



USC University of Southern California

Private Drumset Instruction

MUJZ-153 - Section 4443

MUJZ-301 - Section 44516

MUJZ-353 - Section 44549

MUJZ-453 - Section 44628

MUJZ-553 - Section 4473

Course Instructor:

Professor Peter Erskine, Director of Drumset Studies

Classroom: On-Line

Office: perskine@usc.edu

Email: perskine@usc.edu

Course hours: 1 x 50-minute lesson per week | schedule in Addendum

ALL TIMES SHOWN = Pacific Daylight or Standard Time (*depending on time of year*)

You will be expected to respond efficiently to email and phone (or text) communication from your teacher and from the department. Please keep the department aware of your latest contact information.

Course Description

The purpose of this one semester (Fall 2020) course is to

- 1]. Establish and certify basic levels of musical competency.
- 2]. Lay a foundation upon which the student can increase their understanding of rhythm, promoting a mastery of physical coordination at the drumset.
- 3]. Provide assigned listening and viewing materials with written response papers being mandatory.
- 4]. Improve sight reading skills
- 5]. Work on TOUCH and TONE.
- 6]. Free up each student's improvisational, i.e., compositional skills on their instrument.
- 7]. FIND YOUR VOICE

The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic means that students may not be able to utilize the drumsets in the practice rooms in The Music Complex. This necessitates an adaptation on all our parts. GOOD NEWS: THIS IS WHAT DRUMMERS DO ... we adapt! So, the goal of this course will be to focus on the role of the drums in modern American music, also and more appropriately known as Black American music.

I will work with each of you to best maximize your equipment on-hand. Please note the mandatory instrument requirements and advise me ASAP/STAT if you will require assistance in terms of having the proper instruments made available for you ... this also applies to the necessary internet connectivity. The School of Music has pledged to assist ALL STUDENTS to ensure that we're all on the same page if not wavelength in terms of appropriate data transmissions, etc.

Mandatory Course Materials (all items available from amazon.com, the App Store, etc)

-1 pair of drumsticks for practice pad studies: Vic Firth SD1 or Ted Atkatz models recommended

-1 pair of brushes

-*Modern Reading Text in 4/4* by Louie Bellson

-*Bass Drum Control* by Colin Bailey

-*Beyond Bop Drumming* by John Riley

-*Jazz Essentials vols 1 + 2* play-along apps (for iOS - please notify Prof Erskine if you do not have an iOS device)

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. To apply, please [submit an application](#). The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester. Also: let me know if you need any assistance with your acquiring any necessary drumming-related supplies, etc.

USC Technology Support Links

[Zoom information for students](#)

[Blackboard help for students](#)

[Software available to USC Campus](#)

Synchronous session recording notice

Synchronous sessions will be recorded and provided to all students asynchronously.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment:

Reminder: USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

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).

Because of the unprecedented situation wrought upon the School due to COVID-19, all classes will be held on-line this semester. **Students are expected to have a drumset available in their living environment.** If this is problematic or impossible, the school may be able to provide access to a drumset in one or more of the planned "lesson broadcast studios," in which case myself along with Music Operations will work with the students to coordinate class and broadcast room access times, etc. IF the university allows student presence on campus property ... much of this rests with the county and state health authorities. Depending on where the students are located, the school might otherwise be able to provide a basic drumset or reasonable facsimile for both practice and lesson activities. Please rest assured that you will be taught to the best of my imagination and abilities. Much of what we'll do will require no more than a ride cymbal, snare (or pad) and hi-hat with bass drum pad, too! All to say: we'll figure and work things out ... the situation is fluid at the moment, thank you for your understanding and patience. The most important thing is for everyone to stay healthy.

Netiquette Considerations

"Netiquette" or "internet etiquette," describes the recommended communication and behavior of online communication. Students are expected to be dressed appropriately for class. Class time is not snack time. You'll do your best work by approaching the course as if you were taking it in-person/on-campus. Simply put: **the study of music is, in great measure, the study of being professional.**

Please consult this [Menu of Discussion Norms](#) resource for guidance on how best to receive instruction, interact constructively and enjoyably get the most out of your study of drumming.

Also note: the use of mobile phones or other technology during your lesson is not allowed, unless you are using that device for a specific lesson-related purpose. In other words: no text, email or Instagram checking while I'm teaching you.

Grading Criteria:

- **Attendance:** Attendance is expected for all lessons. This studio will allow one unexcused absence per semester. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a 5% reduction of your overall grade. If a student is 10 minutes or more late for their lesson, that lesson is forfeit and will **not** be rescheduled.
- **Lesson Attentiveness (20%):** in addition to punctuality, the art and discipline of paying attention will be factored into each student's grading.
- **Listening +/-or Reading Assignments (20%):** Students will be sent files or download links for assigned listening or reading. All assigned listening or reading will involve and require response papers to be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the next-scheduled lesson (due papers submitted the morning of a lesson will not be accepted).
- **Weekly Homework Assignments (40%):** Students will be expected to complete all homework assignments. Part of the homework regimen will include listening to and transcribing specific recorded performances.
- **Final Jury Performance (20%):** Students will perform in a jury-type setting for the Instructor. These may be pre-recorded per the discretion and prior agreement/understanding of Professor Erskine.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to Professor Erskine (or to your TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30am – 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

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 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, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

Lesson Notes

-Practicing: Students are expected to practice a minimum of 6 hours per week outside of lesson time.
-Grade levels: while I will be instructing students whose grade-levels range from Freshman to Post-Grad, the essential contours and musical concerns will remain consistently similar throughout the course of studies. Week-to-week playing challenges will offer opportunities for variation, as well as each student's mastery of the basics, etc. This studio also encourages students to ask for specific guidance during each lesson. From Week #2 on, homework assignments will be individualized.

Week 1: REVIEW

- Basic pad work and Basic foot work (pedals)
 - Warm up and coordination exercises
 - Tempo check(s) (tempo control)
 - Comping vocabulary check
- HOMEWORK:** assigned pages from Colin Bailey and Louie Bellson books.

Week 2: Rudiments, Subdivisions, Control & Reading

- Review of Week 1
 - Performance of LESSON HOMEWORK
 - Drumming rudiments
 - Discussion of subdivisions from whole notes to 16th notes
- HOMEWORK:** Rudiments, more reading and B.D. Control

Week 3: COMPING VOCABULARY / DRUMMING STYLES

Week 4: DRUM INTROS

Week 5: SOLOS

- trades
- playing the form
- in tempo/time but not necessarily following the form
- out of tempo
- with accompaniment

Week 6: BRUSHES

Week 7: BRUSHES REVIEW and JURY PIECE SELECTION

Week 8: STRAIGHT-8th

Week 9: BIG BAND

Week 10: BRAZILIAN

Week 11: PLAYING MELODY

Week 12: TEMPO EXTREMES

Week 13: Paul Motian, Ed Thigpen, Clyde Stubblefield, Elvin Jones, Mel Lewis, Max Roach, Buddy Rich

Week 14: JURY

Grading and Exams

- **Aural and Written Mid-term examination (25%)** Examination of aural and written materials pertaining to drumming styles and history presented in the first 7 weeks of class.
- **Drumming Skills Exam #1 (25%)** Students must demonstrate a mastery of basic drumming skills on the practice pad as well as drumset “time” playing, i.e., beats that involve the steadiness of tempo and a measure of drumbeat competency.
- **Final Exam/Drumming Skills Exam #2 (50%)** All students will perform in a jury type of setting for the Instructor. They may be asked to play basic drum rudiments on the practice pad, as well as a beat in any of the styles, tempos that have been studied throughout the semester on the drumset. Drumset chart reading will also be part of the final examination.

SYLLABUS ADDENDUM

For drumstick, books and practice pad STAND purchases, we recommend amazon.com. sweetwater.com is an alternative music industry on-line retailer.

PRACTICE PADS

Here are some links for practice pads, we recommend pads made by ProLogix ... they have agreed to offer all students the following:

Our 8" pads are \$39.99, but with the 20% discount, the students will be looking at \$31.99.
Our 12" pads are \$59.99, but with the 20% discount, the students will be looking at \$47.99.

NOTE: YOU WILL NEED TO PURCHASE A SEPARATE PRACTICE PAD STAND @ AMAZON!

[Here is the link](#) to view our entire catalog. Students can select the product, pick the size (if applicable), and enter the USC discount code at checkout. We are planning to launch our new website during the first week of August. If this link does not work or changes, I will send you a new one ASAP.

[Here is the link](#) for the Thunderkick. [Here is the link](#) for the Practikit.

Discount Code: USC20

For all general inquiries please direct students to www.prologixpercussion.com

PRACTICE PADS and PRACTICE PAD STANDS

Here are some amazon.com links for practice pad stands (which you will need for any practice pad), etc.

Practice Pad Stand / \$53.95

<https://amzn.to/2CxLsF2>

Pad AND stand / \$64.95

<https://amzn.to/2WJZJp5>

RealFeel by Evans pad stand / \$50.43

<https://amzn.to/3fPuH6R>

Ahead Practice Pad Stand / \$31.47

<https://amzn.to/30yqchh>

DRUMSTICKS

<https://amzn.to/2Czjl2Z>

<https://amzn.to/3fPBQUJ>

<https://amzn.to/2WlqsSU>

Jazz Drums & Private Teaching Schedule - ERSKINE

Week: #1-13

All times shown = PDT
or PST

8:00 AM

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
8:00 AM				
8:30 AM				
9:00 AM			Louie Pereira	
9:30 AM				
10:00 AM		Graham Littlejohn	Niko Embry	
10:30 AM				
11:00 AM		Charlie Faragher	Mark Wang	
11:30 AM				
12:00 PM		LUNCH	LUNCH	
12:30 PM				
1:00 PM		Andre Sudol	Sophia Stroud	
1:30 PM				
2:00 PM		Carter Boyle	Sam Rossi	
2:30 PM				
3:00 PM		Lauren Ellis	Ethan Santos	
3:30 PM				
4:00 PM		MPWP-440		