

MUSIC 1400-401  
JAZZ STYLE AND HISTORY

**Instructor:** Max Johnson

**Office Hours:** by advance appointment on Monday/Wednesday after class

**E-mail:** [maxj22@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:maxj22@sas.upenn.edu) (better than Canvas mail)

**Class meeting time/place:** MW 10:15-11:45, Lerner 102

**Course Description and Level** This course is an exploration of the family of musical idioms called jazz. Attention will be given to issues of style development, selective musicians, and to the social and cultural conditions and the scholarly discourses that have informed the creation, dissemination and reception of this dynamic set of styles from the beginning of the 20th century to the present. Fulfills Cultural Diversity in the U.S.

**Required Materials**

Bill Kirchner, *The Oxford Companion to Jazz*. (Oxford, 2005); available at Penn Bookstore (or Amazon, etc). You can get a used copy, it doesn't matter, it's cheaper.

**Canvas** Please make sure your e-mail address is current on Canvas and be sure to check for announcements, assignments, and follow-ups there.

**Grading breakdown**

- 1) Attendance – 30%
- 2) Homework assignments/Projects – 30%
- 3) Exams – 30%
- 4) Participation – 10%

\*Please note that the final exam will be in person and scheduled by the Registrar; that schedule will be published later in the semester on Path. Please do not plan travel until the exam date has been released; travel plans are not a valid excuse to miss the exam.

**Grading scale** for the course is: A=93-100, A-=90-92, B+=87-89, B=83-86, B-=80-82, C+=77-79, C=73-76, C-=70-72, D=60-69, F=0-59.

**Attendance** If you miss class, you are responsible for knowing the material covered. Readings, listening and homework will be posted on Canvas each week, so if you miss class, you can always catch up. Attendance is mandatory and a significant portion of your grade. If you need to miss class because of illness, travel, religion, work opportunity, etc, you **MUST** submit a Course Absence Notice through Path. Two consecutive absences will prompt a Course Action Notice. Each student is allowed one excused absence, for whatever reason. Lateness counts as half an absence.

**Homework** Each week will have assigned reading from the textbook, as well as some additional reading or listening. Without warning, I will ask a random student to present

(briefly) on the reading for that week, so please come with notes or an outline to help you lead the discussion. This is both part of your homework and participation grade.

**Exams** There will be 3 quizzes for this course, they will cover listening (to things we've listened to in class), along with basic knowledge questions on the music covered. The final quiz will be a full class, with the addition of a longform essay exam.

**Projects** There will be two short essays, one that will be a review of a live concert that you will attend (I can provide options), and the second will be on a specific topic we will agree on. The concert report will be 2-4 pages (double spaced), and the final paper 5-8. You will need to provide a works cited page for the final. Any found (or suspected) use of AI or plagiarism to create your work will result in a zero as the grade for this project.

**Academic Accommodations** For procedure regarding request of academic accommodations, please refer to the Weingarten Center:  
<https://wlrc.vpul.upenn.edu/sds/>

**Academic Honesty** Any form of cheating on any kind of work will be reported to the Director of Undergraduate Studies and in turn, to the Office of Student Conduct, and you should of course expect a failing grade for the class. For further information on the policies regarding academic dishonesty go to <http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/>. If you have any doubts about what constitutes cheating during the course of the semester, please ask.

**Classroom etiquette and policies** 1) We are a screen-free classroom. 2) Coming and going during class is also distracting: as far as possible, please plan to be seated for the duration. 3) Class will never run a minute over, in fact, I will excuse you 5-10 minutes early some weeks, so please don't be late—we will start on time. If there is a reason for recurrent lateness that is out of your control, please communicate about it.