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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, on the blues, in static/modal harmony, and straight eighth-note (Brazilian) 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

W/F 12 - 12:50 pm Rm. 292

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 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
- 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 **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.

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/>

Spring 2019 Final Exam Schedule

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Bb for more specifics)
1	1/16	Introduction to class; Syllabus review; Intro to blues.	
2	1/18	Blues vocabulary; soloing over "McDuff's Groove"; transcription of changes.	"McDuff's Groove" #1
3	1/23	Blues performances; discuss song lists (Google doc);	Self-evaluation of McDuff #1 performance. Prep "McDuff's Groove" performance #2. Upload piano performance of blues changes.
4	1/28	(JB gone Friday - class moved to Monday) McDuff performances #2. Programming discussion, Part 1.	Google doc songlist; themed program.
5	1/30	Programming discussion, Part 2.	Create a 75-minute thematic concert 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 soloing: one a cappella, one accompanied.
9	2/13	In-class performances; further motivic development.	Self-eval; prep for final motivic development performance
10	2/15	In-class performances; start Darmon Meader vocabulary etude.	Self eval; practice Meader etude
11	2/20	Perform Meader etude; Vocabulary & Licks	Meader etude; put lick in a context of a tune.

#	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (see Bb for more specifics)
12	2/25	(JB gone - class moved to Monday) Wrap vocabulary/licks; start "Love for Sale"	Work changes for soloing. Prepare melody-based solo @ 120 bpm.
13	2/27	Perform melody-based solo; workshop and feedback.	Practice for second performance of "Love for Sale". Upload piano changes..
14	3/1	Second performance on "Love for Sale" (160 bpm)	Self-eval; continued work at faster tempi.
15	3/6	Third performance on "LFS" (200 bpm)	Shed.
16	3/8	Final performance of "LFS" (220 bpm)	
17	3/13- 15	SPRING BREAK	
18	3/20	Modal Improv	Shed
19	3/22	First performance of modal tune	Self-eval
20	3/27	Second performance of modal tune	Self-eval. 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". Introduce "Spain"	Self-eval; work "Spain"
23	4/5	In-class workshop on "Spain"; discuss Current Artist Reports	upload changes.
24	4/10	In-class performances of "Spain".	Self-eval
25	4/12	(JB gone - Jazz Singers in NYC - make up on 4/22)	
26	4/17	FIPE/GIPE discussion/demo; Discuss final exam.	Current artist reports
27	4/19	Current Artist Reports (3)	Bring odd-meter song of choice that you might solo over to sing in class
28	4/22	Current Artist Reports (1); Odd meter workshop	Odd meter shed
29	4/24	Odd meter performance.	Self-eval
30	4/26	(JB gone). FIPE/GIPE trial run #1; SPOT evaluation in class (please bring device)	
31	5/1	FIPE/GIPE trial run #2	Prep for final.
	5/8	11 - 12:30 (location TBD) Final Performance Exam - Open to the "public"	