

Course Syllabus

Syllabus, Jazz Orchestra (Fall 2023)

MUS 178, course code 04600

Course meetings: Wednesdays, 7:00pm-9:50pm, MM 220.

Auditions: Enrollment in this course is by audition. Auditions take place during the first class meeting via group activities and, if needed, brief individual auditions. All students wishing to audition must attend and participate in the entire first class meeting. You do not need to bring any sheet music, only your instrument.

Instructor: Michael Dessen

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Office hour/location: 2pm-2:50pm Tuesdays, CAC 3023

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Course summary

Welcome! In this course, we will study, practice and perform diverse works from the jazz orchestra repertoire. Broadly speaking, the course has two goals:

- To help you improve your skills as an ensemble musician and an improviser
- To help you deepen your understanding of jazz as a musical and cultural practice

Our repertoire will cover a wide historical and aesthetic range, from classics composed nearly a century ago, to diverse mid and late 20th century compositions, to contemporary works by living composers.

Coursework

During class, our main focus will be on rehearsing the repertoire we'll perform in our concert. Some class time will also be used to practice sight-reading and improvisation. Attendance and full participation in all class sessions is required, including focused attention at all times, even when a section of music being rehearsed does not involve you directly. Electronic devices may not be used during classes, and must be put away (out of reach) before class starts. You are expected to be in your seat with your instrument ready to rehearse at 7pm.

Outside of class, the following work is required each week:

1. practicing your individual parts (expectation: roughly 2 hours per week)
2. participating in a weekly sectional (1 hour per week)
3. occasional listening/viewing/reading assignments (expectation: at most 1 hour per week)

Scheduling and logistics for the sectionals will be explained at the start of the quarter.

Repertoire

(The concert program is [downloadable here \(https://music.arts.uci.edu/events/uci-jazz-orchestra-1\)](https://music.arts.uci.edu/events/uci-jazz-orchestra-1).)

Caravan

Composed by Juan Tizol and Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington; arranged by Ellington
As performed by the Duke Ellington Orchestra in 1946

Avalon

Composed by Giacomo Puccini; arranged by Eddie Durham
As performed by Jimmie Lunceford and His Orchestra in 1935

Scorpio

Composed and arranged by Mary Lou Williams
As arranged for the Duke Ellington Orchestra in 1946

Mango Mangüé

Composed by Gilberto Valdés and Marion Sunshine; arranged by René Hernandez
As recorded by Charlie Parker with Machito and His Orchestra in 1948
Guest soloist: Daniel Richardson, alto saxophone

To you

Composed and arranged by Thad Jones, 1980

The Long Yellow Road

Composed and arranged by Toshiko Akiyoshi, 1961/1975

Groove Merchant

Composed by Jerome Richards; arranged by Thad Jones, 1969

My lament

Composed and arranged by Maria Schneider, 1994

Fables of Faubus

Composed by Charles Mingus (1959); arranged by Steve Slagle

Concert date and details

Full participation in our concert, including the sound check, is a course requirement.

8pm Wednesday, November 29: Concert in Winifred Smith Hall

Schedule that day:

- 4pm: Sound check (be in the hall with your instrument ready)
- 6:30pm: Break
- 7:40pm: Call time (be backstage)
- 8:00pm: Concert

Concert dress: There is not a specific dress code, but you are expected to wear clothing that is reasonably professional and standard for an event like this, i.e. no shorts, tee-shirts, tank tops, dinosaur costumes, etc.

Other important dates

Wednesday, Nov. 15: Class will *not* meet this day due to the UCI Jazz Combos concert. Because it takes place during our class time, you are required to attend the combos concert this evening (8pm, Smith Hall), even if you are not performing on it.

Wednesday, Dec. 6 (week 10): We will meet this week for a final session, even though our concert takes place the week prior. We will work on new music and other exercises. Please be sure to bring your folders to this rehearsal, so that we can collect them at the end.

Exam week: We will not meet during exam week.

Sheet music

Once enrollment is finalized, you will be given a folder for your music. Each week, you must bring that folder with all the music you've been given to date, because we may need to add or remove charts from the folders at any time.

At the end of the quarter, you must return the folder with all sheet music. If you lose any sheet music, you will be held financially responsible for replacing it, which can be costly. If you prefer to not be responsible for the originals, you may photocopy your charts and return the originals to us.

Expectations and grading

Expected time commitment: For this 2-unit course, I expect you to spend on average 4 hours per week on required work outside of class (as detailed under "Coursework" above). If you are investing

that amount of time and still feel under-prepared, please talk to me right away and I will help.

Grading criteria: Your grade will be based on the following criteria, weighted roughly equally:

- For all classes and the concert: Arriving on time, participating in rehearsals with full focus, and collaborating in a mature and professional manner as a member of the ensemble
- Weekly work outside of class: Practicing and learning the repertoire to the best of your ability (see "Coursework" above), attending sectionals, and completing any assigned listening/viewing/reading

Self-evaluation and how your grade is determined: I will communicate with you at any time that your work overall falls below what I consider to be a "B" grade. Please note that if you are consistently unprepared (i.e. unable to perform your parts adequately due to not practicing) and/or miss a significant number of rehearsals (see "Absences" below), you will not be allowed to participate in the concert, and may receive a failing grade for the course. By Wednesday of finals week, you must submit a one paragraph self-evaluation in which you explain the grade you believe you earned for your work in the course, based on the criteria above. I will assign your final course grade taking into account my own evaluation of your work alongside yours.

Absences: Our work in this course is highly collaborative, so attendance and weekly practice outside of class is very important. Missing the concert or missing more than 2 rehearsals may be considered grounds for a failing grade. In cases of absences due to severe illness or an emergency, please contact me immediately.

Course help and accommodations

If you ever struggle with this course or any of your UCI courses, especially if it is not clear how you can improve, I urge you to let me know as early as possible, so I can help.

If you have accommodation requests related to a disability, you must contact the [UCI Disabilities Services Center \(https://dsc.uci.edu/\)](https://dsc.uci.edu/) at the beginning of the quarter and have them send me the accommodations request, then follow up with me to discuss it.

Academic integrity and inclusivity

The main work in this course is embodied performance, but for all assignments including any that involve writing, you must be always careful to *avoid representing another person's work as your own*. Any attempt to do so will be considered an academic integrity violation, and will be [reported \(https://aisc.uci.edu/students/academic-integrity/procedures.php\)](https://aisc.uci.edu/students/academic-integrity/procedures.php).

My intention is always to facilitate welcoming, inclusive and respectful environments for collective learning among diverse students, in the spirit of the [UC's system-wide policies on diversity](#). 

(<https://diversity.universityofcalifornia.edu/policies-guidelines/>) By remaining in the course after reading this syllabus, you are affirming that you share these intentions.

Campus support resources

As a UCI student, you have access to a wide range of resources on campus to help you with not only your academic work, but also many other kinds of challenges, including food and housing insecurity, mental health and much more. I am always happy to talk if you are not sure where to start, and I also recommend consulting with CTSA Student Affairs staff, who are experts on these campus resources and very experienced at helping students with all kinds of challenges. Here is a list of campus resources I encourage you to be aware of:

- **CTSA (School of the Arts) Student Affairs** (<https://www.arts.uci.edu/student-affairs-office/>): A great starting point if you're not sure where to go, or if you prefer to talk to a staff advisor there rather than a professor.
- **UCI Basic Needs Hub** (<https://basicneeds.uci.edu/>): Help for UCI students struggling to meet basic food or housing needs.
- **UCI Counseling Center** (<http://www.counseling.uci.edu/>): Counseling for UCI students, and an excellent resource to help you cope with stress.
- **Disability Services Center** (<http://disability.uci.edu/>): Support for UCI students with disabilities, including helping you to establish accommodations in your courses.
- **UCI LGBT Resource Center** (<http://lgbtrc.uci.edu/>): Provides support for LGBT students and "education and advocacy services supporting intersectional identity development."
- **UCI Dream Center** (<http://dreamers.uci.edu/>): Mission is to "stand with and serve those impacted by immigration policy through advancing systemic change, deconstructing oppressive policies, and fostering community."
- **Student Outreach and Retention Center (SOAR)** (<https://soar.uci.edu/>): Support for academic success, wellness and empowerment, especially for underrepresented students
- **UCI CARE (Campus Assault Resources and Education)** (<https://care.uci.edu/>): "Free and confidential support services to members of the UCI community who have been impacted by sexual assault, relationship abuse, family violence and/or stalking."
- **Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (OEOD)** (<https://www.oeod.uci.edu/>): Promotes "equal opportunity, affirmative action, and nondiscrimination at UCI," and a place where students can report and get support for any perceived violations of university policy or the law, such as hostile work environments
- **Office of Academic Integrity & Student Conduct (OAISC)** (<https://aisc.uci.edu/>): Oversees academic integrity and student conduct, and also a place where students can submit reports or speak with staff about perceived violations of UCI policies and codes of conduct

Thank you for reading the entire Syllabus. I look forward to working with you this quarter!