

MUT 2641 Jazz Improvisation

Spring 2026

UF Jazz Director: Scott Wilson (swilson@arts.ufl.edu)

Teaching Assistants: Alex Pershounin (a.pershounin@ufl.edu)

Course Meeting Time and Location: TBA.

Credit Hours: 2 credits

Jazz Office Location: School of Music: Room 354

Office Hours: Office hours can be made available upon request Monday through Friday.

Course Description

This course is designed to solidify jazz fundamentals in performance. Students will be required to perform 5 jazz standards from memory and arpeggiate the chords to the 9th. Students will have scale exams on major, dorian and dominant scales and their arpeggios (6 keys for Improvisation 1). Students will be tested on jazz improvisation and be graded on their ability to hit all chord changes, play accurate style and demonstrate jazz vocabulary. Students will also perform one jazz vocabulary lick in all 12 keys.

Prerequisites: Commercial Music Theory and Practice 1 with a grade of B or better.

Optional Text:

Students **may** purchase the following Play-A-Long albums but it is not required.

All students must have the app IREAL Pro.

Jamey Aebersold Website (www.jazzbooks.comLinks to an external site.).

Jamie Aebersold Play Along Albums: (the cost is roughly \$15 to \$20 per album)

1. **Volume 44 - Autumn Leaves**
2. **Volume 38 - Blue Note**
3. **Volume 21 - Getting It Together**

Link to Play-A-Long Albums listed above.

http://www.jazzbooks.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=CTGY&Store_Code=JAJAZZ&Category_Code=AEBPLA&offset=0Links to an external site.

Note: These books are not available in the bookstore because the list of suggested Jamey Aebersold albums changes from time to time. There are over one hundred Jamey Aebersold play along albums that we have the option to select from each semester, including newly published play alongs.

MISSION STATEMENT

Your goals are to understand that a routine can solve any and all issues in your playing. You cannot nurture your skills to their fullest if you are constantly moving backwards rather than routinely hitting a task and moving forward. A routine is everything and a routine exponentially increases your learning curve in 16 weeks. Those individuals who have a solid routine are Olympic winners, Nobel Prize Winners, phenomenal musicians with industry skills in every corner, and these people see any goal as a set of weekly results. You only need to get better one percent a week to become a professional musician. The routine of having 16 steady weeks of focusing intently on commercial musicianship skills will profoundly affect your life. Those seeds grow to become pillars of strength in your musical foundation and musical prowess as a player, producer, director or composer.

STAY INFORMED!

Being informed is an intentional act. We expect everyone to take the initiative to stay informed at all times and our success depends on it!

You will receive all Jazz Updates and information through the following methods:

- Twitter updates (you must sign up for the Gator Jazz Band Twitter account or you may not enroll in jazz improvisation).
- Canvas emails and announcements.
- Announcements in class.
- Announcements at the conclusion of rehearsals.

* If you have a class conflict that necessitates leaving class early, it is your responsibility to seek out any information you may have missed from senior members of the class.

Please note that there is no excuse for being uninformed. Thanks in advance for doing your part to keep up to date and contribute to the success of our students!

ATTENDANCE

Prompt and regular attendance is required at all class meetings. Any class conflicts must be cleared with the director a minimum of one week in advance unless it is an emergency. The determination of unexcused absence will be made at the discretion of the director.

Attendance Policy

All class meetings are required. Any unexcused absences will lower the final grade automatically 1/2 a letter grade, i.e. ...1 unexcused = A to A-, 2 unexcused = A- to B, etc. All excused absences will require the proper written documentation that the student has been excused from school during the time in question. Without this approval we cannot excuse an absence.

Tardy

A tardy is defined as not being in class when class begins. Members who arrive late to “3 classes” will have their grade lowered ½ letter grade.

It is required to check the Canvas announcements online every week. This is critical to minimize e-mail traffic, student questions, to lower student anxiety, and it helps to inform students of concerts they can attend. NOTE: Students often have the same questions that need to be. With that in mind, the “Announcements” will be the medium that the instructor communicates all answers to basic questions. In some cases, a student’s question will require a personal response, and in those cases, a personal response will be issued to the student. Please note that you may be penalized -5 points for not reading the Announcements or for not being aware of their content. This ensures scholarly activity from our talented students in terms of being accountable to read instructor communication during the course.

GRADING

THERE ARE 1000 points possible.

1. **Memorization of 5 jazz standards.** (500 points) Each standard is worth 100 points and breaks down as shown below.
 1. Performs melody from memory (40 points)
 2. Performs arpeggios from memory (40 points)
 3. Score on improvising 2 choruses (20 points)
2. **Midterm Scale Test** (180 points) (Use Getting It Together Album) Track 1 Major (4 bars each)
6 Major Scales – play major scale to 9th and arp. to 9th (Track 1 Major) (4 bars each).
 2. 6 Dorian Scales – play minor scale and arpeggiate to 9th (Track 2 Minor Dorian 18) (4 bars each).
 - 3 6 Dominant Scales – play bebop scale and arpeggiate to 9th (Track 16 Dominant) (4 bars)
3. **Recording of you** performing the melody and two choruses of solos over a play along recording such as Jamey Aebersold play alongs (minimum 4 songs). This CD will be crafted as a personal demo and must be complete with photo and cover with song titles listed. (100 points)
4. Student must play 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, b3, 2, 1 in all 12 keys. (120 points). This is a critical pattern that helps students learn the notes for minor scales and altered scales (i.e. b2minor over 17 for Dom7alt.)
5. **Final Exam** (100 points) Students will pick 2 tunes out of a hat that have been studied during the semester. The student will play melody by memory and 2 choruses of solo.

CALCULATE YOUR GRADE

Use the 1000 point grading scale below to calculate your grade.

1000 - 920 A

919 - 900 A -

899 - 850 B+

849 - 820 B

819- 800 B-

799 - 750 C +

749 - 720 C

719- 700 C-

699 - 650 D+

649 - 620 D

619- 600 D-

599 and below E

NOTE: A Passing Grade of B is required for this course to count towards the UF Jazz Minor.

Make-ups for Exams or Other Work

In order to remain fair to all students enrolled in this course who are held to the same academic standard, make-ups for any assignment will require written documentation that the student has been excused from school during the time in question. Without this approval we cannot issue a make-up. This includes all requests for permission to grant a make-up for personal issues involving family, work, deaths, hardships, marriages, pregnancies, illnesses, financial problems, etc. We do apologize for this inconvenience, however, in order to be ethically in good standing, this documentation is needed to ensure the accuracy of all claims made. -----

Resource: UF Grading Policy Website:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>Links to an external site..

JAZZ IMPROVISATION WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

1. Purchase Jamey Aebersold albums for this course.
2. Students attending General Jazz Meeting to schedule class meeting time.

WEEK 2

In Class Exercises

1. Practice Blue Bossa in class. We will read the tune and talk a little bit about the chord changes. We will provide sheet music for all instruments. We encourage students to listen to a few Youtube recordings of the tune so you are familiar with the melody.
2. Play 6 Major Scales to 9th and arpeggiate to 9th. For the first class will have scale sheets for everyone so you can read the scales. To practice major scales students can use the Getting It Together Jamey Aebersold (Track 1 – Major Scales). The track plays each example for 4 bars.

We are doing this scale exercise above in class to help students get started now to prepare for the Midterm in Week 8 (See Week 8 midterm requirements).

WEEK 3

In Class Test

Blue Bossa:

1. Students must play melody by memory (40 points)
2. Students read 6 Major chords to 9th (40 points) Follow the example outlined in "Major 7 Arpeg. Ex. MP3."
3. Take 2 choruses of solos and hit key chord tones (20 points)

WEEK 4

In Class Exercises

1. Practice Blue Train in class. We will read the tune and talk a little bit about the chord changes. We encourage students to listen to a few Youtube recordings of the tune so you are familiar with the melody.
2. Play/Read Minor Scales to 9th and arpeggiate to 9th. Student will play to the Getting It Together Jamey Aebersold (Track 2 – Minor Dorian 18). The track plays each example for 4 bars. This exercise will help students prepare for the Midterm in Week 8.

WEEK 5

In Class Test

Blue Train:

1. Students must play melody by memory (40 points)
2. Using sheet music, Arpeggiate 6 Minor chords to 9th (40 points): For test, use the "Min 7 Arpeg. Ex. MP3."
3. Take 2 choruses of solos and hit chord tones (20 points)

WEEK 6

In Class Exercises

1. Practice Recorda-Me in class. We will read the tune and talk a little bit about the chord changes. We will provide sheet music for all instruments. We encourage students to listen to a few Youtube recordings of the tune so you are familiar with the melody.

2. Using sheet music, Play 6 Bebop Scales and arpeggiate to 9th. Student can practice with the Getting It Together Jamey Aebersold (Track 16 – Dominant7). The track plays each example for 4 bars. This exercise will help students prepare for the Midterm.

WEEK 7

In Class Test

Recorda-Me:

1. Students must play melody by memory (40 points)
2. On Recorda-Me, arpeggiate all chords to 7th (40 points)
3. Take 2 choruses of solos and hit chord tones (20 points)

WEEK 8

MID TERM SCALE TEST (Use Getting It Together Album)

Track 1 Major (4 bars)

1. 6 Major Scales – play major scale to 9th and arpeggiate to 9th (Track 1 Majors) (4 bars each).
2. 6 Dorian Scales – play minor scale and arpeggiate to 9th (Track 2 Minor Dorian 18) (4 bars each).
3. 6 Dominant Scales – play bebop scale and arpeggiate to 9th (Track 16 Dominant) (4 bars)

WEEK 9

Spring Break

WEEK 10

In Class Exercises

1. Practice Autumn Leaves and prepare for test.
2. Play 1,2,b3,4,5,b3,2,1 in all 6 keys. This will help you practice for the final.

WEEK 11

In Class Test

Autumn Leaves :

1. Students must play melody by memory (40 points)
2. On Autumn Leaves, arpeggiate all chords to 7th in time with play along (40 points)
3. Take 2 choruses of solos and hit chord tones (20 points)

WEEK 12

In Class Exercises

1. Practice Locomotion and prepare for test.
2. Play 6 Bebop Scale and arpeggiate to 9th. Student can practice to the Getting It Together Jamey Aebersold (Track 16 – Dominant7). The track plays each example for 4 bars. This exercise will help students prepare for the Midterm.

WEEK 13

In Class Test

Locomotion :

1. Students must play melody by memory (40 points)

2. On Locomotion, arpeggiate chords to 9th in time with play along (40 points)
3. Take 2 choruses of solos and hit chord tones (20 points)

WEEK 14

In Class Exercises

Make Up Week. Students may try to pass off missed exercises.

WEEK 15

In Class Test

Student will play 1,2,b3,4,5,b3,2,1 in all 12 keys.

WEEK 16

FINAL EXAM

1. Students will pick 2 tunes out of a hat that have been studied during the semester. The student will play melody by memory and 2 choruses of solo.

Students with disabilities

"Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester."

Academic Honesty

At the University of Florida every student signed the following statement: "I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for the University." The instructor of this course fully endorses this statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing is subject to an automatic E and further disciplinary action. All violations of academic honesty will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action without exception. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

**If you are repeating this course at UF, please be aware that turning in any part of any written assignment that you submitted for this course in the past also constitutes academic misconduct. See "Scope and Violations" under the Honor Code above.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>Links to an external site..

Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

It is the policy of the University of Florida to provide an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sexual harassment and

sexual misconduct. This includes information sent through e-mail. Sexual harassment and sexual misconduct in any form will not be tolerated, and individuals who engage in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The University encourages students, faculty, staff, and visitors to promptly report sexual harassment or sexual misconduct. For more specific information, please see www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/affact/harass (Located in the General Information section of the University Catalog.)

Campus Resources and Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care websiteLinks to an external site.](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center websiteLinks to an external site.](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center websiteLinks to an external site.](#)

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department websiteLinks to an external site.](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road,

Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center websiteLinks to an external site.](#)

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk Links to an external site.](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections CenterLinks to an external site.: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library SupportLinks to an external site.: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching CenterLinks to an external site.: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more informationLinks to an external site.](#)

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint ProcessLinks to an external site.](#)

In-Class Recording:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable

purposes are (1) for personal education use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and deliver by an instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course.

A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentation such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless, of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/Links to an external site.>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/Links to an external site.>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/Links to an external site.>.