

MUJS 5450 Studies in Jazz History Syllabus Spring 2010

MWF 10:00-10:50 in Room 288

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web3.unt.edu/murphy | class website: ecampus.unt.edu (Blackboard Vista)

Office hours: Monday 11-11:50, Wednesday 1-1:50, Thursday 2-2:50, Friday 11-11:50

Catalog description

5450. Studies in Jazz History. 3 hours. A survey of jazz research materials and methodology, and presentation of special topics in jazz history.

Prerequisite(s): MUJS 4470 or consent of college. [In this context, consent of college means pass the Jazz History Proficiency Exam.]

Textbook

Gennari, John. 2006. *Blowing Hot and Cool: Jazz and its critics* (University of Chicago Press). Available at the University Union bookstore for \$35.00.

Course goals

1. To know the historical literature of jazz and be able to read it critically.
2. To understand the historiography of jazz, how the standard narrative of jazz history reached its present form, and recent critiques of it.
3. To become aware of current scholarship on jazz history and criticism by studying a recent scholarly book and recent scholarly articles.
4. To be able to summarize, critique, and form arguments about jazz history and historiography clearly and professionally in writing, in class, and in video and web formats.
5. To be prepared to teach jazz history at the undergraduate level.
6. To be prepared for the master's comprehensive examination in jazz studies.

Assignments, tests, and grading

Unit 1 Jazz Historiography 30%

Study recent publications on jazz historiography and sample older writings, recordings, and films.

Graded work: essay tests (essay test 1, 5%; essay test 2, 5%), short-answer test (10%), multimedia essay (10%)

Unit 2 Jazz Criticism 30%

Learn about the role jazz critics have played in jazz history by studying John Gennari's *Blowing Hot and Cool: Jazz and its critics* (University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Discuss the book's arguments, read samples of writing by critics and the music they wrote about, and write in response to the ideas and the music.

Apply concepts and content to our larger theme of understanding the standard narrative of jazz history and recent critiques and revisions of it.

Graded work: essays (two, 5% each), short-answer test (10%), multimedia essay (10%)

Unit 3 Teaching Jazz History 30%

Learn how to design and teach a class that is effective for the setting you are teaching in.

10% two-page essay that explains your approach to teaching jazz history. This should explain your approach to jazz historiography and how that will affect your class design.

10% syllabus for a jazz history course in a college teaching situation you choose. Your syllabus should clearly identify the type of student, school, and class size you are designing a class for.

10% lesson plan for one class and test questions about that topic (5 multiple choice, 2 true-false, 2 short answer, 2 listening). Lesson plan should show how all of the class time will be used and include topics, listening examples, readings, and audio and video selections.

Depending on the size of the class, this will include practice teaching in front of our class.

Final exam 10%

A comprehensive short-answer test on main ideas as preparation for your master's comprehensive exam.

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = 59 and below

Essay tests are written on topics chosen from a list of topics provided by the professor, done outside of class. Short-answer tests are given in class on a set of topics specified in advance. Multimedia essays can take several forms. One possible form is a text that you write and then record yourself reading, around 3 minutes long. Illustrate your argument with still images and sound clips. Save it in a format that can be posted on the class site for your colleagues to comment on.

Examples of videos used to communicate scholarly arguments:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gmP4nk0EOE>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGCJ46vyR9o>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4CV05HyAbM>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHvoBPjhsBA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KsEQnOkTZ0>

Video on fair use: <http://vimeo.com/432491>

Have you noticed that there is no long term paper? This semester I am experimenting with shorter assignments that are easier to fit in a musician's busy schedule. If you would like to write a longer term paper to gain that experience, and substitute it for several assignments, you may.

Calendar A more detailed calendar will be available on our ecampus.unt.edu page.

Unit 1 Historiography, weeks 1-5

Unit 2 Jazz Criticism, weeks 6-10

Unit 3 Teaching Jazz History, weeks 11-15

Final Exam Wednesday, May 12, 2010 from 8-10 a.m.

<http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/spring/final.html>

Professor's expectations of the students, including attendance

A university course is a sustained conversation that you must show up for and take part in, not merely a certification that you earn by passing tests and doing assignments. Learning is a social process. Regular attendance is crucial to your success in the course, and to the success of the course itself. If you miss class, you miss a part of that experience that cannot be made up. Some absences, however, are unavoidable. Your grade will depend on your mastery of the subject as reflected in the graded work. I will take attendance so I know who is attending, but I won't include attendance in the grade, with one important exception: the maximum number of classes that a student can miss without penalty is **four**. If you miss five or more class periods, for any reason (not including excused university absences or extended serious illness that is documented by a medical professional), you must drop the class or receive an F for the final grade.

I expect you to attend every meeting of this class, or explain in advance (if possible) why your absence is unavoidable, and to arrive on time. You are responsible for what was covered in class during your absence, including revised assignments and changed deadlines. I expect you to contribute to the discussion both in class and on the discussion area of our class website. An important part of the graduate school experience is formulating an argument, a comment, or a question and putting it out there for other people to respond to. If our class can be compared to a jam session, then everybody has to take a solo. The conversations we have in class are important because they give you practice in the kind of conversations that are found in scholarly work and in the public written exchange of views that has become the norm in musical communities: between you as a reader and writer and the sources you cite; between your writing and a reader or reviewer; among colleagues at a conference; between teachers and students; between musicians. Talking about music is not necessarily a waste of time; it depends on how you do it.

What students can expect of the professor

You can expect me to be prepared for class, to take you and the subject seriously while enjoying the learning process, to begin and end on time, to let you know what to expect on tests and writing assignments, to grade your work fairly and promptly, to allow time for questions and discussions in class, to limit discussion in class so we can achieve our goals, to be available outside of class, and to keep the workload within reasonable limits.

This class and your master's exam

You can expect questions on the exam about what you learn in this class: main ideas, publications, dates, concepts, people, articles, books, recordings, films.

To Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities that affect their work in this class are invited to discuss them with me at office hours. If you expect an accommodation to be made that affects grading, then the disability must be documented.

Recording class

You may only record class with permission in advance. The recording may only be used by you. It may not be shared in any way, including on the web.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty includes presenting only your own ideas as your own, and giving credit for the ideas of others when you use them in your academic work. No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated in this class. Students are expected to follow the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline. Plagiarism, when detected and proven, will result in a failing grade for the course and a referral to the UNT Office of Academic Integrity for formal disciplinary action.

These rules apply to all written work in this class:

- You must cite the source of every bit of language that you did not compose.
- You may not consult any other person about your graded written work without prior permission from Prof. Murphy. The use of a commercial editing service is forbidden.
- Getting help from another student on your writing must be approved in advance, and you must turn in your original before it was edited and the edited version.

This syllabus is subject to change with notice.