San Jose State University
SJSU School of Music
MUSC 39/139, Applied Jazz Bass, Fall 2016

Contact Information

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Class Day/Time: TBA
Classroom: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
To work with the individual jazz bassist in acquiring technical, musical, and practical skills, and the knowledge of the repertoire necessary for performance and/or teaching.

INSTRUCTION:
One 1/2 hour (B.A./B.M. Music Ed) or one hour (B.M.-Performance) of private instruction per week. Each private lesson will consist of focused work on individual physical or body problems, sound production, intonation, technique and facility, scales and theory as applied to bass playing, time as applied to bass playing, soloing, accompanying, the “mental game” involved with playing jazz, and the building of a memorized repertoire. The exercises, literature, and ideas studied in the private lesson should be the foundation for the student's daily practice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
Every student will begin at a unique level, with a unique set of strengths and weaknesses. Every student will progress at their own individual pace, influenced by a unique set of motivations and impediments. Because of this, rather than following a generically scripted program with goals for each semester, jazz bassists will be required to work on improving all aspects of bass playing every semester, concentrating on problematic areas as they are encountered. There are essentially three milestones along the way:

- By the end of the second semester, it is expected that the student will be capable of performing in public.
- By the end of the fourth semester, it is expected that the student will be capable of performing in professional situations. This is also when the junior qualifying exam will take place.
- By the end of the final semester, it is hoped that the student will be well on the way to being a valued and contributing member of the professional community. This is also when the senior recital would take place.

In order to pass the third milestone, students will need to achieve at least competence in these areas:

- General Technique; for fatigue-free playing, robust tone, and good facility on the instrument.
- Intonation; a constant effort for all acoustic bassists.
- Theory; for a bassist, there is much more to theory than you learn in classical or jazz theory class.
- Time; bassists must be constantly and fully aware of the nuances of time, and be able to manipulate them at will.
- Soloing; something that every bassist must be capable of doing without planning for.
- “Mental Game”; the bassist can shape the harmony, the groove, the form, and the energy of any performance.
- Repertoire; bassists must know as many jazz standards, of all styles, as possible, and be able to quickly memorize new material.

As mentioned above, all seven of these critical areas are equally important in the end; but depending on a student's ability and experience, some may be emphasized more than others. A raw beginner, for example, will doubtless have to spend more time on technique at the start, while a professional-level bassist may concentrate on soloing or repertoire.

PERFORMANCES:

All music majors are required to register for Music 81 (lower division) or 181 (upper division) each semester. Students must attend 12 performances. (These may include Tuesday/Thursday Recital Hour, faculty recitals, senior/graduate recitals or SJSU ensemble concerts. Concert credit is not given to students performing on a recital. Please check the Undergraduate Handbook for more details.

REQUIRED CONCERT ATTENDANCE:

1. All faculty recitals given by your applied teacher.
2. All student junior/senior/graduate recitals within your studio.
3. 
4. 
5. 

GRADING INFORMATION:

Due to the laboratory nature of this class, students will be graded on lesson participation and preparedness. For the Final Exam it will be necessary for each student to participate in a jury.

The jury for Fall 2016 will be on Tuesday December 13th. All juries must be passed with a C or better to move to the next level of study. Students who do not pass their jury will be placed on probation as a music major. Each lesson will be graded for 1) Good preparation of assigned material, 2) Progress made during the week on specific assignments, and 3) Positive movement on long range technique. Criteria for grades are:

A Excellent technical and musical mastery of assigned material. A consistent mastery of material. Assigned scale work at the appropriate tempo played with even technical control.

Closure on assigned material within one week with new material assigned.
B Good progress on assigned material. Some minor or technical problems to correct. Portions of the material will be reassigned for additional study. Assigned scales at reduced speed or with minor technical flaws.

C Work has been done on the assigned material. Technical problems and phrasing problems remain an obstacle. More time needed with slow practice of small sections of material to gain better mastery. Scales slow and uneven.

D Assigned work not prepared to minimum standards. Technical flaws prohibit playing through assigned material without frequent stops. Assigned scales played with little evidence of practice, major errors in notes, rhythm and smoothness.

F Lesson missed without notice or appropriate reason.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Solo performance experience is essential to the development of the music major. Each major is required to perform yearly in either A) a studio recital (a recital of students from an applied instructor's studio for the purpose of playing for one another- not open to the general public) or B) a public recital (appearance on the Tuesday/Thursday Listening Hour or other recitals open to the public).

Freshmen: BA or BM- Music Ed: one studio recital required. BM Performance: one studio and one public performance required
Sophomore: BA or BM- Music Ed: two studio recitals required BM Performance: two public performances required
Junior: BA or BM- Music Ed: one studio and one public performance required BM Performance: one public recital and a solo Junior Recital
Senior: BA or BM- Music Ed: one public performance and half Senior Recital BM Performance: one public performance and full Senior Recital

No major may graduate without these requirements. Performance dates and types must be verified on each semester's jury form.

CLASSROOM PROTOCOL:

Students taking applied lessons are expected to attend each scheduled lesson. If it is necessary to miss a lesson because of illness or a family emergency, the instructor should be notified 24 hours in advance. A lesson will be rescheduled at the discretion of the instructor.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/”