

**580:132g Syllabus**

Instructor: Dr. Washut (x3- 6431)

**Jazz Composition Class**

M/W, 12:00 pm/RSL-159

**Spring-2011**

Office Hours: T/Th - 10:00; W - 1:00

*A way of developing an individual voice as an improviser is through composition. You need to write many tunes to get one that is good. There is something you have to work through within your soul. Art Blakey used to say "You find yourself through writing..." In composing, you're conceiving things in your mind. You may play changes a certain way, but committing it to paper will reveal what you like or don't like. -Terrence Blanchard*

**Required Texts:**

Goldstein, Jazz Composer's Companion - available @ University Book & Supply  
Washut, Jazz Composition course packet - available @ Copyworks  
Miller, Modal Jazz Composition & Harmony, Vol. 1 - available @ UBS

**Course Objective:**

To compose 5 jazz compositions of contrasting character in lead sheet form. The composer should be able to demonstrate the ability to perform each composition on his/her instrument.

**Grading Policy:**

- 1) **75%** of grade is based on the quality of the five\* compositions in lead sheet form, including creativity, craft (evidence of mastery of the various compositional techniques discussed), your ability to perform the compositions, and appearance/legibility of the portfolio. The five compositions must be submitted in a spiral-bound portfolio, with a cover page entitled:  
**"Selected Jazz Compositions of <your name>" (and date)**
- 2) **15%** of grade is based on the quality of miscellaneous assignments
- 3) **10%** of grade is based on the performance of the selected piece on the "final exam"

\*Note: Graduate credit requires seven compositions or an alternative project approved by the instructor.

**Due dates:**

- 1) Wednesday, April 29: **Portfolio due**
- 2) Friday, May 2, 1:00-2:50 pm (Final Exam) \*: The composer brings a recording of a selected composition from the portfolio to play for the class. It is the composer's responsibility to assemble the personnel and organize a rehearsal/recording session. Your grade is based on the quality of the performance.
- 3) Miscellaneous composition projects as assigned; miscellaneous quizzes as announced.

**Topics/Activities:**

- 1) Study of various compositional concepts and tools, including melody, modal harmony, form, meter, rhythm, motivic development, ostinati and pedal point, etc.)
- 2) Analysis of selected jazz compositions

Unit I: Melody - Goldstein, Part I (Jan.10-Feb.16)

Unit II: Form/Rhythm & Meter/Ostinati & Pedal Pt. - Goldstein, Part III (Feb. 21 – Mar. 2)

Unit III: Modal Harmony - Miller, Vol. 1, chapters #1-11 & 13 (Mar. 7-April 25)

**General:**

- 1) An understanding of basic tonal jazz harmony and theory is assumed.
- 2) The student is required to prepare all lead sheets using a music notation software program.

No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the University, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination by the University. This policy applies to all aspects of campus activities including employment, education, student programming, and services provided to the community at-large. Students: In order to receive assistance with requests for accommodations, a student with a disability must contact Student Disability Services. See: <http://www.uni.edu/resources/disability>. Accommodations of Disabilities: <http://www.uni.edu/policies/1315>