

Applied Jazz Voice Lessons

Meeting Times:

TBD

Bain 210

Teacher: Natalie Holsey

Email: NatalieHolsey@my.unt.edu

Office Hours: By Appointment Only

Communication Expectations:

Clear and respectful communication is essential to your success in this course. If you have any questions, concerns, or need support, I encourage you to reach out—I'm here to help.

Preferred Method: Email

Email is the most reliable way to contact me regarding any aspect of the course, including:

- Questions about assignments, grades, or course materials
- Notifying me of absences or rescheduling lessons
- Scheduling meetings (either in person or via Zoom)
- Sharing feedback or concerns about your learning experience

Please use your official school email account and include the course name in the subject line to help me respond promptly (email listed above).

For quick questions or concerns you can call me at **(814)889-1058**. This is for limited use, please use sparingly or if there is any sort of emergency.

Response Time:

I aim to respond to all emails within **one business day**, and often sooner. However, please note:

- Emails sent after **5:00 PM** may not receive a response until the following business day.
- I do **not respond to emails on weekends**, so plan ahead if you have time-sensitive questions.

Meetings & Support:

If you'd like to meet to discuss course content, performance, or any challenges you're facing, I'm happy to schedule a time that works for both of us. Meetings can be held:

- **In person** during designated office hours or by appointment
- **Virtually** via Zoom, with a link provided upon request

Course Objectives:

This course is designed to support your growth as a vocal jazz musician through focused instruction, stylistic exploration, and professional development. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- **Strengthen technical proficiency** in vocal jazz performance, with attention to tone, phrasing, articulation, and improvisation in a lesson-based setting.
- **Expand stylistic awareness** by exploring key conventions, practices, and performance techniques unique to vocal jazz.
- **Develop a deeper appreciation** for the rich and diverse traditions of vocal jazz literature, including historical context, influential artists, and genre evolution.
- **Demonstrate professionalism** through consistent preparation, punctuality, and respectful communication during lessons.

These objectives aim to foster both artistic growth and the habits of a reliable, collaborative musician.

Student Expectations:

To foster a productive and supportive learning environment, students are expected to:

1. **Arrive prepared and punctual** for every lesson—vocally warmed up, mentally focused, and equipped with all necessary materials.
2. **Commit to regular independent practice** outside of lesson time to reinforce skills and work toward artistic mastery.
3. **Bring intention and integrity** to each session, approaching the work with patience, determination, honesty, optimism, sincerity, and courage.
4. **Create and protect a safe learning space**, where both mistakes and breakthroughs are embraced as essential parts of the growth process.
5. **Care for all lesson materials and equipment**, including proper handling of audio devices, musical scores, and instruments (e.g., piano), ensuring they are maintained and respected.

These expectations are designed to support your development not only as a vocalist, but as a thoughtful and responsible artist.

What Students Can Expect from Their Instructor

As your voice teacher, my role is to support your growth, challenge your artistry, and foster a respectful and inspiring learning space. You can expect me to:

1. **Come prepared and lead by example**, modeling musical excellence, professionalism, and passion.

2. **Hold students accountable** to their responsibilities while encouraging a positive and collaborative atmosphere.
3. **Demonstrate unwavering dedication** to the craft and to your individual progress as a vocalist.
4. **Cultivate an inclusive and respectful environment**, where every student feels seen, heard, and valued.

My goal is to guide you with integrity and care as you navigate your unique musical journey.

Required Materials:

To ensure productive and focused lessons, students are expected to bring the following each week:

1. **Recording device** – A phone, laptop, tablet, or other device capable of recording lessons for review and reflection (reflections are graded).
2. **Water bottle** – A filled bottle of water, to support vocal health.
3. **ALL assigned materials from previous weeks** – Annotated and accessible, either in print or digital format.
 - If printed, please bring at least **two copies** of each piece of music.
4. **Organizational system** – A folder, binder, or digital note-taking method to keep track of lesson materials and progress.
5. **Prepared voice and mindset** – Arrive vocally warmed up, with a focused attitude and an open mind ready to learn.
6. **Required apps and software:**
 - *iReal Pro* – For practice and accompaniment.
 - *The Amazing Slow Downer* – For tempo adjustment and detailed listening.
 - *Finale, Dorico, or Sibelius* – For creating professional-quality charts and arrangements.

Organizational System – Materials & Practice Tracking

To stay organized and make the most of your lessons, you'll need to keep track of materials and practice in two ways: a physical binder and a shared digital folder.

Physical Binder/Folder:

- You must maintain a **dedicated lesson binder or folder** that includes all:
 - Lead sheets
 - Arrangements
 - Assignments
 - Handouts from the semester
- You do **not** need to include lesson notes in the binder.
- Tablets (like iPads) may be used **in addition to** the binder, but **not as a replacement**.
- Always bring an **extra printed copy** of your music for your teacher, pianist, or accompanist (unless instructed otherwise).

Shared OneDrive/Google Folder

Each student must maintain a **shared OneDrive/Google folder** that both you and your instructor can access. This folder should include:

- **PDFs** of all lead sheets, arrangements, and printed materials
- A **shared Word document** for:
 - Weekly **lesson reflections** – After each lesson, listen to your recording and jot down key takeaways, including technical goals, stylistic notes, and repertoire guidance. (See example template below).

WEEKLY LESSON REFLECTION:

Week #: [Insert week number or date]

****Repertoire Covered:**** - [List songs or pieces worked on]

****Technical Focus Areas:**** - [e.g., breath support, vowel shaping, phrasing, range, etc.]

****Stylistic Feedback:**** - [e.g., swing feel, articulation, tone color, improvisation, etc.]

****Instructor Notes / Key Takeaways:**** - [Summarize feedback from your teacher]

****Goals for Next Week:**** - [List specific goals to work on before your next lesson]

WEEKLY LISTENING LOG:

- This semester, instead of a practice log, I wanted to incorporate more of a listening aspect so that you're always being engaged in content that will further your development as a jazz artist. There will only be **10 listening log entries**. Although there are 13 weeks, I understand that sometimes the demands of the school year can affect progress, so I have left in an intentional buffer if you need another week (supporting mental health in the school system). This means you get 2-3 times that you can move your listening log to the next week, but be cautious not to let these pile up, as there is plenty of other work to be done.
 - Due the day it was assigned (students have a full week to do it). Minus 1 point for everyday after that specific lesson.
 - Can turn in at the end of the semester for late points.

Additional Performance Opportunity:

- This semester, I am planning on setting up a gig (somewhere between week 8-11) to give students an opportunity to work out jury nerves and to get gig experience.
 - Professor Holsey will be providing the band.
 - Students are required to have music sent in to Prof. Holsey to submit to the band in advance. Location and date are TBD.

Attendance Policy:

- Lessons are 50 minutes long, allowing 10 minutes to get to your next class.
- Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the final grade.
- Be on time for your lesson.
- If you miss a lesson without informing me in advance, it will be an unexcused absence and will not be made up.

Grading Policy:

You will be graded based on your participation and preparedness for each lesson. You have the ability to get 10 points every week (13 lessons = 130 points total).

- **2 points for attendance, 8 points for assignments (transcriptions, rep, listening, etc.)**
- **Percentages:**
 - **Jury 25%**
 - **Lesson Grade 40%**
 - **Assignments (Ex: Listening Log) 10%**
 - **Attendance 25%**

Curriculum (First-Year):

Jury Requirement:

At the end of each semester, students are required to participate in a jury performance evaluated by Jazz Voice faculty and/or Graduate Teaching Fellows.

Jury Format & Expectations

- You will perform selected repertoire from memory, with the exception of your self-accompanied piece, which may be performed with music.
- Your jury program must include:
 - One self-accompanied song
 - At least one song from each designated repertoire category
- Songs chosen for jury performance must **not** overlap with repertoire prepared for **Fundamentals of Jazz Performance** or **Vocal Jazz Techniques** classes.

Jury Form & Materials:

- You are responsible for completing your jury form prior to the performance.
- Bring six printed copies of the completed form to your assigned jury time.
- Jury times will be posted in advance—please check regularly for updates.
- Review the jury form ahead of time to understand the evaluation criteria and ensure you are prepared to meet all expectations.

Curriculum (Second-Year) 2nd Semester: Upper Division Examination (UDE)

All undergraduate Jazz Studies (Voice) majors must pass the Upper Divisional Exam (UDE) before advancing to the 3000 level of voice study. The UDE is a jury that takes place at the end of the fourth semester of study. Transfer students may take the UDE at the discretion of their teachers in consultation with Prof. Barnes any time after the completion of one semester of lower division study.

The purpose of the UDE is to determine whether the student is progressing through their curriculum with sufficient promise for continued progress that they will be prepared to perform a recital and complete their Bachelor's degree after 4 additional semesters of study. This is determined through examining the student's total progress as they've passed through the following benchmarks:

- Private study at the 1500 level
- Fundamentals of Jazz Performance class (2 semesters)
- Vocal Jazz Techniques class (2 semesters)
- Jazz Improvisation class (passing course grades for two semesters)

In some cases, it may be determined that a student who has not yet taken Improv II will be allowed to take the UDE if the measure of that student's other work is deemed to be of high enough merit that the 3000 level of lessons may, in fact, aid the student as they proceed with Improv II. These decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The focus of the UDE will be to determine a student's grasp of the basic concepts of jazz styles and an ability to express themselves artistically in those styles. As such, students taking the UDE will prepare the following material:

1. A medium swing "standard" (120 – 160 bpm).
2. A jazz ballad "standard" (50 – 60 bpm).
3. Two other selections in contrasting styles.
4. One bebop head
5. "Sing-along with the recording" performances (with or without written transcription), in one of the following formats:
 - One "match the pro jazz singer as they sing melodic/lyric content EXACTLY" performance, containing ALL of the melodic/lyric content on the track before and after improv solo(s).
 - One "match the vocal or instrumental improviser EXACTLY" performance.
 - Under the advice of your private instructor, you MAY present short excerpts of both, if recordings are cued/clipped and ready (not to exceed 3 minutes total).

Other UDE Information:

- The UDE is typically taken in the **4th semester**, but students must confirm **readiness** with their **academic advisor** and **private instructor**.
- All repertoire must be performed **from memory**.
- One of the four selections must be **self-accompanied**.

- Medium swing and ballad selections **cannot be aurally transcribed**; all material must be the student's **original intellectual property**.
- Students must complete the **UDE Form** and bring **six printed copies** to the jury.
- Songs used for lessons **may not overlap** with repertoire from **Vocal Jazz Techniques**.
- Students should review the **UDE evaluation criteria** on the form.
- After the jury, students receive one of two results:
 - **Pass** → eligible for **3000-level lessons** the following semester.
 - **Fail** → required meeting with **Professors Barnes and Eckert** to discuss options.
- Students who fail on the first attempt **may remain in 1500-level lessons** for one more semester before retaking the UDE (faculty discretion).
- Students who fail the UDE a second time will be **advised out of the Jazz Studies major**.

University Policies:

Academic integrity policy: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

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

Eagle Connect Info: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>

ODA Statement: <http://disability.unt.edu/>

Diversity Policy: <https://idea.unt.edu/diversity-inclusion>

Registration Information: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>

Health and Safety: <https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

Counseling and Testing: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>

Retention of student records policy: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

Financial aid and Academic Progress: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

Full list of student resources: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

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

Academic Calendar: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-registration-guide>

Care Team: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>