

MUC 6625 GRADUATE JAZZ COMPOSITION AND ARRANGING

Fall 2025

Course Meeting Time and Location: TBA. Student schedules will be collected to find the best time for the class to meet.

Credit Hours: 3 credits

Instructors: Clyde Connor – email: cjconnor1@ufl.edu

Jazz Office Location: School of Music: Room 354

Office Hours: TBA and upon request. **Jazz Director Information: Scott Wilson** swilson@arts.ufl.edu / **Office phone:** 435-851-6363

Course Description

Jazz Composition and Arranging provides graduate instruction in jazz composition and arranging and advanced techniques for commercial song writing. Students will study chord movement, melodic development and composition techniques for various styles of music. Students will complete original compositions and arrangements, contra-facts, sax solis, big band chart and know the basics of string writing. A passing grade of B or better in this course is required for the Masters Degree.

Portfolio requirement: Student will complete a large group recording project.

Course Objectives/Goals

This course is vital to ensure that our jazz graduates have the opportunity to learn jazz composition and arranging skills that will enable them to be competitive in the commercial music industry. This course covers the writing styles of jazz, smooth jazz, rock, pop, latin, salsa, and dixieland. The instruction received in Jazz Composition and Arranging will contribute to the financial success and diversity for students who complete this course.

Representative Text and/or Materials: *Jazz Arranging Techniques* by Gary Lindsay.

The book is also available at the following location
(\$39.95) http://www.lindsayjazz.com/publications/books/inside_jat.html Links to an external site.

Required materials include:

- Computer notation software.
- A recording device (or access to a computer-based recording program)
- Required Text

Required Attendance Policy

Students are required to attend a two hour class each week. Any unexcused absences will lower the final grade automatically 1/2 a letter grade, i.e. ...1 unexcused = A to A-, 2 unexcused = A- to B, etc. If a student is officially excused for an absence the student is in good standing.

EVALUATIONS AND GRADES

	Points	Score
Assignments		
Project One: Voicing Assignments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review instrument transpositions.• Woodwind, Brass & Rhythm writing assignment demonstrating an understanding of correct voicing techniques.• All assignments will be submitted using computer notation software with an MP3 playback file.	400 points	
Project Two: Large Group Arrangement (Short)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write an arrangement for large jazz ensemble. (Pre-existing tunes only*)• Intro, head and short ending.• Melody must move in an idiomatic manner and breathe properly.• Score for 8 brass, 5 saxes, 4 rhythm.• Scores (transposed).	400 points	

- Manuscript: individual parts must follow formats and standards.
- No ballads, 3/4 or 5/4 tunes; write for a tempo not to exceed $q = 180$.

Project Three: Expand Project I into a full chart for large jazz ensemble.

- Score for the same ensemble as Project I (External form: ABA)
- A: Intro, head, ending with climax then with transition to next part.
 B: Middle section: develop materials found in "A", and end with the full band scored to climax. There should be an extension to the form at this point.

B section can consist of one or more of the following:

1. Solo with backgrounds (bkgds 2Xo for opt. repeat, bkgds building to climax)
2. Soli (1/2 chorus saxes or trombones, followed or preceded by solo or tutti)
3. Tutti section (1/2 chorus, preceded by solo or soli).
4. Recapitulation. Use a D.S. and Coda if possible.

- The final ending can be up or down, according to the musical needs of the arrangement.

- Try to schedule your writing to get more than one playing, with time for reflection and subtle adjustments between the each playing.

800

points

Quizzes – 6 Quizzes Total

200

points

Listening Quizzes – 4 Quizzes Total

200

points

2000 Points Total

**Your
Score**

=

**Originals are possible but must be approved by the instructor before any work begins.*

GRADING SCALE AND CALCULATING YOUR GRADE

2000 Point Scale for Final Grade Calculation

2000 – 1840 A

1839 – 1800 A-

1799 – 1700 B+

1699 – 1640 B

1639 – 1600 B-

1599 – 1500 C+

1499 – 1440 C

1439 – 1400 C-

1399 – 1300 D+

1299 – 1240 D

1239 – 1200 D-

1199 and below E

Resource: UF Grading Policy

Website: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculatinggpa>
[Links to an external site.](#)

Required materials include:

- Materials and Score Paper for projects.

- A recording device (or access to a computer-based recording program)
- Required Text

Attendance Policies

Any unexcused absences will lower the final grade automatically 1/2 a letter grade, i.e. ...1 unexcused = A to A-, 2 unexcused = A- to B, etc. All excused absences will require the proper written documentation that the student has been excused from school during the time in question. Without this approval we cannot excuse the absence.

Make-ups for Exams or Other Work

In order to remain fair to all students enrolled in this course who are held to the same academic standard, make-ups for any assignment will require written documentation that the student has been excused from school during the time in question. Without this approval we cannot issue a make-up. This includes all requests for permission to grant a make-up for personal issues involving family, work, deaths, hardships, marriages, pregnancies, illnesses, financial problems, etc. We do apologize for this inconvenience, however, in order to be ethically in good standing, this documentation is needed to ensure the accuracy of all claims made.

Recording of Masterclasses and Online Meetings

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Resource: UF Grading Policy Website:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>Links to an external site..

Students with disabilities

“Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.”

Academic Honesty

At the University of Florida every student signed the following statement: “I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for the University.” The instructor of this course fully endorses this statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing is subject to an automatic E and further disciplinary action. All violations of academic honesty will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action without exception. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

**If you are repeating this course at UF, please be aware that turning in any part of any written assignment that you submitted for this course in the past also constitutes academic misconduct. See “Scope and Violations” under the Honor Code above.

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>Links to an external site..

Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

It is the policy of the University of Florida to provide an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. This includes information sent through e-mail. Sexual harassment and sexual misconduct in any form will not be tolerated, and individuals who engage in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The University encourages students, faculty, staff, and visitors to promptly report sexual harassment or sexual misconduct. For more specific information, please see www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/affact/harass (Located in the General Information section of the University Catalog.)

Campus Resources and Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#)Links to an external site. to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center websiteLinks to an external site.](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center websiteLinks to an external site.](#)

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department websiteLinks to an external site.](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road,

Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center websiteLinks to an external site.](#)

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk Links to an external site.](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections CenterLinks to an external site.: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library SupportLinks to an external site.: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching CenterLinks to an external site.: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more informationLinks to an external site.](#)

On-Line Students Complaints: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint ProcessLinks to an external site.](#)

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/Links to an external site.> Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/Links to an external site.> Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/Links to an external site.>

GRADUATE JAZZ ARRANGING WEEKLY LAYOUT

Details of assignments and grading.

WEEK 1

This week is reserved for getting registered, getting the text book and scheduling a class meeting time.

1. Read Chapter 1 of the Jazz Arranging Techniques text book.
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WEEK 2 Jazz Arranging Techniques Chapter 1.

Discussions on ABAB Song Forms AABA Song Forms. See Page 6 for examples: *"Standard Tunes Listed By Their Song Form"*

Discussion on Arranger's Piano. We will review the F to F rule on Piano for voicing the core of the harmony.

Discussions on Page 4 of the Jazz Arranging Techniques Book, see Arrangers Piano. Leave the class know how to describe the following.

- A. Three up, One Down
- B. Three up, Two Down
- C. Four up, One Down

1. Student must write down 5 tune names with ABAB song form. (10 points)
2. Students must write down 5 tune names with AABA song form. (10 points)
3. Copy out a jazz standard. Must be written by hand (no computer copies)
Write out a standard of your choice using the following guidelines (See book for more detailed definitions: Read Adapting the Melody on page 16 of the jazz arranging book). (30 points)
 - A. Determine the style
 - B. Select the best key for the solo instrument or voice.
 - C. Make simple adjustments to the rhythm of the melody to match style.
 - D. Notate the material accurately for performers. Please see below.

NOTE: Notating rhythms correctly will be a core focus to this assignment.

Check out the rhythm sheets in the Ultimate Jazz Took Kit and remember how beats 1 and 2 should be separated from 3 and 4. This allows musicians to easily read your music and that makes your music sound better! Rhythms notated incorrectly will be returned to the student to correct.

WEEK 3

Turn in Jazz Standard written out with correct rhythms. Turn in 5 song names with ABAB form and 5 song names with AABA song for.

1. Using the chord matrix, write an original chord progression that are is 8 to 12 bars and voice it for 5 trombones. Be able to talk about why you selected these specific changes and why they are clever or different. We will play your examples in class. Make sure you list the style and tempo. Block chords only required (you do not have to write inner lines or movement unless desired) (25 points)
2. The following worksheets that are due Week 4 (you can turn them in next class).
WORKSHEET - (40 points possible) (Ultimate Workbook page 52) Brain Teaser For Building Lightning-Fast Note Recognition
WORKSHEET - (45 points possible) (Ultimate Workbook page 27 and 28) Using Polychords to Make Complex Harmony Simple (building fully extended 13th chords)

LOOKING AHEAD

Know the simple concept behind extending major, minor and dominant chords so you can target interesting melody notes in your compositions. There will be a playing test on 2 over 1 in Week 7 so start working on the basics of playing the 1 chord in your left hand and two chord in your right hand. In the Ultimate Jazz Tool Kit, you have Building Basic Extended Chords which details extending these chords. With regards to Dom7b9b13 which is b2min/1, you can put the root and b7th in your left hand and b2 minor in your right for economy.

WEEK 4

Turn in Worksheets and the trombone chord progressions due from the assignments in Week 3.

In class we will listen to "Kiss That Told Me" and "View For Kings." Notes will be taken so students can write a detailed analysis for the assignment due next week.

1. Review the following tunes. "Kiss That Told Me" and "View For Kings" (The sheet music and mp3s are on dropbox and below are links to the EVI solo transcriptions). You will be analyzing the melody of these two tunes so listen to them closely!

You must circle and identify the following. (Each song analysis is worth 50 points each!)

A. Identify and label all motives that are reused. (ex. For example in the Kiss That Told Me, the whole step motive is used in bar 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc. (look

closely!)

B. On the downbeat of each bar label the melody note's chord function (i.e. Is it the #11 of the chord, or 3rd, 9th, 13th, etc).

C. Identify all rhythms that are commonly used and developed.

D. In Kiss that Told Me, look at the chord progress and be able to discuss it in class.

E. NOTE SEE THE TWO SHORT IN CLASS TESTS IN WEEK 7. LOOK AHEAD!

All Files are in the Dropbox and below are Video Transcriptions links of the EVI improvised solos on the songs below.

A. KISS THAT TOLD ME

: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oX93ZMm3XpE>Links to an external



[site.](#)

B. VIEW FOR

KINGS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sWnK4Y96fY>Links to an



[external site.](#)

WEEK 5

Turn in analysis of Kiss That Told Me and View For Kings.

Discussion of the each student's song analysis on "Kiss that Told Me" and "View For Kings."

Discussion on several jazz standards in which students will be able to identify the Tune Puzzle Pieces present in the tune. Students will also begin to be able to discuss exactly why the melody is working. (i.e. the motif's used, themes, call and answer, form, active vs static melody, developers, artistic chord movement, use of style, complete and incomplete cadences, etc.

1. Download "Writing A Combo Tune With Ease" from the Drop Box. Students will have to write out 2 original melodies to two of the 12 bar blues examples (staff paper provided in the PDF). You must use forms of the blues as

illustrated in "Writing Your First Blues." You must primarily use the blues scale as your main melodic content and you must follow AAB form in the melody (i.e You Ain't Nothin But a Hound Dog). The 2nd tune must be modal. The purpose of this song writing exercise is to think very simply and quickly and use a simple song form and what you know to quickly write a catchy tune. This exercise should take you no more than 30 minutes if you are doing it correctly (you can only use 2 chords in this model tune....only 2. The form may change but know more than 2 chords). (50 points each)

WEEK 6

Turn in 2 original melodies (one 12 bar blues and one modal from Week 5 assignments.)

Discussion: Writing for the Bass player.

1. Listen to Big Band Audio Examples on Dropbox
 2. In each example, identify the minute mark when the bass player starts walking the bass.
 3. We will analyze a Ron Carter Bass Transcription.
 4. A Bass player will demonstrate what bass players do for swing, half time feel, funk, bossa, and samba.
 5. Write a Contrafact on a jazz standard. A Contrafact is a tune that uses standard chords changes yet has a new originally composed melody. In your original Contrafact melody, use clearly identifiable motifs and rhythms. You must write the melody for tenor sax. If you have never written for tenor, get with a sax player in the building and have them play the instrument for you and tell you about it. Review the instrument transposition in the Ultimate Jazz Tool Kit in the Writing A Combo Tune With Ease chapter. (50 points)
 6. Prepare for in class test in Week 7 and Week 8.
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WEEK 7

Turn in Contrafact on jazz standard from assignment in Week 6.

1. **IN CLASS TEST.** Each student will be asked 5 chords to fully extend on piano (Major 13 #11, Minor 13, Dom7 #11,13 and Dom7b9b13). Using the 2 over 1 concept students have to be able to play in 5 seconds each chord. 50 points possible (each one is worth 10 points)
2. **IN CLASS TEST.** Aural Skills Test on Tune Puzzle Pieces. Students must be able to aural identify by number the examples 1 through 9 in the Identifying Standard Puzzle Pieces PDF. (25 points)

2. Discussion on Writing Bass Lines Worksheet – (50 points)
3. Prepare for Week 8 in class test.

Using the chord matrix, write an original chord progression that are is 8 to 12 bars and voice it for 5 saxophones. Be able to talk about why you selected these specific changes and why they are clever or different. We will play your examples in class. Make sure you list the style and tempo. Block chords only required (you do not have to write inner lines or movement unless desired) (50 points)

WEEK 8

Turn in Writing Bass Lines Worksheet. Turn in saxophone chord progressions due from the assignments in Week 7

1. **IN CLASS TEST:** Each student will have to play 3 chord progressions on the piano from the 3 chord to the 1 chord using the Wilson chord matrix. You will be asked why you made the selection and what you like about the sound. For example, you can play 3, 6, 2, 5, 1 or 3, b3, 2, 5, 1 or 3, 6, 2, b2, 1, etc. Keep in mind that any chord in a tune can be approached in this same manner with very colorful results. (30 points)
 2. Read about Developers in the Jazz Arranging Book.
 3. Homework is to prepare for the presentation next week in WEEK 9.
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WEEK 9

Discussions about instrument ranges. We will have a demonstration with live horns and you can ask questions to the performers regarding writing for their instrument.

Sketch.

Discussion of a 3 Line

Discussion on how and

when to use Density.

Discussion on Developers. Each student will take 1 minutes to sight a developer in a jazz standard.

Discussion of Change Bass and Substitute Chord Changes, Sus Chords and Modulations.

Discussion saxophone transposition, voicings and registers.

Discussion on Super Structure

1. Harmonize for 5 saxes a solo line from a Charlie Parker melody or solo that is 12 to 16 bars. (50 points)
 2. Listen to 3 audio files listed in drop box. Write out a graph of the super structure. Be mindful of the lead lines and high points in the track.
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WEEK 10

In Class Jazz Arranging Test This Week (60 points).

Test on book contains information on: Density, Developers, Super Structure, Middle Section, Recapitulation and Endings, Timing Your Music, Lead Sheet, 3 Line Sketch, name 5 high school arrangers, name 5 college arrangers, name 5 big band arrangers, etc.

Discussion on how to modify chords, come up with intros, use modal harmony, extend cadences, modulations, change of style, etc.

Discussion on Super Structure. Students will show their graph out of the super structure of 3 charts.

1. Look ahead to writing projects in Week 12 and Week 14.

WEEK 11

1. Presentation on 2 chosen big band scores of varying styles. Must pass out an outline for the class and must have a graph of the super structure of the tune. You can check out these scores in the Jazz Library (50 points)

Discussions on writing for the saxophones section, trombone section, trumpet section and rhythm section. This class will be held in Jazz Band Rehearsal. We will meet in the Steinbrenner at 4pm on Thursday.

WEEK 12

Discussions on small ensemble arranging.

1. Arrange a 10 piece horn arrangement of a jazz standard. (score + individual transposed parts for performers). (90 points)

WEEK 13

Perform 10 piece horn arrangements in class or in jazz band.

WEEK 14

Discussion on Pop Song Writing

- A. Understanding Pop Melodies
- B. The Hook
- C. The Production
- D. The Mix, The Market, The Video

1. Compose one original pop tune with 3 horns with lyrics, vocals and strings. Must turn in recording of tune for this final project. (50 points)

WEEK 15

Writing For Strings.

1. Examples of strings instruments and how to write for the String Quartet.
2. Examples will be written in real time on the board and the string ensemble will play.
3. Complete Writing For String Worksheets. (50 points)

WEEK 16

Turn in original pop tune with 3 horns with lyrics, vocals and strings. Must turn in recording (Week 14 assignment).

1. Write 8 bars for String Quartet. Try to complete this exercise within 30 minutes. See Ultimate Jazz Workbook for the Sheet Music and instrument ranges. (50 points)

WEEK 17

Performance of final projects if not already recorded.