Playing Jazz
K40.1316
Gallatin School
New York University
Spring 2017
Tuesday 3:30-6:10PM
Drummers Collective

Bill Rayner
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Off.Hr. Tues. 2-3, room 613 6-8PM room 429
Rm. 429, 1 Washington Place

Syllabus

Course Goal:
The goal of this course is to give student musicians the opportunity to begin to learn, or improve their existing ability to play Jazz.

Method:
This course will explore the concepts and fundamentals of playing Jazz, especially those of improvisation. Students will learn chord structures, modes, chord progressions, rhythmic applications, song forms and options for organizing an improvisation. Students will learn by playing, listening and analyzing examples of improvisation to help discover the ambient factors of their organization. Class lectures will focus on and reinforce concepts proposed in the texts with emphasis on their application.

Student Requirements:
1) To learn the concepts and/or philosophies of playing jazz.
2) To learn theoretical concepts behind the harmonic, rhythmic, melodic and formal structure of standard jazz repertoire.
3) To learn the basic chords, chord progressions, and scales needed to play jazz.
4) To explore the nature and practice of improvisation in music through, listening, readings and practice.
5) To be able to improvise during the performance of standard jazz tunes at a level commensurate with a semester of study.

Student Assignments:
Weekly: 1) Practicing new tunes, scales, chord progressions, etc. that will be assigned
2) Listening to professional jazz musicians

The 10th class: A written exam on concepts, tune structures, chords, and scales.
Final Playing Exam: 1) To play some unprepared tunes
2) To play some prepared tunes
3) To show some facility improvising on their instrument

Required Books and Materials:
Patterns for Jazz, Jerry Coker, Warner Bros. Publications

**Recommended Books:**
- *Building a Jazz Vocabulary: A Resource for Learning Jazz Improvisation*, Mike Steinel
- *Improvising Jazz*, Jerry Coker, Simon and Schuster

**Grading Policy:**
Letter grade. Students will be graded according to (1) their weekly work, (2) written work, and (3) the final playing exam. These grades will average out to your final grade. Your playing grade will be judged by the improvement commensurate with your playing level at the beginning of the course. Attendance, tardiness, and leaving class early will affect final grade.

**Approximate Class Schedule**

1/24
1) Get acquainted
2) Short talk about jazz vocabulary
3) Review syllabus
4) Play

1/31
1) Introduction of theories and philosophies
2) Play

2/7
1) Discussion of ensemble roles (soloing and accompanying)
2) Forms, rhythm
3) Play

2/14 and 2/21
1) Jazz harmony, chord extensions, etc.
2) Play

2/28 and 3/6
1) Chords, alternate blues progressions
2) Play

3/20
1) Scales, modes
2) Play
Spring Break March 14-18

3/27
1) Written test review
2) Play

4/3
1) Written test
2) Play

4/10
Play

4/17
Final playing test review

4/24
Final playing exam, (instrumental and unprepared tunes)

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Attendance is mandatory for this course. All students are expected to attend class regularly and to actively participate in class activities. Students who must miss class are required to notify the instructor in advance via email, and are responsible for all material covered during the missed class meeting. Students are allowed two “personal days” for non-medical reasons such as family, professional, or other obligations. Students may not use a “personal day” on days when an exam, quiz, presentation, in-class performance, or other individual assessment is scheduled; missing any of the above will result in a grade of zero. Class Presentation and Final Paper submission dates will not be rescheduled except under extraordinary circumstances and with written permission from the instructor.

HOMEWORK POLICY
If a student takes a “personal” day (see Attendance Policy) or has another unexcused absence on the day an assignment is due, they are still responsible for submitting the assignment by the set deadline. Otherwise, the assignment will receive a grade of zero. Late assignments will only be accepted if the absence is excused or if prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, and must be submitted no later than the following class meeting (or other deadline as determined by the instructor). After that, the assignment will receive a grade of zero.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity (http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/students-with-disabilities.html), 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor, [212-998-4980] and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for appropriate accommodation.