



Northwest College

MUAP 1285 - Improvisation

CRN 93405 – Spring 2016

Northwest College, Spring Branch Performing Arts Center

2 hour lecture course / 16 hours per semester/ 16 weeks

Instructor: Dr. Woody Witt

Instructor Contact Information: 713.718.5601; woodrow.witt@hccs.edu

Office location and hours: By appointment

Please feel free to contact me concerning any problems that you are experiencing in this course. You do not need to wait until you have received a poor grade before asking for my assistance. Your performance in my class is very important to me. I am available to hear your concerns and just to discuss course topics. Feel free to come by my office anytime during these hours.

Course Description

MUAP 1285 consists of 15 one- hour (50 minute studio time) or if given in 10 week Summer Session, 10 one-and-1/2 hour (1 hr. 15 min. studio time.)

Prerequisite

Any instrumentalist may apply for this course provided he/she is able to meet the following requirements:

1. Student must have a working knowledge of their instrument including, but certainly not limited to
All major scales played at a moderate, even tempo.
A repertoire of some sort i.e., Standard tunes, pop music, classical music, original compositions.
The ability to read music and have a basic understanding of music fundamentals, i.e. rhythms and intervals.
- A vast technical background is not essential, but the student must be aware that the more advanced their training, the better prepared he/she will be to understand the theories and concepts of jazz improvisation. It is essential to acknowledge that a well-trained ear is the ideal of any musician and should represent an ongoing area of study for the student.

Course Goal

To attain and use techniques for performance based on improvisational techniques

Student Learning Outcomes

The student will:

1. Show technical proficiency at instrument
2. Spell and play basic major, minor and 7th chords.
3. Perform all major scales
4. Perform with a good tone quality and dynamic control.
5. Perform a core repertoire of popular standards
6. Perform with stylistic accuracy in various interpretations of popular standard repertoire.

Learning objectives

A first semester student with little or no experience in improvisation can expect to work in three general areas:

1. Chord/scale relationships
2. General rhythmic concepts of jazz
3. Organization and analysis of a melodic line

As an instructor, I want my students to be successful. I feel that it is my responsibility to provide you with knowledge concerning the field of education, modeling good teaching strategies, and organizing and monitoring the field experience that allows you to connect the information that you learn in this course to the real world of education.

As a student wanting to learn about the field of education, it is your responsibility to read the textbook, submit assignments on the due dates, study for the exams, participate in classroom activities, attend class, and enjoy yourself while experiencing the real world of education.

As I believe that engaging the students in the learning is essential for teaching to be effective, you will spend the majority of class time involved in collaborative activities. You will be involved in discussions with your classmates and your instructor. As you will want to contribute to these discussions, you will need to come to class prepared to discuss, analyze and evaluate information from your text and other assigned readings.

Student Assignments

Assignments have been developed that will enhance your learning. To better understand a topic, you will be given assignments on key information that you will need to remember for your success in your career as an educator. Students will be required to successfully complete the following:

Final Exam (Jury)

Student will perform a 10-minute jury for a panel of instructors demonstrating the ability to execute various techniques using improvisation as a basis. Elements of style, instrument technique and creativity will be considered in the evaluation.

Assessments

- 30% -- Juries (Given at end of each semester)
- 30% -- Attendance
- 40% -- Progress/Participation

Instructional Materials

1. The Real Book
2. Music manuscript (book or loose pages acceptable)
3. Other materials (as recommended by instructor)

LECTURE/LAB REQUIREMENTS:

- 16 one hour private music lessons are scheduled with a credentialed faculty (16 lecture hours)
- 16 lab hour activities are required of each MUAP student to include but not limited to: assigned concert attendance; assigned music workshop participation; mandatory studio class (2 hours) preceding jury performance. These will all be monitored, graded activities (16 contact hours).
- In addition, a minimum of 8 practice hours per week is required. Instrumentalists are responsible for providing their own instruments, in good playing condition, except for piano and percussion instruments. Students are responsible to not abuse College-owned instruments, equipment and music.
- **Attendance Requirements: Students are required to notify the instructor no later than 24 hours in advance, except documented emergencies, of any lessons that will be missed.** Two make-up lessons will be allowed per semester, if instructor time and studio space can be arranged. Failure to give notice automatically counts the student as absent and forfeits the private lesson. HCCS policy stipulates that the student may be dropped after accumulating in excess of 12.5 percent of the hours of instruction. This equates to two absences from your scheduled private lessons. Also, because of performance or other schedule changes, the instructor may schedule a different lesson time for the student on occasion. Cooperation between student and instructor is essential when scheduling private lessons.
- **NOTE: IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO WITHDRAW OFFICIALLY FROM A COURSE.** Administrative drops are at the discretion of the instructor. Failure of the student to withdraw officially could result in the student

receiving a grade of “F” in the course. For the deadline for course withdrawal, check the current course schedule.

- **The withdrawal deadline for Spring 2015 is Tuesday, April 5th.**

EGLS₃ -- Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System

At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Look for the survey as part of the Houston Community College Student System online near the end of the term.

HCC Policy Statement - ADA

Services to Students with Disabilities

Students who require reasonable accommodations for disabilities are encouraged to report to Dr. Becky Hauri at 713-718-7910 to make necessary arrangements. Faculty is only authorized to provide accommodations by the Disability Support Service Office.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 requires that institutions have policies and procedures that protect students' rights with regard to sex/gender discrimination. Information regarding these rights are on the HCC website under Students-Anti-discrimination. Students who are pregnant and require accommodations should contact any of the ADA Counselors for assistance.

It is important that every student understands and conforms to respectful behavior while at HCC. Sexual misconduct is not condoned and will be addressed promptly. Know your rights and how to avoid these difficult situations.

HCC Policy Statement: Academic Honesty

A student who is academically dishonest is, by definition, not showing that the coursework has been learned, and that student is claiming an advantage not available to other students. The instructor is responsible for measuring each student's individual achievements and also for ensuring that all students compete on a level playing field. Thus, in our system, the instructor has teaching, grading, and enforcement roles. You are expected to be familiar with the University's Policy on Academic Honesty, found in the catalog. What that means is: If you are charged with an offense, pleading ignorance of the rules will not help you. Students are responsible for conducting themselves with honor and integrity in fulfilling course requirements. Penalties and/or disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by College System officials against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty. “Scholastic dishonesty”: includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating on a test includes:

- Copying from another students' test paper;
- Using materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- Collaborating with another student during a test without authorization;
- Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of a test that has not been administered;
- Bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered.

Plagiarism means the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work offered for credit.

Collusion mean the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit. Possible punishments for academic dishonesty may include a grade of 0 or F in the particular assignment, failure in the course, and/or recommendation for probation or dismissal from the College System. (See the Student Handbook)

HCC Policy Statements

Class Attendance - It is important that you come to class! Attending class regularly is the best way to succeed in this class. Research has shown that the single most important factor in student success is attendance. Simply put, going to class greatly increases your ability to succeed. You are expected to attend all lecture and labs regularly. You are responsible for materials covered during your absences. Class attendance is checked daily. Although it is your responsibility to drop a course for nonattendance, the instructor has the authority to drop you for excessive absences.

If you are not attending class, you are not learning the information. As the information that is discussed in class is important for your career, students may be dropped from a course after accumulating absences in excess of 12.5% hours of instruction. The six hours of class time would include any total classes missed or for excessive tardiness or leaving class early.

You may decide NOT to come to class for whatever reason. As an adult making the decision not to attend, you do not have to notify the instructor prior to missing a class. However, if this happens too many times, you may suddenly find that you have "lost" the class.

Poor attendance records tend to correlate with poor grades. If you miss any class, including the first week, you are responsible for all material missed. It is a good idea to find a friend or a buddy in class who would be willing to share class notes or discussion or be able to hand in paper if you unavoidably miss a class.

Class attendance equals class success.

HCC Course Withdrawal Policy

If you feel that you cannot complete this course, you will need to withdraw from the course prior to the final date of withdrawal. Before, you withdraw from your course; please take the time to meet with the instructor to discuss why you feel it is necessary to do so. The instructor may be able to provide you with suggestions that would enable you to complete the course. Your success is very important. Beginning in fall 2007, the Texas Legislature passed a law limiting first time entering freshmen to no more than **SIX** total course withdrawals **throughout** their educational career in obtaining a certificate and/or degree.

To help students avoid having to drop/withdraw from any class, HCC has instituted an Early Alert process by which your professor *may* “alert” you and HCC counselors that you might fail a class because of excessive absences and/or poor academic performance. It is your responsibility to visit with your professor or a counselor to learn about what, if any, HCC interventions might be available to assist you – online tutoring, child care, financial aid, job placement, etc. – to stay in class and improve your academic performance.

If you plan on withdrawing from your class you must do so **PRIOR** to the withdrawal deadline to receive a “W” on your transcript. **Final withdrawal deadlines vary each semester and/or depending on class length, please visit the online registration calendars, HCC schedule of classes and catalog, any HCC Registration Office, or any HCC counselor to determine class withdrawal deadlines. ***Remember to allow a 24-hour response time when communicating via email and/or telephone with a professor and/or counselor. Do not submit a request to discuss withdrawal options less than a day before the deadline.*** If you do not withdraw before the deadline, you will receive the grade that you are making in the class as your final grade.

Repeat Course Fee

The State of Texas encourages students to complete college without having to repeat failed classes. To increase student success, students who repeat the same course more than twice, are required to pay extra tuition. The purpose of this extra tuition fee is to encourage students to pass their courses and to graduate. Effective fall 2006, HCC will charge a higher tuition rate to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your instructor/counselor as early as possible about your study habits, reading and writing homework, test taking skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available.

Classroom Behavior

As your instructor and as a student in this class, it is our shared responsibility to develop and maintain a positive learning environment for everyone. Your instructor takes this responsibility very seriously and will inform members of the class if their behavior makes it difficult for him/her to carry out this task. As a fellow learner, you are asked to respect

the learning needs of your classmates and assist your instructor achieve this critical goal.

Use of Camera and/or Recording Devices

As a student active in the learning community of this course, it is your responsibility to be respectful of the learning atmosphere in your classroom. To show respect of your fellow students and instructor, you will turn off your phone and other electronic devices, and will not use these devices in the classroom unless you receive permission from the instructor.

Use of recording devices, including camera phones and tape recorders, is prohibited in classrooms, laboratories, faculty offices, and other locations where instruction, tutoring, or testing occurs. Students with disabilities who need to use a recording device as a reasonable accommodation should contact the Office for Students with Disabilities for information regarding reasonable accommodations

Instructor Requirements

As your Instructor, it is my responsibility to:

- Provide the grading scale and detailed grading formula explaining how student grades are to be derived
- Facilitate an effective learning environment through class activities, discussions, and lectures
- Description of any special projects or assignments
- Inform students of policies such as attendance, withdrawal, tardiness and make up
- Provide the course outline and class calendar which will include a description of any special projects or assignments
- Arrange to meet with individual students before and after class as required

To be successful in this class, it is the student's responsibility to:

- Attend class and participate in class discussions and activities
- Attend concert performances relative to learning
- Practice material covered in class regularly and diligently
- Never come to class unprepared.

Program/Discipline Requirements

The Field Study is a discipline requirement of EDUC 1301. The field study is essential in your deciding if education is the right career path for you. The field study also reinforces what you are learning in class by connecting theory to the real world of education. This assignment is very important and as such, it must be completed with 70% of possible points or you will not receive a passing grade in this class.

Grading

Your instructor will conduct quizzes, exams, and assessments that you can use to determine how successful you are at achieving the course learning outcomes (mastery of course content and skills) outlined in the syllabus. If you find you are not mastering

the material and skills, you are encouraged to reflect on how you study and prepare for each class. Your instructor welcomes a dialogue on what you discover and may be able to assist you in finding resources on campus that will improve your performance.

Grading Scale

90 - 100 = A

80 - 89 = B

70 - 79 = C

60 - 69 = D

Below 60 = F