

Humboldt State University

Department of Music

Syllabus

A. M. Jazz Band Spring, 2018

MUS 106J CRN: 21293

MUS 406J CRN: 21300

TR 11:00-11:50 a.m. Rm. 131 1 credit

Office hours: T 12:00; W 1:00; F 4:00

Dr. Paul Cummings

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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 a basic level on the instrument to be played in class is required prior to enrollment. Music reading skill at an intermediate level is also required. Enrollment is conditional on an audition held 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 are uncomfortable.

Lab Environment:

We may have a qualified music major serving as Teaching Assistant with A.M. Jazz this semester. This student will be fully qualified for this responsibility and approved for the position by me. Your effort and participation should be no different when a student is directing than when the regular instructor of the course is directing.

Responsibilities:

1. Always bring materials to class: instrument, music, accessories (extra reeds, mutes, mallets), and a pencil.
2. 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.
3. 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.

Concert date:

The concert date for spring, 2018 is Thursday, May 3, at 8pm in Fulkerson Recital Hall.

Please put this date in your personal calendar. Call time will be approximately 6:30 pm on May 3.

Redwood Jazz Alliance:

You are required to attend at least three RJA performances. RJA artists will also present a free workshop, usually the morning after their concerts. You must attend these, too. 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 or Dan Aldag at the workshop and ask one of us 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. Matters such as how many chairs belong in the third row, what time the next concert will end, and other conversations among group members are best saved for before or after class. 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, if possible, 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:

40% Attendance, including sectional rehearsals

20% Individual playing test(s)

20% Instrumental proficiency as demonstrated in regular class sessions

20% Other assignments, including research on recordings, short descriptions of RJA events, etc.

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>