #2	
	5/3	Final Performance Exam - Open to the "public"	