

GESM 111 “Jazz: America’s Music”

Professor Thomas and teaching assistant Landon Grigsby

OFFICE HOURS: Professor Thomas

1:00PM-1:50PM Mondays and Wednesdays, on Zoom. Email to make an appointment.

E-mail: johnthom@usc.edu

To set up an appointment with Landon Grigsby, email him at this address:

lgrigsby@usc.edu

Course Description:

Improvisation, a main ingredient of jazz, allows the performer to create in the moment, bringing about an exciting and unpredictable adventure for the performer and listener. At the same time, this peculiarly American art form reflects and chronicles the national identity like no other.

This seminar explores the important jazz musicians and their music from the early days of Storyville to the present. During the semester we will: study the evolution and elements of jazz music by listening to music during class and on YouTube, learning musical fundamentals and formal construct, participating in group presentations, becoming familiar with an array of jazz recordings, and reading a sampling of primary and secondary source material relating to nine different jazz styles.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students are able to:

1. Recognize the jazz instruments through focused listening
2. Explain and identify the musical elements of jazz
3. Analyze a jazz performance or recording
4. Identify the nine different jazz styles
5. Name the major jazz musicians for each style

Statement from Professor Thomas:

No one likes having to teach or take a class online during these uncertain times and we are all frustrated and overwhelmed with the situation of this Pandemic. If you become frustrated, have a problem or an upset, please contact Landon or myself right away.

Try to be respectful to one another, to myself and to Landon. We have worked tirelessly over the past weeks, making this online class fun and enjoyable. We want everyone to have a wonderful experience and to appreciate the music we love.

Grading Structure:

Weekly Listening Assignments - 40%

Presentations - 40%

Group Discussions - 20%

Class Schedule: Note: This schedule is only a sketch and could change depending on the flow of the class.

Week 1 - Introductions

Week 2 - Instruments of Jazz

Week 3/4 - The Elements of Jazz

Week 5 - New Orleans Jazz

Week 6/7 - Swing

Week 8/9 - Bebop

Week 10 - Cool Jazz

Week 11 - Free Jazz

Week 12 - Hard Bop / Funky (soul) Jazz

Week 13 - Fusion

Class Format:

- Starting in week 4, students will have a **Weekly Listening** assignment on the style of music being covered during the current week. Students will be given a list of musicians from that style and write a short summary/analysis of what they hear.

Rubric for listening assignments:

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Appropriate Vocabulary	Students use the correct vocabulary to describe the musical elements of the piece	Students use mostly correct vocabulary to describe the musical elements of the piece	Students use some correct vocabulary to describe the musical elements of the piece	Students do not use any correct vocabulary to describe the musical elements of the piece
Commentary	Students use their commentary to draw attention to important elements in the piece	Students use their commentary to draw attention to most of the important elements in the piece	Students use their commentary to draw attention to some of the important elements in the piece	Students use their commentary to draw attention to non of the important elements in the piece
Use of Elements	Students demonstrate a clear understanding of instruments, pitch, dynamics, tempo, mood/emotion, and structure	Students demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of instruments, pitch, dynamics, tempo, mood/emotion, and structure	Students demonstrate a moderate understanding of instruments, pitch, dynamics, tempo, mood/emotion, and structure	Students demonstrate slight understanding of instruments, pitch, dynamics, tempo, mood/emotion, and structure
Creativity	Students demonstrate creativity in their interpretation of the piece			Students demonstrate no creativity in their interpretation of the piece

- Also starting in week 4, students will be put into assigned groups to give **Presentations** on the **Style** being covered that week on the corresponding Wednesday. Students will know what group they are in by week 2 so that they will have time to prepare their presentations.

Rubric for presentations:

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Preparedness	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.	Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.
Comprehension	Student is able to accurately answer almost all questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is able to accurately answer most questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is able to accurately answer a few questions posed by classmates about the topic.	Student is unable to accurately answer questions posed by classmates about the topic.
Stays on Topic	Stays on topic all (100%) of the time.	Stays on topic most (99-90%) of the time.	Stays on topic some (89%-75%) of the time.	It was hard to tell what the topic was.
Content	Shows a full understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.

Recording Online Classes:

All classes will be automatically recorded and will be available to the students in Blackboard. Students are not allowed to create their own class recordings without the instructor’s permission. Information on recording and sharing Zoom recordings, and on Zoom settings, is available on the CET website:
<http://cet.usc.edu/online-teaching/>.

Camera Policy:

Acknowledging that class dynamics are substantially compromised without the ability to see the people in class, faculty can set an expectation that students have their **cameras on during synchronous online sessions**. However, some students may be facing challenging situations, such as internet connectivity, illness, or home

environments that make this difficult or impossible. To alleviate these concerns, faculty can encourage students to use virtual backgrounds, which will eliminate most privacy concerns, and earphones or headsets to improve audio quality. While faculty are at liberty to create a “camera-on” policy in their class, they should communicate that accommodations are available to students who contact them directly with reasonable requests.

Time Zone Accommodation:

The class meets from 2:00PM-3:50PM Pacific Time. In general, students should plan to attend every synchronous session for the classes in which they are enrolled, irrespective of when it occurs in their time zone. However, if the class meets outside of 7:00AM to 10:00PM in your local time we might need to make arrangements for synchronous activities.

Synchronous session recording notice

As required by USC, the synchronous sessions for this course will be recorded and provided to all students asynchronously. This policy does not apply to individual lessons.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Please do not share or otherwise distribute class materials, music scores or recordings produced by me or any students in the conduct of this course without expressed permission.

SCampus Section 11.12(B)

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).

Zoom etiquette

I expect you to demonstrate your presence and participation in class by your being on camera in all Zoom sessions. If you will be unable to keep your camera on during

the synchronous Zoom sessions, please contact me prior to the class sessions to discuss.

<http://cet.usc.edu/cet/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Netiquette-Considerations.docx>

USC technology rental program

We realize that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program or other assistance. To apply, please [submit an application](#) on the Student Basic Needs portal.

USC Technology Support Links

<https://keepsteaching.usc.edu/students/student=toolkit/>

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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.