

MUJZ 141 - Keyboard for Improvisers
Fall 2016 - Course Syllabus – subject to revision.
Instructor: David Arnay arnay@usc.edu

Overview:

MUJZ 141 will familiarize you with the piano keyboard as a tool for understanding harmony, learning tunes, sitting in as pianist, and developing your writing. We'll cover fundamental piano technique including scales and arpeggios, an understanding of basic chording and progressions at the keyboard, common jazz and blues progressions and styles, performance of melodies with simple accompaniment, and the creation of bass lines. After the midterm we explore more complex chord voicings and accompaniment techniques, additional jazz styles, and further your skills for sightreading lead sheets.

Materials:

1. Audio **headphones or earbuds** compatible with the MUS213 lab pianos are **required at every class meeting**. Our lab system includes headphones but you should bring your own as backup.
2. Each week's assignment and associated lead sheets will be posted on Blackboard weekly, usually on Wednesday. **It is your responsibility to print each assignment and bring it to class each week.** All printed materials must be collected in a 3-ring binder, to be presented at the midterm and the final exams. Binders are available at the USC book store.

Communication: Monitor and maintain your USC email account! All class-related messages will be via email, and please use email to contact me. Make sure there's room in your inbox, and if a reply is requested, make sure to do so!

Format:

Each class session will begin with the introduction of new concepts and associated assignments. In the remaining class time, you will begin to explore the new material while I listen to students individually to review the assignment due that day. Your progress will be recorded on a checklist. **Weekly attendance and the associated performances/evaluations account for 50% of your grade.** There will be some written assignments; you must be prepared to play what you write.

This is a two-unit performance-related class; you are expected to **practice at least thirty minutes a day, on average.** Access to Gateway practice rooms is managed by the Music Operations office (x6444), and on the web through the Virtual EMS system.

Grading:

To pass the course you must complete all assignments on time and demonstrate your familiarity with all the techniques introduced in class. "A" students will master all assignments in the week assigned. "B" students may progress more slowly but demonstrate consistent effort. **Lower grades result from unexcused absences and/or poor effort.** Even if you lack exceptional "chops," evidence of real effort will contribute to a higher grade.

The midterms and finals will cover all material introduced to that point.

Weekly progress/attendance	50%
Midterm	25%
Final	25%

IMPORTANT: Attendance at every class meeting is a major component of success in MUJZ 141. **Personal conflicts (gigs, travel, etc.) do not qualify for makeup sessions. Makeups will be offered only if there is a documented medical problem or academic conflict.** If you miss a class, you're expected to demonstrate your mastery of that week's material on the midterm or final exam.

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Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali> which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

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<u>Week # / Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments/Tunes</u> (due the following week)
1) Aug. 26	Introduction, basic technique	Warmups, Scales, 7 th chord arpeggios
2) Sep. 2	Triads	Diatonic and chromatic movement Inversion exercises, triads as 3,5,7. Simple songs: "Happy Birthday," "Imagine" Pachelbel "Canon" progression
3) Sep. 9	Shell Voicings (LH voicing)	ii-V and ii-V-I exercises (whole step movement) "Shew's Blues," "Autumn Leaves."
4) Sep. 16	Guide Tones	Diatonic and chromatic motion ii-V and ii-V-I exercises DeGreg: "Blues For The Birds."
5) Sep. 23	Bass lines 1: Walking Turnarounds and blues.	Blues: walking bass w/ GT comping LH exercises
6) Sep. 30	Bass lines 2: Grooves 1 G.T. w/ bass lines	"Blue Bossa" MIDTERM PREP
October 7	MIDTERM EXAM	Covers all topics through week 6
8) Oct. 14	In class: review Shell extensions incl. 9ths, 13ths	"Scapple From The Apple" Diatonic, chromatic motion ii-V-I: whole step movement "Oh, Lady Be Good!"
8) Oct. 21	Four voice sightreading	"You Are Too Beautiful," student pick
9) Oct. 28	3-voice rootless chords incl. 9ths, 13ths	Diatonic, chromatic motion ii-V-I: whole step movement Practice Progressions, "St. Thomas"
10) Nov. 4	RH/LH independence comping	"Song For My Father" w/improv
11) Nov. 11	"Big Sound" Two-handed comping	"Killer Joe," Bb blues
12) Nov. 18	Modal style	Quartal triads, "So What"
Nov. 25	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
Dec. 2	Review and final prep	
Dec. 9	FINAL EXAM	Final will include all material covered to date.