

SYLLABUS  
Music 298  
Jazz Improvisation 1  
Thursday 1:30-2:20 P.M.  
135 McCain Auditorium

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### **Course Overview and Syllabus**

**Prerequisite:** instructor permission/audition/interview

**Required Text:** *The Wise Improviser*. Goins, W. (2006 KS Publishers)

**Course Outline:** The primary goal of this course is to review the **basic elements of jazz**, and to prepare students to investigate the more complex elements found in the areas of jazz improvisation. The objectives of this course are for each student to a) develop the ability to incorporate these basic principles of jazz improvisation in their performance technique in order to raise their level of performance, and b) apply principles of jazz improvisation to standard jazz literature so that each participant is able to create a more sophisticated improvised solo (based on chord changes found in selected literature) that is logical and effectively incorporates the material covered in class; and c) demonstrate a thorough working knowledge of the principal players involved in the stylistic development of the various periods related to jazz improvisation.

**Grading:** Attendance in all classes is mandatory. Any unexcused absence may result in a full grade cut (i.e., one excused absence=B, two unexcused absences=C, etc.) Being late twice will constitute an unexcused absence. Students are primarily graded on attendance and individual performance/ability to incorporate materials covered in class into their improvisational skills.

Performance Dates: Students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and ability for material for material covered in class on a weekly schedule. Grades will be determined on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

**Exam Dates:** TBA

Exam material will include memorization of scale construction, chord symbols/construction, chord progressions, composition analysis, and application of specific principles of jazz improvisation to related jazz literature.

### **CLASS ACTIVITIES**

- Review Basic Theory material (triads, seventh chords, major scales, modes, etc.)
- Learn one or two songs per week
- Play in front of the class every week.
- Memorize the chords and melody for jazz tunes on "test days"
- Analyze chord structures using knowledge of jazz theory
- Memorize jazz licks
- Listen to CD recordings for the aural absorption of traditional patterns and licks
- Give and receive feedback from students regarding classroom performances
- Take a comprehensive exam on related class material

**Extra Credit:** This will be solely based on attendance, class participation, and demonstrating excellent performance skills pertinent to relevant subject matter in class. All points will be administered solely by the teacher's discretion.

**Assignments/Projects:** You are expected to practice the material that correlate to the current class activities, including textbook, class notes, CD LISTENING, handouts and other assigned materials.

**Attendance:** This is class that meets twice a week. Missing one session is nearly equivalent to missing a full week of class. Your presence and participation is essential to your success in this class.

**Academic Honesty:** Kansas State University has an Honor System based on personal integrity, which is presumed to be sufficient assurance that, in academic matters, one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance. Undergraduate and graduate students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honor System. The policies and procedures of the Honor System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, and via distance learning. The honor system website can be reached via the following URL: [www.ksu.edu/honor](http://www.ksu.edu/honor). A component vital to the Honor System is the inclusion of the Honor Pledge which applies to all assignments, examinations, or other course work undertaken by students. The Honor Pledge is implied, whether or not it is stated: "On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work." A grade of XF can result from a breach of academic honesty. The F indicates failure in the course; the X indicates the reason is an Honor Pledge violation.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student with a disability who needs an accommodation or other assistance in this course should make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible.

**Classroom Conduct:** All student activities in the University, including this course, are governed by the Student Judicial Conduct Code as outlined in the Student Governing Association By Laws, Article VI, Section 3, number 2. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment may be asked to leave the class.

***N.B.—I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus and course overview as necessary.***