

**MUS 390**  
**SPECIAL TOPICS: JAZZ AND BLUES THEORY/COMPOSITION**  
**W: 1:00-3:20p in Lone Mountain 151**  
**Web link: [http://www.jkornfeld.net/mus\\_390.htm](http://www.jkornfeld.net/mus_390.htm)**

Instructor: Jono Kornfeld  
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Office: 281 Masonic, #203  
Office Hours: W, 12:00 – 12:45p  
Campus Phone: 415-422-2721

**Course Description and Goals**

The prerequisite for the course is MUS 100. This class introduces the language of jazz, blues and related popular music styles. Through written analytical and aural work, students will learn jazz scales/modes, construct basic chord progressions, apply common rhythms and forms (e.g. 12-bar blues or 32-bar popular song), create and interpret lead sheets, and explore basic principles of improvisation. Classes will contain a mixture of lecture, discussion, score and recording analysis, ear-training exercises, composition and improvisation exercises, and occasional music making. This is not a performance class, but you may be asked to perform at your own skill-level.

**Goals**

This course intends to supply a foundational knowledge of jazz and blues harmony, melody, composition, improvisation and form. This knowledge will enhance your listening, performing and creative skills, as well as allow you to expand and refine your appreciation for these and other genres of music. While jazz and blues are the focus, we will cultivate an understanding of how each relates to both earlier and later styles of music, as well as assimilate a vocabulary that will allow you to be more expressive and articulate amongst professional musicians and non-musical members of your various communities.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- construct basic jazz chords and understand their sounds and functions
- hear/sing intervals and scale passages related to the jazz idiom
- transpose simple melodies and chord progressions
- recognize and convey common meters and rhythmic concepts
- analyze, interpret and create a 12-bar blues and a 32-bar popular song structure through the lead sheet format
- apply basic concepts of improvisation
- demonstrate basic keyboard harmony skills

**Assessment of Learning Outcomes**

Written, aural and performance skills will be evaluated through:

- Regular quizzes
- In-class performances
- Midterm and final exams
- Composition/writing assignments
- Analysis and theory assignments
- A short keyboard harmony demonstration (explained separately)

**Performing Arts Department Mission Statement**

Our Department offers the unique Performing Arts and Social Justice major, with concentrations in dance, music, and theater. The faculty and staff are committed to providing coursework, activities, and productions that acknowledge and study the performing arts' role as an agent of creative and social transformation. We strive to achieve academic and artistic excellence in the classroom, on stage, and in the community, while working towards a more humane and just society.

## **Text**

No text is required, but there are several charts and instructional materials that you are required to print-out.

## **Materials**

- Manuscript/staff paper (without left-side bar lines or clefs; this can be downloaded for free if you do not want to buy a notebooks' worth)
- Pencils and eraser
- Access to a keyboard or (preferably) piano
- Internet access for downloading instructional materials and accessing audio examples

## **Class Participation and Conduct**

- Class participation (in discussions, aural, performance and improvisation exercises, and written work) is mandatory and factors into your final grade. It is crucial to your learning process and will make your experience in the class more meaningful.
- You are expected to have completed all reading, written, listening and performance-preparation work prior to each class meeting. You are also expected to bring all course materials to each class meeting. This is crucial in you getting the most out of each class.
- You are expected to play an active role in creating and maintaining a supportive, friendly and respectful class environment.
- Studying music is like studying a language: learning rates can vary from student to student, but the best results come from consistent engagement with the material on a day-to-day basis. Two hours' worth of studying/practicing in one day will not be as good as 30 minutes' worth over four consecutive days. It can also be very helpful to partner up with classmates when it comes to preparing for performances of any type; music-making is often a social experience and can be practiced as such.
- All written work (homework, compositions, quizzes, exams) must be done in pencil (unless otherwise specified) and maintain a professional, legible appearance. Only use staff paper WITHOUT pre-printed bar lines or clefs (or anything else) on it.
- Students are responsible for acquiring handouts and assignments that are distributed in class even in the event of an unforeseen absence.
- The use of electronic devices (phones, laptops, mp3 players, etc.) is prohibited. Please remember to silence your phones when entering the classroom.
- There may be instances where we need to make individual, special arrangements. In these cases, it is best that we do so in person. However, it will also be necessary to follow up such face-to-face communications with confirmation emails. In the event that we have made a special arrangement, please make sure we have at least done so in writing. If you write to me, please communicate as clearly as possible. While this is a music class, you are expected to practice college-level, professional communication standards in your written and oral communication.

## **Academic Integrity**

The Department of Performing Arts adheres to USF's Academic Honesty Policy outlined in the Fogcutter. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism, intentionally or unintentionally representing the words or ideas of another person as your own; failure to properly cite references; manufacturing references;
- Working with another person when independent work is required;
- Submission of the same paper in more than one course without the specific permission of each instructor;
- Submitting a paper written by another person or obtained from the Internet.

Penalties for violation of the policy may include a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, and/or a referral to the Dean and the Committee on Student Academic Honesty.

**USF's Honor Code:** As a Jesuit institution committed to the care and education of the whole person, USF has an obligation to ensure that all members of the academic community embody and foster the values of honesty and integrity. All students are expected to know and adhere to the University's Honor Code. You can find the full text of the code online at [www.usfca.edu/fogcutter](http://www.usfca.edu/fogcutter).

**Attendance**

Attendance will be taken at every class meeting. In accordance with the official policy of the USF Department of Performing Arts, students enrolled in a 2-unit academic class may miss up to 1 class without penalty. For every absence thereafter, the student's final grade will be lowered by one grade point, such as from a B+ to B. Tardiness to class, or leaving early without permission, will also affect your grade: Three of either (or a combination) will count as one absence. Students who miss more than 5 class meetings may be asked to withdraw from the class or risk being given a failing grade.

Exception: When representing USF in intercollegiate competition (e.g., athletics, debate), students shall be excused from classes on the hours or days such competition takes them away from classes. However, such students shall be responsible for advising their professors regarding anticipated absences and for arranging to complete course work for classes, laboratories and/or examinations missed.

**Homework**

All homework is due at the beginning of class on the assigned date unless otherwise specified. Late assignments will not be accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances and I am notified in advance.

*Redo Policy:* Unless otherwise specified, you can redo any homework assignment that gets less than a 93%. The score of the redone version of the assignment will be averaged with the original score for a final assignment grade, with a maximum possible grade of 93%. Redone assignments are due one class period after the original assignment is handed back. Redoing an assignment means that you either make clear corrections on the original assignment, or that you hand in a copied-over, corrected version of the original assignment on a separate piece of paper. For the latter, you MUST staple the redone assignment to the original marked-up version; you don't have to copy over portions of the original assignment that were done correctly.

**Grading** (distribution subject to change)

Attendance, participation and level of preparedness: 5%

Keyboard harmony demonstration: 5% (in two parts)

Quizzes (approximately 5, with the lowest grade dropped; 2.5% each): 10%

Homework (mainly short written exercises and analyses): 35%

Final composition projects: 15%

Exams: 30%

*Grades on all assignments, quizzes and tests will be given as percentages; only your final course grade will be in letter-form.*

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Student Disability Services (SDS), 422-6876 as early as possible in the semester. SDS ensures that students with disabilities have equal access to all areas of university life and receive appropriate educational support and services to foster their academic and personal success. For services related to head injury, health, hearing, mobility, physical, psychological, temporary, or vision impairments call 422-2613. For services related to Learning Disabilities, AD/HD, or Asperger's Syndrome, call 422-6876. For more information, visit the web site at <http://www.usfca.edu/acadserv/academic/services/sds/>

**MUS 390**  
**APPROXIMATE CLASS/ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**  
 (subject to modification)

Week/Date	Class Topics and Activities	Assignments (written/listening) <i>due at the start of class</i> <i>N.B. most reading and written assignments will be downloadable</i>
1 Jan 22	Course overview  Diatonic harmony review: scales, intervals, triads, 7 <sup>th</sup> chords (symbols and roman numerals), inversions, circle of 5ths/progressions	
2 Jan 29	Transposition, more on chord symbols, 7th chords, slash notation, basic progressions (ii V I), substituting the M6 <sup>th</sup> chord for the M7 <sup>th</sup> chord, lead sheet format	<b>Read:</b> Triads, 7th chords, the roman numeral harmony system, inversions, basic chord progressions  <b>Assignment #1:</b> Review assignment (distributed in class)
3 Feb 5	More on lead sheet format Rhythm: swing, latin, bebop, ballad Expanded progressions: iii vi ii V I ii V units  Quiz 1: * 7th/6th chord spelling of lead sheet symbols * Vocabulary	<b>Read:</b> Jazz rhythms & styles; Basic chords and progressions Seven basic 7th chords <b>Assignment #2 (two parts):</b> ii V I table (for all M/m keys) <i>(complete if not finished in class)</i>  Transposing and Identifying ii V I progressions
4 Feb 12	Singing ii V I bass lines More on ii V units Reharmonizing: secondary dominants, tritone subs, approach chords I vi(VI*) ii(II*) V I I vi ii V iii vi ii V I I vi ii V -- iii bIII* ii bII* I	<b>Read:</b> Chord reharmonizations & substitutions; Chord extensions and alterations; Lead sheet format (handed out in class)  <b>Assignment #3:</b> Lead sheet basic analysis
5 Feb 19	<b>Quiz 2:</b> Chord substitutions  More on analysis and reharmonizing; Other chord functions: alterations and extensions Keyboard applications/voicings  <b>Form:</b> 12-bar blues (basic/vocal, bebop, maj/min); The dominant 7th chord in blues;	<b>Read:</b> The blues form and its variations; The 32 bar (popular) form  <b>Assignment #4:</b> Jazz standard reharmonization using substitute and approach chords
6 Feb 26	32-bar song AABA; uses of cadences; Rhythm changes; other forms  Review/prepare for midterm	<b>Read:</b> other forms and structures in blues/jazz  <b>Assignment #5:</b> (2 parts) Analysis and reharmonization II  Bring in keyboard harmony sheet and fill in chords for part I
7 March 5	<b>Midterm exam</b> Keyboard harmony demonstration, part I due	

**Spring Break (March 10-14)**

8 March 19	Melody construction (motif & sequence) Melodic improvisation; scales, motif, sequence, arpeggios, nonchord tones	<b>Read:</b> melody, motif and the basics of melodic composition and improvisation  Autumn Leaves Melodic Analysis
9 March 26	<b>Quiz 3:</b> Melody & nonchord tones (click for demo)  More melodic analysis/construction Blues melodies and improvisation 32 bar form improvisation	<b>Read:</b> improvising within specific formats  <b>Assignment #6:</b> Melody Analysis
10 April 2	Composition: blues	<b>Read:</b> blues composition: re-read The blues form and its variations  <b>Assignment #7:</b> Improvisation Motifs Example assignment; audio example
11 April 9	<b>Quiz 4:</b> Improvisation/Melodic Outlines Example quiz  Analysis: 32-bar AABA jazz Other forms to be discussed	<b>Read:</b> Reread: The 32 bar (popular) form Read: Various Jazz Forms  <b>Assignment #8:</b> blues composition
12 April 16	Composition: Composing a 32-bar piece based on an existing chord structure	<b>Assignment #9:</b> Jazz standard analysis Example Analysis
13 April 23	Introduction to modal jazz; modal blues; other modal forms & styles	<b>Read:</b> modes modes: examples modal jazz
14 April 30	<b>Quiz 5:</b> Modes: be able to write-out two Dorian and two Mixolydian scales/modes  More with modal music Other music: precursors and offshoots	<b>Read:</b> Mode-writing practice  <b>Assignment #10:</b> 32-bar composition  <b>**DUE MONDAY, APRIL 28, AT 3PM IN THE PASJ OFFICE**</b>
15 May 7	Review for final; keyboard harmony review	<b>Assignment #11:</b> composition rewrites (based on feedback given on Assignment #10)
Wed, May 14, 3:00-5:00p	<b>Final exam, MA 122</b> Exam review sheet  Keyboard Harmony Demonstration, part II due	<b>Extra credit assignment due:</b> same as Assignment 9 (another jazz standard analysis), but pick another song—your choice, but it must be approved.

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Homework (mainly short written exercises and analyses): 35%

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