Fall 2015

MUS 6705

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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
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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

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.
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 incomplete

• 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.