

SYLLABUS Spring 2009

Course: Jazz Artists and Epochs MU 115
Instructor: Neil Wetzel office: room 317, Brethren's House
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Office hours: Posted on office door at end of first week of classes.

Course Objectives:

- Students will write (using appropriate vocabulary) about and discuss the different eras and corresponding styles of jazz.
- Student will study and understand how noted musicians have affected or changed the development of jazz music and styles.
- Student will demonstrate a knowledge of jazz as an evolution.
- Student will demonstrate a knowledge of jazz as an influence on other styles of music (classical, pop, commercial).
- Student will perform, improvise and record a blues and modal jazz composition.

Requirements:

1. Regular, punctual attendance.
2. Class participation through discussions and appropriate note taking.
3. Completion of class assignments including 4 listening/writing assignments.
4. 2 recording projects (one each of a blues and modal jazz tune).
5. Attendance at 2 live jazz performances (with brief observation report). One will be "Quebecite: a jazz opera" in Foy Hall on Wednesday February 18th, 7:30 pm.
6. Completion of reading assignments.
7. A 5-6 page research paper of an historically important jazz artist. (Or the alternate project: the "Greatest Hits" CD project.)
8. A mid-term and final exam.

Grading:

- 25% of grade is based on listening/reflection assignments and reading assignment quizzes.
- 10% of grade is based on attendance and class participation.
- 10% of grade is based on the mid-term exam.
- 15% of grade is based on the final exam.
- 10% of grade is based on the research paper or "Greatest Hits" project.
- 20% of grade is based on the 2 recording projects.
- 10% of grade is based on attendance at 2 live jazz performances and a written critique for each.

Attendance: Excused absences (accompanied by doctor's note) will not be marked against the student. Arrival after 10:30 a.m. (20 minutes after start of class) will be marked as an absence. Each unexcused absence will result in 0.5 point reduction from the final grade. It is the student's responsibility to find out about, and complete missed work/assignments due to absences.

Assignment Policy: Assignments are considered on time if received by 4:00 p.m. of due date. Each day late will result in a 10% deduction of the homework grade up to one week late. Assignments turned in over a week late will receive no credit.

Academic Honesty: Students must adhere to college-wide policies on academic honesty, as described in the Student Handbook.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Services Office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Required Text: Tirro, Frank. Jazz: A History. W. W. Norton & Company.

Content:

| Dates | 1 st meeting | 2 nd meeting | 3 rd meeting |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Jan 19, 21, 23 | Introduction and requirements of the course. Why do we study the people we do? What is jazz and how to listen to it. | Formulate a definition of jazz. Pop music, jazz and the seven elements of music. Read chptr. 1 for next class. | Jazz performance and the instruments of jazz. Precursors of jazz: African, European, American. Read chptr. 2 for next class. |
| Jan 26, 28, 30 | 1890-1910. Ragtime, Blues, and New Orleans (Storyville). Scott Joplin | Blues styles and artists. Blues recording project. Read chptr. 3 for next class. | Work on Blues Project CD—groups. First Listening/Writing assignment due this class: 1/30/09 Read chptr. 4 for next class. |
| Feb 2, 4, 6 | Dixieland. Jazz & technology. 1910-1920. New Orleans to Chicago. Dixieland evolves. King Oliver and Louis Armstrong. | 1920's. White jazz musicians of jazz/pop in the roaring 20's. Paul Whiteman, Frankie Trumbauer, Bix Beiderbecke. Blues Lyrics Assignment Due. Read chptr. 5 for next class. | Video: The Devil's Music: 1920s Jazz Read "Does Jazz Put the Sin in Syncopation?" for next class. |
| Feb 9, 11, 13 | Debate: "Does Jazz Put the Sin in Syncopation?" Read chptr. 6 for next class. | The beginnings of big band jazz and swing. Select jazz artist for project/paper. | 1930-1950 Beginning of the "swing era" and New York bands. Don Redman and Coleman Hawkins Second Listening/Writing assignment due this class: 2/13/09 |
| Feb 16, 18, 20 | Kansas City Swing: Count Basie and Lester Young | Discussion—on jazz opera. "Quebecite: a jazz opera" 7:30 pm Foy Hall; Attendance Required | Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller. |
| Feb 23, 25, 27 | Big Bands: jazz or jive? White band leaders: Glenn Miller, Review for Mid-term | MID-TERM EXAM | The great singers: Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn. |
| Feb. 28-March 8 | Spring Break | | |
| March 9, 11, 13 | 1943-1955. Be-bop, New York as the jazz mecca. Small groups and difficult chord changes. Charlie Parker and Dizzie Gillespie. Read chptr. 7 for next class. | Blues Recordings—in class. | Blues Recordings—in class. |
| March 16, 18, 20 | Be-Bop influences, jazz as a voice against prejudice. Read chptr. 8 for next class. | 1949-1956. The Cool School. The birth of the cool, West Coast Jazz, a reaction to Be-Bop? Gerry Mulligan, Lennie Tristano | Modal Jazz. Miles Davis, Third Listening/Writing assignment due 3/20/09. |
| March 23, 25, 27 | 1957-1960's. Hard Bop. Be-Bop one step beyond. Jazz as an art form. | John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Clifford Brown. Read chptr. 9 for next class. | 1960-1970. Avant Garde. Free-jazz: where did it come from? |
| March 30, Apr 1, 3 | Coltrane, Charles Mingus, Ornette Coleman | Modal Jazz recording project: Music department computer lab. Read chptr. 10 for next class. | 1970-1980's. Jazz/Rock Fusion. Elements of rock and jazz merge. |
| April 6, 8, 10 | Brecker Brothers, David Sanborn, Pat Metheny, Grover Washington Jr. | Modal Jazz recording project: Music department computer lab Fourth Listening/writing assignment due 4/8/09. Read chptr. 11 for next class. | Easter: no classes |
| April 13, 15, 17 | Easter: no classes | 1980's -present. Neoclassical Jazz: a return to the masters. Dexter Gordon, Wynton and Branford Marsalis. | Modal Jazz recording project: Music department computer lab |
| April 20, 22, 24 | Modal Jazz recording project: Music department computer lab | Modal Jazz recording project: CD is due | The future of jazz: Is jazz dead? Final Project Due. |
| April 27, 29 May 2 | Catch-up with material—Review for exam | | |
| Final exam: day and time TBA | | | |

Class assignments and timetables and subject to change according to the needs and pace of the class.