

MUJS 3620, Jazz Arranging II

General Information

MUJS 3620.001, Jazz Arranging (3 credits, offered only in the spring semester)
Required of all undergraduate instrumental jazz majors.

Professor: Richard DeRosa
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The class meets in room 287 where there are 20 MIDI keyboard/computer stations.

Since there are more than 20 students, two sections accommodate the class size.

Class Time (morning section) – MWF 9:00 – 9:50 in room 287.

Class Time (afternoon section) – MWF 1:00 – 1:50 in room 287.

Course description: Introduction to arranging for the large jazz ensemble. Specific technical and expressive exercises are assigned to help the student develop the writing skill and concepts necessary to realize comprehensive arrangements for this instrumentation. All assignments are created with a digital notation program.

Course prerequisites: MUJS 1360, 1361, 1370, 1371 (Jazz Fundamentals), 1470 (Intro to Jazz Recordings), and MUTH 1500 (Music Theory), MUJS 3610

Suggested books

Inside the Score by Rayburn Wright – Kendor Music
The Complete Arranger – Sammy Nestico
The Contemporary Arranger – Don Sebesky
Jazz Arranging Techniques – Gary Lindsay
Jazz Composition & Arranging in the Digital Age – Richard Sussman & Mike Abene
Fred Sturm – Changes Over Time: The Evolution of Jazz Arranging
Essential Dictionary Series (Orchestration, Notation, Music Dictionary) - Alfred Music
**Stefon Harris' interactive computer application Harmony Cloud*

Course objectives: To introduce basic arranging concepts for musicians who are primarily performance majors: overtone series, transposition, range, registers, texture (monophonic, polyphonic, homophonic), counterpoint, harmonic voicings, form and development, manuscript preparation.

Learning outcomes and other requirements: Students work at a MIDI keyboard/computer station during each class session; it is essentially a lab. Each assignment is presented in digital notation with an audio demo. Most assignments are weekly. The mid-term project is presented as a MIDI demo with careful consideration for timbre enhancement and mixing. The final project will be sight-read by members of a big band. A transposed score will be prepared for the conductor. Individual parts must be prepared for each of the ensemble players in an appropriate clef and key (transposed as necessary). Digital notation is mandatory for all assignments.

Topical outline of content:

1. Creating an “event list” – understanding form and development.
2. Working with a big band template; notation input with a MIDI keyboard.
3. Voicing for the trombone section (4-part voicings; root and rootless).
4. Voicing for the brass section (4-8 part voicings).
5. Voicing techniques for the sax section (5-part voicing). Soli writing (harmonizing each note).
6. Voicing for the full ensemble (using the saxes as a layer to EQ the ensemble sound).
7. Orchestrating the rhythm section (using them beyond slash notation; “string” section; exploring the color palette of the guitar).
8. Developing a complete arrangement – formal elements, modulation, extensions, etc.
7. Manuscript preparation – creating a full score (transposed), formatting individual parts (including rhythm players), formatting scores vs. parts (landscape vs portrait), sizing image to page. Printing and taping.
8. Prepare the final project – a short big band arrangement that contains an introduction, exposition, improvisation section w/backgrounds, ensemble feature and ending.

Guidelines/suggestions for greater learning:

Students must participate in order to achieve an effective level of accomplishment. In addition to maintaining weekly assignments, the student must listen to music that reflects the current objective. An analysis (of the writing, not the performance) of the music must occur regarding tonality, range and register, melodic/harmonic and rhythmic analysis, counterpoint, texture, and development. Any performances in ensembles also provide an active environment to observe and/or influence the writing process. Students should also interact with other students or teachers who play different or less familiar instruments to learn more about potential performance problems and/or characteristics.

Guidelines for methods of student assessment:

The **assignments** commence immediately in the Monday class time. Each session (MWF) is used actively at the MIDI/computer station to learn and assimilate the technical skill while also implementing the artistic techniques of arranging. Immediate playback teaches the student how to listen more effectively and adjust accordingly. Each assignment is evaluated by a TA and returned to the student for self-study. In situations where the student’s work is unsatisfactory or even less than excellent, the student may redo and re-submit the assignment for another review. The final review determines the grade for that assignment. All assignments are issued as a *minimum* for satisfactory accomplishment. The more creative and inspired student is encouraged to progress beyond the minimum as desired. *It may be possible to complete an assignment within the three lab sessions per week. Unfinished assignments will become homework.*

In general, the grades for the **recording projects** (mid-term and final) are based on the content of the work, the audio demo and the professional appearance of score and part preparation. Lab bands (3-6) will be used to perform the final projects within their normal rehearsal times.

Grade determination - each project is worth 25% for a total of 50% of the semester grade. Homework assignments and class participation comprise the remaining 50%.

Attendance policy

The student will be held to the same standard as any professional (includes UNT faculty, staff, and administration). Professional personnel on this campus must account for an absence. Failure to do so will result in a severe reprimand. Excessive absence would possibly result in termination from the position.

*For students in this class, **four unexcused absences will result in an automatic semester grade of F. An absence will not be counted if the student submits the assignment electronically during that lab session.** Given the cumulative amount of work and considerable amount of time that is required, it is not possible to complete multiple assignments at a later point in the semester. Should these absences occur prior to the semester break, the best alternative may be for the student to withdraw from the class. A grade of W is preferable to an F. As the course is required to earn the BM degree, failure may likely cause a delay of one year to graduate.*

An excused absence is an illness, an academic conflict, a tour, or other extenuating circumstances such as an unforeseen accident or a death in the family. Please do not show up to class with a communicable illness (including colds); germs are spread easily when sharing a computer station. The preferred method of any notification is via e-mail or a text message. Please notify a TA instructor ASAP.

Office Hours – If a student has a concern or needs academic help beyond their interactions with the TAs for this class, the professor is available (scheduled by appointment) as necessary. The ideal setting is via Zoom so the consultation can be recorded on video.

Compliance with Federal Statutes:

The College of Music complies with "The Americans With Disabilities Act", in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disability. If you have an established disability as defined in this act and would like to request accommodations, please see me as soon as possible.

Scholastic Honesty Policy:

Cheating, in any form, will result in an automatic grade of "F" in the course, the removal of the student from the course, and immediate reporting of the student's actions to the office of the Dean of Students and to the office of the Dean of the College of Music.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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>.

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/csrr.

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The short SPOT survey will be made available from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Please look for the email in your UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete your survey. Once you complete the survey you will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

WEEKLY AGENDA

Week 1 (Jan 12)

M: Semester overview/syllabus. Review the Essentials Folder items. Personalize big band template in chosen notation program (Muse Score, Sibelius, Dorico).

W: How an “event list” establishes form and development within an arrangement. Examples are “Basie Straight Ahead” and “Up Where We Belong”. (Listen to recordings in class).

Canvas: study the event lists for “Basie Straight Ahead” and “Up Where We Belong”. Refer to posted recordings.

F: Create an event list for “Corner Pocket” in class. Listen and acknowledge events within your event list.

Week 2 (Jan 19)

M: no school (Martin Luther King day).

W: Lecture - voicing exercises for trombones. Range and register. Use of the bass trombone. Voicing techniques - spread, close, rootless; voice-leading. Complete exercise 1 in your notation program.

F: Complete exercises 2 & 3 in your notation program and prepare an audio demo of all three exercises. *Save this project (and all future projects) in a folder. Copy the folder onto an external drive or flash drive.*

Week 3 (Jan 26) Create two arrangements of “Tenderly”.

M: orchestrate the leadsheet (*only first half of tune*) – assign an instrument to the melody, create rhythm section parts. One version is set in a ballad, the other as a bossa.

W: create trombone pads using the voicing techniques from the trombone exercise.

F: finish both arrangements (16 bars each). Present an audio mix (mp3) and PDF score.

Week 4 (Feb 2) Voicing Exercises sheet – grand staff format.

M: Lecture – ensemble voicings (upper structure triads)
Voicing Exercises sheet (examples 1, 2, & 3).

W: Assignment – complete exercises 1 & 2 by writing the voicings in the grand staff.

F: Complete exercise three. Submit an audio demo and PDF score for all examples.

Week 5 (Feb 9) Create two arrangements of “Fall”.

M: Lecture - Orchestrate “Fall” for full ensemble:

Variation 1 - with lead trpt in staff for a *mf* volume – saxes play the melody.

Variation 2 - with lead trpt 8va for a *ff* volume but with the saxes playing a hip countermelody created by you.

W: Assignment: create variation 1 in your notation program.

F: Assignment: create variation 2 in your notation program. Submit an audio demo and PDF score.

Week 6 (Feb 16) **Mid-Term Recording Project**

M: This project is based on the **voicing exercises sheet** (found in the Lesson 4 Canvas Folder). Lecture: using the sax section to EQ the brass voicings.

W: With exercise 1, create a Basie-style soft ensemble arrangement. *Refer to the Lesson 6 Canvas Folder for explicit instructions.*

F: With exercise 2, create a quasi-samba groove and assign the pitches to saxophones. Use the saxes as a background to an improvised solo. Create the solo as well. *Refer to the Lesson 6 Canvas Folder for explicit instructions.*

Week 7 (Feb 23) **Mid-Term Recording Project continued.**

M: With exercise 3, create an epic ballad in the Kenton style. *Refer to the Lesson 6 Canvas Folder for explicit instructions.*

W: Finish the detail work in your orchestrations (Ex 1, 2, 3).

F: Create audio demos (good mixes!) and PDF scores.

Week 8 (Mar 2) Present computer-generated projects in class.

M: TAs select three impressive student projects from each class section.

W: TAs select three impressive student projects from each class section.

F: TAs select three impressive student projects from each class section.

SPRING BREAK

Week 9 (Mar 16) Sax Soli Writing

M: Lecture – Harmonizing melody notes (soli writing). Analyze voicing techniques – block w/doubled lead 8vb, drop 2, drop 3, independent – on “Take the ‘A’ Train”. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of using each technique. Discuss harmonic techniques for voicing non-chord tones – diatonic and chromatic planing, dominant and diminished approach, tonicization of any “target” chord.

Additional listening and analysis (Moonlight in Vermont – incorporating all voicing techniques randomly).

W: Assignment - arrange the intro to “Farmer’s Market” in a harmonized soli for 5 saxes.

F: Complete the “Farmer’s Market” assignment.

Week 10 (Mar 23)

M: Lecture – harmonic techniques and examples of soli writing for the full ensemble.

W: Listening – three examples for analysis.

Assignment: “Lullaby of Birdland” – add approaching and passing harmony.

F: Students work on “Lullaby of Birdland” assignment.

Week 11 (Mar 30)

M: Lecture - integrating the rhythm (and “string”) section for support and contrast.

Also discuss harmonic substitution and guidelines for cross-section writing.

Analyze “Darkness Within” and “Alone Together”.

W: Follow up discussion (Q&A) regarding topics in Monday’s lecture.

F: TAs confer with students – choose a tune to arrange for the final project.

Week 12 (Apr 6)

M: Lecture – Professor DeRosa presents his arrangement of “Yardbird Suite” for the JLCO as a model for the final project.

W: Lecture - Manuscript preparation 1. Discuss appropriate music to page ratio, bar layout, planning for page turns, rehearsal letters, bar numbers, etc.

F: Lecture – Manuscript preparation 2. Printing score, parts, taping, binding, etc.

Week 13 (Apr 13)

M: Q&A regarding final projects (students are actively writing)

W: Q&A regarding final projects (students are actively writing)

F: Q&A regarding final projects (students are actively writing)

Week 14 (Apr 20)

M: Q&A regarding final projects (students are actively writing)

W: Q&A regarding final projects (students are actively writing)

F: Q&A regarding final projects (students are actively writing)

Week 15 (Apr 27)

M: students record final projects with selected big band (3:00, 4:00, etc.)

T: students record final projects with selected big band (3:00, 4:00, etc.)

W: students record final projects with selected big band (3:00, 4:00, etc.)

Week 16 – Final Exam week (no exam given)

Teachers grade final projects and submit semester grades.