

**Humboldt State University**  
**Department of Music**

**Syllabus**

<b>A. M. Jazz Band</b>	Spring, 2017	Dr. Paul Cummings
MUS 106J-1	CRN: 21659	Office: 219 Music B
MUS 406J-1	CRN: 21666	826-5435
TR 11:00-11:50 a.m.	Rm. 131, Music A	1 credit
Office hours: TBA and by appointment		pcc6@humboldt.edu

**Course Description**

A. M. Jazz Band provides an opportunity for players of traditional big band instruments to develop ensemble and solo skills while playing a varied jazz repertoire. Technical facility at an intermediate level on the instrument to be played in class is required prior to enrollment. Music reading skill at an intermediate level is required. Enrollment is conditional on an audition at the beginning of the term.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will develop skills in rhythmic accuracy, intonation, balance, dynamics, and phrasing.
2. Students will rehearse and perform jazz music from a wide variety of styles.
3. Students will rehearse for two hours per week as a full ensemble and one hour as a section.
4. In sectional rehearsals, students will collaborate in making decisions regarding musical phrasing, dynamics, articulations, and other expressive dimensions.
5. Students will demonstrate skills of musical performance that distinguish jazz from other musical experiences, including improvisation, applying them in rehearsal and performance.

**Music Department Goals and Outcomes**

Goal 2: Students will demonstrate familiarity with, and an ability to perform a wide selection of musical literature representing principal eras, genres, and cultural sources.

Outcome 2C: Over the course of four years, music majors will perform a wide variety of music – in solos, large and small ensembles, from different eras, in different styles.

Goal 3: Students will demonstrate ability in performing areas appropriate to the student's needs, interests, and degree path.

Outcome 3: Students will demonstrate improvement in their performing skills – both in the quality of their performance and the difficulty of the repertoire that they can perform.

### **General Education Area C Measurable Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of and ability to apply discipline-specific vocabulary. Written, tangible, or presentational assignments will demonstrate application of concepts and principles to a specific instance.
2. Through written, tangible, or presentational assignments, students will demonstrate an integrated response of affective subjectivity and collective standards of judgment in relation to an artistic or humanistic work.
3. Through written, tangible or presentational assignments, students will demonstrate their ability to critically evaluate the production of humanistic or artistic works through the lenses of (but not limited to) gender, culture, or ethnicity.
4. Students will articulate in written, tangible, or presentational assignments the particular contribution(s) that a discipline within the Arts and Humanities can bring to understanding human experience.

### **HSU Learning Outcomes**

This course explicitly contributes to your acquisition of skills and knowledge relevant to these HSU Learning Outcomes:

#### **HSU graduates will have demonstrated:**

- Critical and creative thinking skills in acquiring a broad base of knowledge and applying it to complex issues.
- Competence in a major area of study.

#### **HSU graduates will be prepared to:**

- Succeed in their chosen careers.
- Take responsibility for identifying personal goals and practicing lifelong learning.

## **Repertoire**

There will be an eclectic mixture of jazz literature to rehearse and perform during the semester. Some compositions will be drawn from the traditional canon of big band music, including ballads, swing tunes, and Latin charts. Other pieces will stem from world music traditions.

It will be helpful to keep an open mind about repertoire. There will surely be some pieces that you enjoy playing, but there may also be a few that seem inappropriate or unsuited to the group. As the director, I do my best to balance many competing factors in selecting charts, such as too easy vs. too hard; too much improvisation required vs. too little improv; brass or rhythm section parts vs. sax parts; fast vs. slow; swing style vs. Latin style; and the list goes on and on. Thanks in advance for your flexibility and willingness to try things that might feel uncomfortable.

## **Responsibilities**

1. Bring materials to class: instrument, music, accessories (extra reeds, mutes, mallets), and a pencil.
2. Get into a regular practice routine early in the semester. There is lots of evidence that regular practice is the key to success in music rather than pure talent.
3. Know your music! Here is a quote worth remembering: "Rehearsals are for learning everyone else's parts rather than only your own part." You can learn those other parts better if you already know your own.
4. Attend all rehearsals, and be on time.

## **Sectional Rehearsals**

Students are required to meet on a weekly basis in sectional rehearsals. While section leaders have primary responsibility for scheduling and leading the rehearsals, all section members are expected to be active participants. If you cannot attend a particular sectional rehearsal, you are required to inform both me and your section leader of the conflict at least one day ahead of time. You may be given a make-up assignment due to the missed rehearsal.

## **Redwood Jazz Alliance**

You are required to attend at least two RJA workshops and one performance. RJA artists usually present a free workshop on the morning after their concerts. It is your responsibility to verify your attendance at these events. For the concerts, turn in your ticket stub and a copy of the program with your name on it. For the workshops, find me, Dr. Aldag, or the designated student attendance monitor

at the workshop, and ask one of them to confirm your attendance on the roll sheet. A list of RJA events will be distributed in class.

### **Care and Feeding of the Director**

All musicians are expected to maintain focus on the music during rehearsals. Stay focused, especially during tough rehearsal grinds.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Arrive no later than 11:00 so that you are prepared for a 11:05 downbeat. This means that you should be in room 131 several minutes earlier for individual warm-up. Rehearsals will end at 11:50. When you anticipate a schedule conflict, e-mail me before the relevant rehearsal. When an absence cannot be predicted, explain the reason to me as soon as possible afterward. A qualified substitute is most welcome, and goes a long way toward compensating for your absence. **If you have more than three absences during the term, you risk receiving a grade of NC (no credit) for the class.**

### **Grading (CR/NC)**

Grades will be based on the following criteria:

- 35% Attendance, including sectional rehearsals and RJA events
- 30% Instrumental proficiency as demonstrated in individual playing test(s)
- 15% Instrumental proficiency as demonstrated in regular class sessions
- 20% Written assignments; details are explained in class

More detailed information about policies and procedures related to HSU courses may be found here: <http://www2.humboldt.edu/academicprograms/syllabus-addendum-campus-resources-policies>