

GESM 111 “Jazz: America’s Music”

Professor Thomas and teaching assistant Landon Grigsby

Units: 4

Time: M/W 2:00-3:50PM

Location: MUS204

Office Hours: 1:00PM-1:50PM Mondays and Wednesdays. Email to make an appointment. TMC 124

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 ten different jazz styles. Weekly assignments, presentations and discussions will explore how the musical elements affect our emotions.

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 ten different jazz styles
5. Name the major jazz musicians for each style
6. Able to Compare how the musical elements stimulate emotions

Grading Structure:

Weekly Listening Assignments - 40%

Presentations - 40%

Group Discussions - 20%

No Midterm or Final exam!

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 - Swing

Week 7 - Bebop

Week 8 - Cool Jazz

Week 9 - Free Jazz

Week 10 - Hard Bop

Week 11 - Funky (soul) Jazz

Week 12 - Latin

Week 13 - Fusion

Week 14 - Jazz Influences in Today's Music

Week 15 - TBA

Class Format:

- Starting in week 5, students will have a **Weekly Listening** assignment on the style of music being covered during the current week. Students will be given listening examples from that style and write a short summary/analysis of what they hear using the terms given in week three.
- Also starting in week four, 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 three, so that they will have time to prepare their presentations.

All assignments will be uploaded to Google Docs.

“This course is being offered in an in-person modality. Please be attentive to the class attendance policy found in this syllabus. Online alternatives will not be considered unless I am presented with a directive from the offices of Student Health or Student Affairs. However, if on any day you are ill or otherwise cannot complete Trojan Check to produce a valid Campus Day Pass, stay home. In that case, contact me to make up work or otherwise maintain contact with the class.”

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, policy.usc.edu/research-and-scholarship-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, Equal Opportunity and Title IX - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

eotix.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.symlicity.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 Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776

osas.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.

[LiveSafe Mobile Safety App](#)

[TrojansAlert Emergency Notification System](#)

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Thornton Emergency Services

Thornton Emergency Response Team: If evacuation or other actions are needed, members of the Thornton Emergency Response Team will provide verbal instructions.

Thornton Business Continuity Team: Multi-channel messages will be sent to your phone, text, and email providing next steps in the case of an emergency or significant unexpected disruption to facilities or operations.