

Course Syllabus

Syllabus, Jazz Orchestra (Winter 2024)

MUS 178, course code 04600

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

Auditions: Enrollment in this course is by audition. Students who were in the class in fall 2023 or have been informed already by the instructor do not need to re-audition. All other students must audition by attending the first class meeting or making an individual audition arrangement with the instructor. (The first class is a regular class rehearsal, and all students, including continuing students, should attend.)

Instructor: Michael Dessen

Contact: mdessen@uci.edu

Office hour/location: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30pm, CAC 3023

Office hour signup: You can drop in on my office hours if no one else is there, but whenever possible, please [sign up for times in advance on this google sheet](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/170iWtt6qiHyqtetfvUDjjS62AI5EYSHD28qLuMiSMIU/edit?usp=sharing). 

[\(https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/170iWtt6qiHyqtetfvUDjjS62AI5EYSHD28qLuMiSMIU/edit?usp=sharing\)](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/170iWtt6qiHyqtetfvUDjjS62AI5EYSHD28qLuMiSMIU/edit?usp=sharing) If you do drop in and someone is in the room with me already, knock on the window so that I know you're there, and I'll let you know how soon we can finish.

[\(mailto:mdessen@uci.edu\)](mailto:mdessen@uci.edu)

Course summary

Welcome! In this course, we will study, practice and perform diverse works from jazz orchestra traditions. The course has two broad 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 a century ago, to diverse mid and late 20th century compositions, to contemporary works by living composers.

Coursework and expectations

This is a 2-unit course, requiring roughly 3-4 hours of work per week outside of class, as well as our weekly 3-hour full ensemble rehearsal and an additional soundcheck/rehearsal on the day of our concert.

Attending rehearsals and the concert: Attendance and full participation in all class sessions and the soundcheck/concert 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.

Weekly work outside of class: You are expected to do the following:

1. practice your individual parts: 1-2 hours per week
2. attend weekly sectional: 1 hour per week
3. listening/viewing assignments: 1 hour per week*

Each section will coordinate a regular weekly sectional time at the start of the quarter.

Listening/viewing assignments are detailed in Canvas [Assignments](#)

(<https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments>).

*Note for non-Music majors: If you are able to enroll in this course with the Pass/No Pass grade option, then you can earn a Pass grade even if you do not complete any of the listening/viewing assignments, as long as you complete the rest of the coursework.

Repertoire

We will work on 9 charts this quarter and hopefully be able to perform all in the concert:

1. *Front Burner*, arr. Sammy Nestico (Count Basie), or possibly a different Basie chart instead
2. *Aries Mood (Portrait of Ben Webster)*, comp. Mary Lou Williams
3. *Just Waiting*, comp. Melba Liston
4. *Vinifera*, comp. Ayn Inserto
5. *Greasy Gravy*, comp. Carla Bley
6. *Definitely In*, comp. Eddie Palmieri
7. *Star Crossed Lovers*, comp. Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn
8. *I Said Cool, You Said... What?*, comp. Miho Hazama
9. *The Time Is Now*, comp. Eliane Elias, arr. Bob Brookmeyer
10. Possibly one or more improvisational interludes via [Conduction](#) ➞

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/30/arts/music/butch-morris-dies-at-65-creator-of-conduction.html>)

If you use Apple Music, you can hear these compositions on [this playlist](#) ➞

(<https://music.apple.com/us/playlist/w24-uci-jazz-orchestra/pl.u-zPyLeVLTGm49>). The version of "Just Waiting" there is not the jazz orchestra arrangement we'll use, but it gives you an idea of the song. If you use Spotify or YouTube, you should be able to find the arrangements there, but let me know if you have problems. This music will be the first listening assignment, due Jan. 17th.

Concert date and details

The [concert announcement is online here \(https://music.arts.uci.edu/events/uci-jazz-orchestra-0\)](https://music.arts.uci.edu/events/uci-jazz-orchestra-0), and the program will be downloadable on that page later in the quarter.

8pm Wednesday, Feb. 28: Concert in Winifred Smith Hall

Schedule that day:

- 3:30pm: Drummers/bassists arrive to help load in equipment
- 4pm: Everyone be in the hall with your instrument ready. Soundcheck and final rehearsal.
- 6:00pm: 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, and not distracting to others, i.e. no shorts, tee-shirts, tank tops, dinosaur costumes, etc.

Other important dates

Wednesday, Feb. 21: 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, March 6 (week 9): Class *will* meet this week, even though our concert will have happened.

Wednesday, March 13 (week 10): Class will *not* meet this week, because of the UCI Choirs concert at the Barclay Theater, which you are encouraged to attend if possible. In place of this class meeting, we will schedule a special activities class meeting during either this final week of classes or exam week, day/time TBD, which will be our final class meeting of the quarter.

Summary of viewing/listening assignments

Details and links to watch on UCI Kanopy are in the Canvas assignments linked below:

- [For week 2 \(https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296382\)](https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296382): Listening to recordings of all the charts we're working on
- [For week 3 \(https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296384\)](https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296384): Film, "Mary Lou Williams: The Lady Who Swings the Band" (1 hour)
- [For week 4 \(https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296391\)](https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296391): Film, "Duke Ellington - Black and Tan" (20 min.)

- **For week 5** (<https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296393>): Film, "The Girls In The Band" (first half)
- **For week 6** (<https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296394>): Film, "The Girls In The Band" (second half), and submit quick self-eval form
- **For week 7** (<https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296395>): Film, "Count Basie - Then As Now, Count's The King" (1 hr)
- **For week 9** (<https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296406>): Film, "Black February: Legendary Jazz Composer Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris" (1 hr)
- **For week 10** (<https://canvas.eee.uci.edu/courses/60455/assignments/1296396>): Film, "Birds of Paradise - Carla Bley" (30 min.), and submit quick end of quarter self-eval form

Grading

Grade calculation: Your grade will be based on how well you meet the expectations detailed above under "Coursework and expectations." The in class and out of class work are weighted equally. In week 5 and again in finals week, you will be required to fill out a short self-evaluation form to indicate the letter grades you think correspond to your in class and out of class work. At the end of the quarter, I will assign your course grade, taking into account your self-evaluations as well as my own.

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. If you are sick, please see a doctor and do not attend class, and in all cases of absences due to illness or an emergency, please contact me as soon as you are able to let me know.

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/).  [\(https://diversity.universityofcalifornia.edu/policies-guidelines/\)](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 \(https://www.arts.uci.edu/student-affairs-office/\)](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 \(https://basicneeds.uci.edu/\)](https://basicneeds.uci.edu/): Help for UCI students struggling to meet basic food or housing needs.
- [UCI Counseling Center \(http://www.counseling.uci.edu/\)](http://www.counseling.uci.edu/): Counseling for UCI students, and an excellent resource to help you cope with stress.
- [Disability Services Center \(http://disability.uci.edu/\)](http://disability.uci.edu/): Support for UCI students with disabilities, including helping you to establish accommodations in your courses.
- [UCI LGBT Resource Center \(http://lgbtrc.uci.edu/\)](http://lgbtrc.uci.edu/): Provides support for LGBT students and "education and advocacy services supporting intersectional identity development."
- [UCI Dream Center \(http://dreamers.uci.edu/\)](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 \(SOAR\) \(https://soar.uci.edu/\)](https://soar.uci.edu/): Support for academic success, wellness and empowerment, especially for underrepresented students
- [UCI CARE \(Campus Assault Resources and Education\) \(https://care.uci.edu/\)](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 \(OEOD\) \(https://www.oeod.uci.edu/\)](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 \(OAISC\) \(https://aisc.uci.edu/\)](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!