



MU 114 A – Jazz Improvisation

Syllabus

Course: MU 114 A – “Jazz Improvisation”

Term: JanPlan 2022

Time: TWRF- 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Location: Bixler 219

Instructor: Dr. Jeff Osarczuk (“Dr. O”)

Contact Information: josarczu@colby.edu

Office Hours: By appointment only

Course Description

“Jazz Improvisation” is an introductory course that familiarizes students with the fundamental aspects of improvisation used in the jazz genre. Students will learn beginning jazz music-theory and will perform concepts during class and in small groups.

Course Prerequisites

Students should already possess the ability to read treble-clef or bass-clef musical notation prior to enrollment. Students will also need to provide their own instruments and relevant supplies (reeds, mouthpieces, valve oil, strings, etc). Pianists will need to share available keyboards in the classroom.

Learning Outcomes

Topics covered include and are not limited to scales (major/minor), modes, pentatonic scales, chords, chord-scales, chord symbols, rhythm, harmony, the blues, form, “tune learning routine,” moving beyond the blues scale, ii-V-I chord progressions, listening to jazz masters, imitation, “the creative process”, “jazz etudes”, and the application of all these (and more) into our own solos.

Required texts/materials

Supplies for notetaking, a working instrument, and all class handouts.

Grades

Student grades will be based on attendance and participation, not performance ability.

("Grades" continued)

- Getting an "A" in this class should be easy. All you need to do it show up on time, with all your materials, and participate positively in every class.
- Each unexcused absence will result in a 10% reduction to your grade.
- Each unexcused late will result in a 5% reduction (first late is a warning).
- All emergencies (family deaths, medical emergencies, COVID-19, etc.) will not affect your grade negatively. Proof of incident may be required.
- Participation can be earned by answering questions, asking questions, and performing.
- Unpreparedness and disorderly behavior (cell phone use / talking, etc.) will result in a reduction to your participation grade.
- Behavior that violates "Colby College Policies" (see below) can result in a reduction to your participation grade or removal from the class depending on the severity of the incident.
- **All requests for an excused late or excused absence must be emailed to the instructor at least 24 hours prior in order to be considered.**

*The following policies were written and provided by Colby College:

Colby College Policies

Academic Accommodations

I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made. I am happy to consider creative solutions as long as they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity.

If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, you are also welcome to initiate this conversation with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office works with students with disabilities and faculty members to identify reasonable accommodations. Please visit their website for contact and other information: <https://www.colby.edu/studentadvising/student-access-and-disability-services/>. If you have already been approved for academic accommodations, please connect within the two weeks of the start of the semester so the office can develop an implementation plan.

Mental and Emotional Health

I am invested in the mental and emotional health of my students. Even as I establish and maintain the academic standards of my course, I value each of you as individuals with complex lives, identities, and challenges.

Throughout the semester, the responsibilities of your Colby education may interact with situational as well as ongoing mental and emotional challenges in foreseeable and unforeseeable ways. If you are in need of reasonable flexibility due to an emotional situation or an ongoing mental health issue, please communicate as openly as possible with your Class Dean, and/or members of the office of Access and Disability Services, preferably in advance of the need, so that we can discuss how your circumstances

interface with course requirements. Together, we will consider what is needed and what is possible. If we can discuss the situation, we can manage the situation together.

Please do not allow academic responsibilities to prevent you from getting help you need. Our Colby Counseling Services staff (207-859-4490) and the staff in the Dean of Studies office (207-859-4560) are available to connect with you. The safety of my students and every member of this community is paramount. If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide or may be a danger to themselves or others, please call the on-call counselor immediately (207-859-4490, press '0')."

Respect for Diversity

It is my intent that students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. I expect you to feel challenged and sometimes outside of your comfort zone in this course, but it is my intent to present materials and activities that are inclusive and respectful of all persons, no matter their gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics.

Class rosters are provided to each instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Academic Integrity and Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

Honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility are cornerstones of a Colby education and provide the foundation for scholarly inquiry, intellectual discourse, and an open and welcoming campus community. These values are articulated in the Colby Affirmation and are central to this course. You are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all aspects of this course. If you understand our course expectations, give credit to those whose work you rely on, and submit your best work, you are highly unlikely to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: violating clearly stated rules for taking an exam or completing homework; plagiarism (including material from sources without a citation and quotation marks around any borrowed words); claiming another's work or a modification of another's work as one's own; buying or attempting to buy papers or projects for a course; fabricating information or citations; knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty; misrepresentations to faculty within the context of a course; and submitting the same work, including an essay that you wrote, in more than one course without the permission of the instructors.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense against the college. Sanctions for academic dishonesty are assigned by an academic review board and may include: failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the College.

For more on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism, see: [libguides.colby.edu/avoiding plagiarism](http://libguides.colby.edu/avoiding-plagiarism). For resources and information on academic integrity, see: www.colby.edu/academicintegrity.

Athletic Participation

While Colby College is supportive of athletic participation by its students, academics take priority over athletics. Both NCAA and Colby rules prohibit missing class for practices. In the case of overlapping commitments between class and athletic competitions, the student must meet with the professor as soon as possible to discuss these overlaps. The student may request permission to miss class and make up the missed work; the instructor has final authority either to grant or to withhold permission.

Religious Holidays

I have attempted to avoid scheduling exams during major religious holidays. If, however, I have inadvertently scheduled an exam or major deadline that creates a conflict with your religious observances, please let me know within two weeks of the start of classes so that we can make other arrangements. Colby College is supportive of the religious practices of its students, faculty, and staff. The College is committed to ensuring that all students are able to observe their religious beliefs without academic penalty.

Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement

Colby College prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. Colby is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to, sexual assault and sexual harassment) and other specific forms of behavior that violate federal and state laws (Title IX and Title VII, and the Maine Human Rights Act). Such behavior also requires the College to fulfill certain obligations under two other federal laws, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Statistics Act (Clery Act). To learn more about what constitutes sexual misconduct or to report an incident, see: www.colby.edu/studentlife/handbook-section/f-sexualmisconduct/.

I am committed to all Colby students feeling safe, accepted, and included in all aspects of their college experiences, including this course. Colby prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender based discrimination of any kind and is obligated, by federal and state laws, to respond to reports and provide resources to students. As your professor, I am considered a "responsible employee" which requires me to report incidence of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking to the [Title IX Coordinator](#).

If you wish to access confidential support services, you may contact:

- The Counseling Center: 207-859-4490
- The Title IX Confidential Advocate, Emily Schusterbauer: 207-859-4093
- The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life: 207-859-4272
- Maines's 24/7 Sexual Assault Helpline: 1-800-871-7741