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## **JAZZ IMPROVISATION I**

**MUSC219.001 | FALL**

TTH 9:30-10:45 | **016**

**BERT LIGON | Room 122 | 777.6565 | bligon@mozart.sc.edu**

[music.sc.edu/ea/Jazz/Improv219.html](http://music.sc.edu/ea/Jazz/Improv219.html)

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### **1 COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Applications of jazz theory skills. Students explore selected jazz repertoire in-depth applying technical and theoretical concepts. In order to pass from one level to the next, students must pass a basic scale proficiency test and an improvising jury for the jazz faculty. This class is part of the applied sequence for jazz majors, and in some ways is modeled after applied lessons. Students will get feedback in daily classes and will also be graded with a final jury.

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### **2 GOALS & LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Improvisational methods over standard jazz literature. Students will be able to identify key center areas, identify important distinguishing pitches that define key areas, have several approaches for improvising using harmonic generalization and harmonic specificity, and demonstrate applications and common jazz vocabulary over universal harmonic progressions and memorized tunes from the jazz standard repertoire.

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### **SKILLS**

- All major and harmonic minor scales
  - Outlines No. 1, 2, & 3 in major and minor (from *Connecting Chords With Linear Harmony*)
  - 1-3-5-7, 1-3-5-7-9, and 3-5-7-9 arpeggios on all ii, V and I chords in major & ii<sup>o</sup>, V7 and i chords in minor
  - Selected technical studies and Jazz Etudes as assigned
  - Selected voicings and bass lines for rhythm section instruments
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### **3 MATERIALS**

***Jazz Theory Resources, [Vol. 1], Connecting Chords with Linear Harmony***, Bert Ligon

Staff paper, pencils, & your instrument

Partial list of jazz CDs available in the USC Music Library: [www.music.sc.edu/ea/Jazz/USCjazzCDs.pdf](http://www.music.sc.edu/ea/Jazz/USCjazzCDs.pdf)

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### **4 CLASS STRUCTURE**

- Lecture and demonstration of improvisation vocabulary and techniques.
  - Address, memorize and learn strategies for 2-3 tunes per week.
  - Students will improvise in class using discussed techniques practiced outside of class
  - Students will participate in discussion and critique of class performances
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### **5 COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Attend and participate during class time improvisation
  - Be prepared to discuss musical elements
  - Transcribe and present to class four appropriate jazz transcriptions (see separate handout)
  - Four playing exams. Exams may include tune memorization, improvisation over tunes, specific technical exercises and etudes assigned in class and applied to specific pieces.
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### **6 COURSE POLICIES**

Much of your grade will depend on your performance in class. The university attendance policy states the following: "Enrollment in a course obligates the student not only for prompt completion of all work assigned but also for punctual and regular attendance and for participation in whatever class discussion may occur. It is the student's responsibility to keep informed concerning all assignments made. Absences whether excused or unexcused do not absolve him or her from this responsibility. Absence from more than 10% of the scheduled classes, whether excused or unexcused, is excessive and the instructor may choose to exact a grade penalty for such absences." The Handbook for Undergraduate Students; "A student taking applied lessons who incurs more than two (2) unexcused absences will receive a failing grade." As this class relates to applied lessons, and applied lessons are usually once per week, this converts to missing 4 classes on a TTH or 6 on a MWF schedule.

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**7****ASSESSMENT & GRADING**

• Playing exams (2 @10%)	20%
• Mid-term Evaluation playing exam	15%
• Classroom participation	10%
• Improvisation notebook*	10%
• Short Transcription Assignments (3 @ 5%)	15%
• Complete Transcription Assignment (1 @ 10%)	10%
• Final Improvisation Jury	20%
• <b>Final Grade</b>	<b>100%</b>

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\*Improvisation workbook will include:

- Log of exercises and approaches, handouts from class.
  - Bass lines, voicings for rhythm section
  - Transcription excerpts and complete transcriptions
  - Practice/exercise log
  - Listening log [[music.sc.edu/ea/Jazz/Improv/uscjazzcds.pdf](http://music.sc.edu/ea/Jazz/Improv/uscjazzcds.pdf)]
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**8****OUTLINE**

Be prepared to play the melody, chord changes, and improvise over the selected 2-3 tunes per week.

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**Improv I: TUNES may include:**

Autumn Leaves	Now's The Time
Big Note Blues	Satin Doll
Birks' Works	Second Line
Blue Bossa	So What
Blue Monk	Song For My Father
Cantelope Island	Sonnymoon For Two
Centerpiece	St. Thomas
Chicken, The	Sugar
Cold Duck Time	Summertime
Doxy	Sunny
Fly Me To The Moon	Take The "A" Train
Groove Merchant, The	Tenor Madness
I Got Rhythm (Rhythm Changes)	The Flintstones (Rhythm Changes)
Lady Be Good	Watermelon Man
Mercy, Mercy. Mercy	When The Saints Go Marchin' In
Mr. P. C.	Work Song