Marshall University
College of Arts and Media - School of Music and Theatre
MUS 631: Advanced Jazz Improvisation

Course Title/Number	MUS 631: Advanced Jazz Improvisation, Section 101, 2 credits
Semester/Year	Fall 2016
Days/Time	T.B.A.
Location	Jomie Jazz Center, Rm. 210
Instructor	Jeffrey Wolfe
Office	SMH 315
Phone	304-696-3613
E-Mail	wolfe9@marshall.edu
Office Hours	T.B.A
University Policies	By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs and clicking on "Marshall University Policies." Or you can access the policies directly by going to http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802 Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment

Course Description (from course catalog)

Advanced skills, techniques, and performance practices for jazz improvisation. Continued study of bebop, post-bebop, extended forms, contemporary, and non-Western styles and improvisation techniques. Transcription and performance of representative literature.

Student Learning Outcomes	How Students Will Achieve Learning Outcomes	How Student Achievement Of Outcomes Will Be Assessed
Students will continue developing the core principles and concepts of the jazz language, chord/scale relationships, and generic patterns, as well as written, aural, and practical application of major scale derivatives and common jazz language elements, motives, patterns, etc.	Students will be assigned generic materials, licks, patterns, scales, etc., for individual practice, and content-specific readings. Class lectures, in-class playing, and call and response exercises will further develop student understanding.	Students will demonstrate their mastery of these concepts through individual in-class demonstrations (and their subsequent progress), written quizzes/exams and aural examinations.
Students will learn to construct and apply the diminished, whole tone, and the ascending melodic minor scales (and their derivatives), as well as standard harmonic formulae commonly used in jazz improvisation (turnarounds, the cycle, tritone substitution, etc.).	Students will be assigned canonic literature that supports course content and concepts, as well as solo transcriptions and licks from the jazz masters that support and reinforce these concepts.	Students will demonstrate their mastery of generic materials through individual playing exams, written quizzes/exams, aural examinations, and in-class, “low stakes” informal playing pop quizzes.
Students will learn to assimilate the modern jazz language and apply it to their own playing, by creating original improvised solos that are rooted in modern common practices of jazz improvisation.	Students will apply generic materials, licks, patterns, scales, etc., as well as their own variations of these devices over common harmonic formulae and canonic jazz literature in order to begin assimilating the jazz language.	Students will demonstrate their mastery of these concepts through individual playing exams, written and aural quizzes/exams, informal in-class individual/group playing, and solo/lick transcriptions (formal and informal), including the final solo transcription performance.
Students will learn contemporary harmonic and improvisation techniques such as Coltrane substitutions, pentatonics, fourths, triad pairs, bitonals, free playing, etc.	Students will learn contemporary harmonic and improvisation techniques through assigned readings, in-class call and response exercises, and applying techniques as described in the assigned readings.	Students will demonstrate their mastery of course material by creating and performing multiple solo transcriptions, as well as through individual playing exams.
Students will learn to construct and apply the diminished, whole tone, and the ascending melodic minor scales (and their derivatives), as well as standard generic patterns/formulae commonly used in jazz improvisation.	Students will learn these concepts through assigned readings, class lecture, and individual and group in-class playing.	Students will demonstrate their mastery of these concepts though individual playing exams, written quizzes, and informal in-class playing opportunities, as well as the final solo transcription project/performance.

Required Texts and Materials

- Your instrument
- David Baker. Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation: A Comprehensive Method for All Musicians: A New Approach to Fourths, Pentatonics, and Bitonals.
- Gary Campbell. Triad Pairs for Jazz: Practice and Application for the Jazz Improvisor.
- Notebook with manuscript paper and writing materials
- Spotify account (create a free account at spotify.com) or an Apple Music account to access important recordings and practice materials (all of the Jamey Aebersold play-along recordings are currently available on Apple Music)

Suggested Materials

- David Baker, Advanced Improvisation 2: A Comprehensive Method for all Musicians, Rhythmic and Harmonic Concepts
- David Baker, How to Play Bebop, Volumes 1, 2, and 3
- David Baker, A Creative Approach to Practicing Jazz
- The Charlie Parker Omnibook, Hal Leonard

Tips for Success in Jazz Improvisation I

- Listen! Part of every successful jazz musician's daily practice routine involves active listening to the masters. This is where all of the nuance, inflection, and language of the music lives. Jazz, especially improvisation, cannot be learned simply by taking a class or reading off a piece of music. How did Charlie Parker ever achieve his greatness without taking an improvisation class in college?
- Practice. Diligent and intelligent practice is key to your success. Simply attending class meetings will not make you a better improviser. Class time is where you learn what tools, techniques, and strategies are necessary to become a successful improviser. Your time spent practicing outside of class is where you will make meaningful progress.
- Transcribe. Listen to music with your instrument in hand. Learn phrases and licks that you like (not necessarily an entire solo, nor do you have to write them down all of the time) and are meaningful to you. Learn these in all keys and try to incorporate them into your own playing.
- Sing. Try to sing phrases from various solos and play them back on your instrument using only your ears to guide you.
- Be a student of jazz history. Listen, play, and create with a sense of history, building on the music, innovations, and artists who came before you.
- Attend all class meetings, ask questions, and take detailed notes.

Course Requirements (See course schedule for due dates)

This course will consist of the following requirements:

- Four Quizzes: (30%) Quizzes are designed to assess your level of mastery of course content. Each quiz will consist of two portions: A written and aural (listening) section. Attendance is required for all quizzes (excused absences not withstanding).
- Individual playing exams: (40%) Playing exams will be administered twice during the semester. These authentic assessments allow the student to display their mastery of course content in a "real world" performance-based environment.
- Midterm solo transcription and performance: (15%): At the midpoint of the semester, students will submit and perform an improvised solo transcription (following the guidelines provided to the student at the appropriate time in the semester). The solo may be subject to approval from the instructor. Students are strongly encouraged to notate the transcription utilizing notation software.
- Final solo transcription and performance: (15%) At the end of the semester, students will submit and perform an improvised solo transcription (following the guidelines provided to the student at the appropriate time in the semester). The solo may be subject to approval from the instructor. Students are strongly encouraged to notate the transcription utilizing notation software.

Grading Policy

Grades will be assigned using the following scale (please note the category weights in the "Course Requirements and Due Dates" section).

A = 90% - 100%
B = 80% - 89%
C = 70% - 79%
D = 60% - 69%
F = 59% or lower

Required Tune List

As part of the course requirements, you will need to demonstrate your ability to play what we have covered in class. For each tune, you will need to do the following:

- Play the tune from memory
- Play the corresponding scales, chord outlines, generic patterns, etc. over the changes for each tune. You may read the written chord changes for this portion of the playing exam.
- A detailed rubric and schedule of test out times will be provided at the appropriate time during the semester.

1. "Ceora"
2. "Dolphin Dance"
3. "The Eternal Triangle"
4. "Giant Steps"
5. "Have You Met Miss Jones"
6. "Moment's Notice"
7. "Sail Away"
8. "Woody N' You"

Attendance and Late Work

Attendance is paramount to your success. If you miss class, you miss material that cannot be made up. **Attendance is required.** Every unexcused absence after two will result in your grade being lowered by one letter. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** However, excused absences are permitted for illness, personal emergencies, and MU sanctioned activities. In order for an absence to be excused, you must meet the guidelines for excused absences as stated in the *Marshall University Undergraduate Catalog 2015-2016*, pp. 85-86, and have written approval from the Dean of Student Affairs (Office of Student Affairs). Please do not ask me to rule as to whether your absence is to be excused. I do not have the right to such rulings. Please do not bring me notes from doctors, parents, roommates, spouses, etc. Take such materials to the appropriate office before the next class meeting. Tardiness of more than 5 minutes or walking out in the middle of class (without consulting me of your need to leave early) will be counted as an absence.

All assignments are to be submitted at the beginning of the class period in which they are due. Assignments submitted after the due date will be assessed a **10% penalty** for each day late. Absences, whether excused or not, do not exempt you from completing and submitting work due or completed in class. Assignments are due at the first class period the student returns after an absence (regardless of an excused or unexcused absence). If the absence is excused, there will be no late penalty; if the absence is unexcused, the late penalty will be applied. Attendance is required for quizzes and exams. A quiz or exam may only be made up if a student meets the criteria stated above for an excused absence. A make-up quiz or exam may vary from the original.

Academic Dishonesty & Plagiarism

Please consult the *Marshall University Undergraduate Catalog 2015-2016*, pp. 71-73 for Marshall University's policy and definitions of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is considered to be an academic crime. Doing your own work and properly documenting quoted and paraphrased material are the keys to avoiding plagiarism. If I detect any plagiarism or academic dishonesty (i.e., copying someone else's paper or test), you will fail the assignment or test and the incident will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs. Additionally, you may fail the course and/or be subject to academic suspension.

Mobile Computing Devices

No one loves their mobile devices more than I do, but using them during class for activities outside the scope of the course is distracting to your instructor and more importantly to your fellow classmates. If mobile devices are to be utilized during class, your instructor will notify you. Mobile devices must be stowed and set to "silent" prior to the beginning of class. If you know in advance that you will need to use your phone during class time please let me know before class begins (emergencies not withstanding). **Failure to meet this expectation will result in the student being asked to leave class and an unexcused absence being recorded for the day.**

Miscellaneous

- Email: Please check your Marshall email often. This will be the official source of communication between myself and you, the student.
- MU Online: Most course materials as well as applicable assignments will be made available on MU Online (www.marshall.edu/muonline). Log on to view and download materials you might have lost or need due to an absence or to view current course activities and assignments.
- Grade Reports: Detailed grade reports will be kept on MU Online. At any point in the semester you may check MU Online for your current grade.
- Some Important Dates:
    - T.B.A.

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Schedule of topics, assignments, due dates, required readings, and tunes

(Schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)

Class Meetings and Important Dates	Topics	Assignments and Required Tunes (in Bold)
Week 1 - 8/23, 8/25	Review of all major scale derivatives modes and their chord/scale relationships.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation - Chapters VI and XI **"The Eternal Triangle"**
Week 2 - 8/30 -, 9/1	Application of major scale derivative modes. The II-V-I progression. Common generic materials, licks, patterns, etc. utilized over II-V-I harmonic formulae.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation - Chapter VI and XI **"Ceora"**
Week 3 - 9/6, 9/8	The ascending melodic minor scale. Derivative modes of the ascending melodic minor scale and their chord/scale relationships.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation - Chapter IV **"Woody N' You"**
Week 4 - 9/13, **9/15**	Application of the ascending melodic minor derivative modes. The minor II-V-I progression. Common generic materials, licks, patterns, etc. utilized over minor II-V-I harmonic formulae.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation - Chapter IV **"Woody N' You"**
Week 5 - 9/20, 9/22 ★ **Quiz 1 (Tuesday, 9/20)**	The diminished scale. Application and common public domain patterns built from the diminished scale.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation - Chapters VI and XII
Week 6 - 9/27, 9/29	Introduction to contemporary techniques for jazz improvisation. Coltrane substitutions.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation - Chapter VIII **"Have You Met Miss Jones"** **"Giant Steps"**
Week 7 - 10/4, 10/6 Quiz 2 (Thursday, 10/6)	Coltrane substitutions continued. Techniques for practicing Coltrane changes.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation - Chapter VIII **"Giant Steps"**
Week 8 - 10/11, **10/13** ★ **Quiz 2 (Tuesday, 10/11)** ★ **Midterm Transcription Due (Thursday, 10/13)**	Utilizing Pentatonics in jazz improvisation. Common pentatonic patterns and the application of pentatonics over common harmonic formulae.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation – Chapters I, VI, and IX **"Dolphin Dance"**

Class Meetings and Important Dates	Topics	Assignments and Required Tunes (in Bold)
Week 9 - 10/18, 10/20 ★ **Tune test out sessions (all week, time and days TBA)**	Introduction to quartal playing (fourths). Utilizing fourths over chord progressions as well as perpetual motion exercises	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation – Chapters II, II, and IV **"Dolphin Dance"**
Week 10 - 10/25, 10/27	Introduction to triad pairs. Foundational exercises to begin practicing triad pairs.	Triad Pairs for Jazz – "Why Practice Triad Pairs," "Applying Triad Pairs"
Week 11 - 11/1, **11/3** ★ **Quiz 3 (Thursday, 11/3)**	Chord/scale approach to triad pairs. How to practice triad pairs and common triad pair patterns.	Triad Pairs for Jazz – "How to Practice Triad Pairs," "Linking Triads"
Week 12 - 11/8, 11/10	Application of triad pairs.	Triad Pairs for Jazz – "Variations," "Licks," "Solos – Using triad pair applications on standard tune chord changes" **"Moment's Notice"**
Week 13 - 11/15, **11/17** ★ **Quiz 4 (Thursday, 11/17)**	Bitonal playing. Combining scales to realize bitonal chords. How to practice bitonals.	Modern Concepts in Jazz Improvisation – Chapters V and IV **"Sail Away"**
Week 14 - 11/21 - 11/25	**Thanksgiving/Fall Break (No Class meetings)**	**Thanksgiving/Fall Break (No Class meetings)**
Week 15 - 11/29, 12/1 ★ **Transcriptions due (Thursday, 12/1)**	Free playing and dramatic devices. Putting it all together. Combining contemporary techniques in jazz improvisation.	Performance of transcribed solos and review of all required tunes.
Week 16 - 12/8 ★ **Test out session two and remaining tunes (Final exam) Tuesday, December 6th, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**	**Test out session two and remaining tunes (Final exam) Tuesday, December 6th, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**	**Test out session two and remaining tunes (Final exam) Tuesday, December 6th, 3:30-5:30 p.m.**