

Fall 2015

## MUS 6705

Brian Seeger  
*University of New Orleans*

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# Music 6705 - Advanced Jazz Improvisation – Fall 2015

## Syllabus: Class Policies

Wednesday 4 pm to 6:45 pm Room 103 PAC

Brian Seeger

- -7470 bseeger1@uno.edu

Office 108E Office Hours - As Posted

The purpose of this class is to help the students to become better musicians and educators through the development of:

- 1) an understanding of a variety of musical forms through the study, memorization, and performance of tunes
- 2) a knowledge of improvisational techniques through the transcription, analysis, and performance of the recorded solos
- 3) an awareness of important theoretical concepts that can be used to expand the improviser's melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic choices
- 4) aural and rhythmic skills
- 5) insight into creating and sustaining a personal environment for artistic and personal growth
- 6) a personal approach to the teaching and dissemination of musical ideas to others

### Grading

Each student will be required to:

#### **1) Complete three transcription projects**

Each of the transcriptions will be graded as Exemplary, Satisfactory, and Unsatisfactory. An Exemplary grade will be given to a transcription that is complete, memorized, performed at a high level, annotated well, notated with notation software such as Finale, has practice exercises if required, and reflects approximately 30 to 40 hours of practice and study. More advanced students should choose more difficult projects which will take them 30 to 40 hours to finish completely. A satisfactory grade will be given to a project that is complete, but demonstrates no special effort on the student's behalf. An Unsatisfactory grade will be given to a transcription that is incomplete, poorly performed, shows no real effort, is notated by hand, is late, or otherwise demonstrates a lack of integrity.

**PLEASE NOTE: THESE PROJECTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE DUE DATES**

(SEE SYLLABUS: OVERVIEW FOR DATES)

**2) Complete homework assignments and ear training exercises.**

Each assignment will be given a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory grades in 20% or more of graded assignments will negatively affect the student's final grade up to one letter.

**3) Complete and present a preproduction demo.** Details of this project will be discussed at length on several occasions during class. This assignment will be given two grades of Exemplary, Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. An Exemplary grade will be given to a preproduction demo that follows the criteria established by the instructor, demonstrates real effort by the student, and is fully conceptualized and executed. An Unsatisfactory grade will be given to a preproduction demo that is incomplete, ill-conceived or amateurish, or demonstrates a lack of effort.

**4) Attend class regularly.** Students are allowed 2 absences a semester. Due dates will not be changed to accommodate a student's absence. Each absence after 2 will lower the student's final grade by 1/2 of a letter grade. If you expect to have an insurmountable conflict that will preclude your attendance in class, it is in your best interest to inform the instructor of your personal situation well before the class you will miss. Students not in class by ten minutes after the beginning of class may be considered absent.

**5) Participate in class activities and quizzes.**

Overall class participation (preparation of the studied material, contributing to class discussions, completing assignments, performance on ear training evaluations, etc.) will be assigned a final evaluation of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. An Unsatisfactory grade in this area will negatively affect a student's final grade up to one letter grade.

**GRADING SUMMARY**

All assignments not turned in by the due date will receive a grade of Unsatisfactory.

A = 4 or 5 Exemplary grades, no Unsatisfactory grades, and 2 or fewer absences.

B = 2 or 3 Exemplary grades, no Unsatisfactory grades, and 2 or less absences.

C = No Unsatisfactory grades, and 2 or fewer absences. Or, 3 or 4 Exemplary grades and 1 Unsatisfactory grade, and 2 or less absences.

D = 1 Unsatisfactory grade and 2 or fewer Exemplary grades, and 2 or less absences.

F = 2 Unsatisfactory grade

## **Contacting Your Instructor**

The preferred methods of contacting the instructor, from most effective to least effective, are: in person at school, email, office phone, cell phone, in person somewhere other than school. Texting the instructor is generally unacceptable unless you are absolutely sure the instructor is aware of your phone number. Any contact via social networking sites about anything more serious than what you ate for lunch or your vague metaphysical observations is unacceptable. School related conversations on the bandstand or at entertainment establishments are generally discouraged.

## **Other Miscellaneous Notes**

The instructor reserves the right to record the classes, or parts of the classes. All recordings will be strictly for academic purposes, and are prohibited from being made available to the public in any way or by any means, forever and everywhere. The instructor grants to the students the right to record the classes, or parts of the classes. All recordings will be strictly for academic purposes, and are prohibited from being made available to the public in any way or by any means, forever and everywhere. Students are advised that this class requires approximately 15 hours of work outside of the classroom each week, and that they should adjust their agendas accordingly.

### **Important Dates\***

Last day to adjust schedule w/out fee	08/18/2015
Semester Classes Begin	08/19/2015
Last day to adjust schedule w/fee, or withdraw with 100% refund	08/25/2015
Last day to apply for December commencement	09/25/2015
Final day to drop a course or resign	10/14/2015
Mid-semester examinations	10/05-10/09/2015
Final examinations	12/07-12/11/2015
Commencement	12/18/2015

*\*Note: check Registrar's website for Saturday and A/B sessions, and for items not listed here:  
<http://www.registrar.uno.edu>*

### **Fall Semester Holidays**

Labor Day	09/07/2015
Mid-semester break	10/15-10/16/2015
Thanksgiving	11/26-11/27/2015

### **Graduate Policies**

Graduate policies often vary from undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, see the Graduate Student Handbook:

<http://www.uno.edu/grad/documents/GraduateStudentHandbook2014.pdf>

### **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

<http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/documents/academic-dishonesty-policy-rev2014.pdf>

### **Safety Awareness Facts and Education**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: <http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/>

### **UNO Counseling Services and UNO Cares**

UNO offers care and support for students in any type of distress. Counseling Services assist students in addressing mental health concerns through assessment, short-term counseling, and career testing and counseling. Find out more at <http://www.uno.edu/counseling-services/>. First-year students often have unique concerns, and UNO Cares is designed to address those students succeed. Contact UNO Cares through <http://www.uno.edu/fye/uno-cares.aspx>.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Sign up for emergency notifications via text and/or email at E2Campus Notification: <http://www.uno.edu/ehso/emergency-communications/index.aspx>. All emergency and safety procedures are explained at the Emergency Health and Safety Office: <http://www.uno.edu/ehso/>.

### **Diversity at UNO**

As the most diverse public university in the state, UNO maintains a Diversity Affairs division to support the university's efforts towards creating an environment of healthy respect, tolerance, and appreciation for the people from all walks of life, and the expression of intellectual point of view and personal lifestyle. The Office of Diversity Affairs promotes these values through a wide range of programming and activities. <http://diversity.uno.edu/index.cfm>

### **Learning and Support Services**

Help is within reach in the form of learning support services, including tutoring in writing and math and other supplemental instruction. Visit the Learning Resource Center in LA 334, or learn more at <http://www.uno.edu/lrc/>.

# Music 6705 - Advanced Jazz Improvisation – Fall 2015

## Syllabus: Class Overview

Wednesday 2 pm to 3:50 pm Room 103 PAC

Brian Seeger

(646) 283-3987 (504) 280-7470 bseeger1@uno.edu

Office 108E Office Hours - As Posted

### August

19 - Introduction - Overview. Discussion of various class objectives. Discussion of Transcription projects and Recording project.

26 - Eartraining: Conceptions, notes against a harmonic background, harmonic intervals, song of the root motions. About Time: the Honesty Metronome, the Continuum of Swing, Quintuplets, Accents and Time.

### September

2 - Eartraining: notes against a harmonic background, 2nds, song of the root motions. About Time Continued.

9 - Eartraining: notes against a harmonic background, 2nds, song of the root motions. More Time.

**16 - Discussion and performance of student transcription #1, Walking Bass and Ride Cymbal.**

23 - Ear Training. Melodic Performance and Performing Melodically. Using articulative devices.

30 - Eartraining: examination of common chord motions, particularly the first two chords of tunes. Spontaneous harmonic invention: expansion and contraction of harmonic density while improvising.

### October

7 - **Discussion and performance of student transcription #2. Sonny Rollins**

14 - Ear Training. A briefing on Theory. Decoding slash chords

21 - Guest Lecturer - **TBD**

28 - Playing Tunes with Slash Chords

### November

**4 – Discussion and Performance of Student Transcription #3: Trumpet**

11 - Guest Lecturer – Dan Loomis

18 - Guest Lecturer – Dan Loomis

**25 - Preproduction Day 1**

### December

**2 - Preproduction Day 2**

Music 6705  
Advanced Jazz Improvisation – Fall 2015  
Syllabus: Major Project Specifications

**THREE TRANSCRIPTIONS**

- Refer to the handout “The Perfect Transcription” for additional details about what constitutes a great transcription presentation
  - All transcriptions done in Finale or similar notation program. Annotations can be done by hand on the printouts.
  - No late transcriptions
  - No incompletes
- **Transcription #1: Due on September 16th.** 2 choruses of walking bass, predominantly quarter notes, from some great bass player with noteworthy time, on a 32 bar standard with relatively involved chord changes AND 1 chorus (32 bars) of the ride cymbal accompanying said bass part. Practice playing along with the ride cymbal using a stick on a cymbal and also using one note, or scales, on your instrument, or - be creative. Pay in depth attention to the swing feel and to the intensity of each beat. You must memorize this - that is one of the main points, internalizing the time feel!!
- **Transcription #2: Due on October 7th.** A Sonny Rollins solo. Fully annotated & memorized. Give special emphasis to time feel and especially articulations. Produce two practice examples that get at something which is *particularly* Sonny, and, practice them before you give your presentation. That means start working on this sooner as opposed to later. Drummers - translate the solo into a drum solo, or perform the solo on a melodic instrument.
- **Transcription #3: Due on November 4th.** Clifford Brown with Strings, Tom Harrell ballad or Kenny Wheeler. Fully annotated & memorized. Produce two practice examples that get at something which is *particularly* to the artist you transcribed, and, practice them before you give your presentation. This presentation should elicit “Wows” from your peers. It should be so happening you impress yourself. Drummers - translate the solo into a drum solo, or perform the solo on a melodic instrument.

**RECORDING PROJECT**

**Record a professional quality CD.** This project will spread across two semesters, and result in you possessing a fantastic disc which represents your musical mastery as a performer, composer, arranger, and producer. Towards the end of this semester you will present to your peers a preproduction demo, or live performance, of *at least* four compositions. The four compositions must include one ballad and one odd time meter piece. The pieces should either be original compositions, or extremely original takes on a standard.