



USC/Thornton School of Music
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MUJZ 141a - Keyboard for Improvisers Fall 2024 - Course Syllabus

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. The course covers fundamental piano technique including scales and arpeggios, 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. For all courses in the Keyboard Lab (MUS 213), students are required to use their own headset, comprising headphones with an attached boom microphone. **Headsets must have a 1/8" (3.5 mm) wired TRRS connector to work with the lab controller system.** Compatible headsets can be found in the USC bookstore. Students can also purchase these online etc.

Examples include the following models:

1. [Logitech H111](#)
2. [Logitech H151](#)
3. [Logitech G332](#)
4. [Yamaha HPH-250m](#)

2. Each week's assignment and associated files will be posted on Blackboard weekly, usually on Wednesday. **You may view the materials in class on a laptop or iPad (not on your phone) but printing the assignments is strongly encouraged.** Printed materials should be collected in a 3-ring binder, which will count for +/- 5 points on 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 communication will be via USC email. Make sure there's always room in your inbox, and please respond promptly when a reply is requested.

Format:

Each class session will begin with the introduction of new concepts and associated assignments. In the remaining class time, you may begin to explore the new material while I connect with 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 written assignments; you must be prepared to play what you write.

Practice:

This is a two-unit performance-related class; you are expected to **practice at least thirty minutes a day, on average**. Access to a keyboard in your living space is ideal.

Access to Gateway practice rooms is managed by the Music Operations office (x6444), and on the web through the Virtual EMS system.

Classroom conduct:

Cell phones must be silenced and stowed. Viewing the assignments on an iPad or laptop is allowed, though the printed library is preferred. No gum chewing, please!

Grading:

"A" students will master all assignments in the week assigned. "B" students may progress more slowly but demonstrate consistent effort. **Lower grades result from missing assignments and/or lack of effort.** Even if you lack exceptional "chops," evidence of real effort will contribute to a higher grade: *"progress, not perfection."* The midterms and finals will cover all material introduced to that point.

Class participation:	10%
Weekly assignments:	40%
Midterm:	25%
Final:	25%

Remote options:

Each week's presentation will be archived on video and uploaded to Blackboard. If you must miss a class you should view the video to stay current. You will get the most out of the class through personal interaction with the instructor and other students in MUS213, but you may submit weekly assignments as a video recording of your performance.

Office hours:

I will establish a time on Tuesday or Thursday for Zoom consultations. You may use this time to address any difficulties you may be having with the material, or to catch up on missing assignments. There may also be in-person slots available on campus M/W, TBD.

IMPORTANT: Participation is a major component of success in MUJZ 141. If you miss a class and do not submit a performance video, you are expected to demonstrate your understanding of that week's material on the midterm or final exam. Missing assignments will affect your grade.

Fall 2024 schedule – subject to revision

<u>Week # / Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments/Tunes</u> (due the following week)
1) Aug. 30	Introduction, evals. Technic 1	Warmups, Hanon #1, Db scale
2) Sep. 6	Reading two clefs Transposition	“Mikrokosmos,” “London Bridge,” “Over the Rainbow”
3) Sep. 13	Triads	Diatonic and chromatic motion, inversions, harmonization: “Amazing Grace”
4) Sep. 20	Shell voicings 1	Maj.7, Dom.7, Min.7, half dim.7,dim.7 ii-V-I drills, “Autumn Leaves”
5) Sep. 27	Shell voicings 2 MIDTERM PREP	“Rhythm” changes w/melody
6) Oct. 4	MIDTERM EXAM	Covers all topics through week 5
	Guide Tones	Diatonic, chromatic motion ii-V-I drills, “Blues x 2”
Oct. 11	FALL RECESS	
7) Oct. 18	Walking bass	Turnaround loops, blues progressions, "Freddie Freeloader"
8) Oct. 25	3-voice comping	chromatic and diatonic movement “Now’s the Time”
9) Nov. 1	Tune study	“Song For My Father” incl. improv
10) Nov. 8	4-voice technique “shell extensions”	Melodic patterns, diatonic motion “But Beautiful,” student pick
11) Nov. 15	“Big Sound”	Bb blues comping, “Killer Joe”
12) Nov. 22	Modal style	Quartal triads, “So What”
Nov. 29	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
Dec. 6	Review and FINAL PREP	
Dec. 13	FINAL EXAM	Covers all material to date.

Statement on University Academic and Support Systems

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate](#)- and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems:

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

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

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline consists of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086

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) 740-2500

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

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411

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

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101

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](#)

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: \(323\) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call](#)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.