



# MUSC\*3730 Topics in Jazz and Improvised Music

Fall 2020

Section(s): C01

School of Fine Art and Music

Credit Weight: 1.00

Version 5.00 - August 24, 2020

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## 1 Course Details

### 1.1 Calendar Description

This course provides a seminar experience in focussed topics related to jazz and improvised music. Topics will normally include some combination of the following: jazz/improvisation history and theory, critical studies in jazz/ improvised music. Subject matter will vary according to the instructor.

**Pre-Requisites:** 7.50 credits including MUSC\*2140

### 1.2 Course Description

What do researchers say about jazz improvisation? How does it work? What does it mean? What is its history? How does it relate to society and culture? By examining some of the major scholarly research on jazz improvisation by ethnomusicologists, jazz historians, musicologists, cultural study scholarS, and jazz performers, we will attempt to answer these questions.

You will be required to discuss, read, listen, analyze and write. Each class will consist of a discussion on an assigned reading. Discussion of recorded musical examples may be required. Students will be marked on their directed contribution to the discussion. Guidelines, requirements and grading rubrics for these discussions will be addressed at the beginning of the course. In addition, students will be required to write a reflection report that summarizes and discusses our readings and class discussions. Late submissions will have marks deducted unless there are confirmed health problems or family emergencies.

## 1.3 Timetable

Timetable is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

Approximate schedule

### Week 1 The Ethnomusicological Approach

*Thoughts on Improvisation: A Comparative Approach* Bruno Nettl

### Week 2 Analysis

*Lester Young's 'Shoeshine Boy'* Lawrence Gushee

### Week 3 The Social Context

*Jazz and Political and Musical Practice* Ingrid Monson

Week 4 The Performance Context

*"Epilogue: Jazz as Way of Life"* In Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Jazz Improvisation Paul Berliner

Week 5 Improvisation in Jazz History

*Genius, Improvisation, and the Narratives of Jazz History*"Gabriel Solis

Week6 Improvisation in Jazz History (again)

*Improvisation and Related Terms in Middle-Period Jazz*"Lawrence Gushee

Week 7 Critical studies

*"Exploding the Narrative in Jazz Improvisation"* Vijay Iyer

Week 8 Ethnomusicological approaches (again)

*"Jazz as Conversation"* In Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction. p 73 -96 .  
Ingrid Monson

Week 9. Critical studies

*Improvised Music After 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives*. George Lewis

Weeks 10 Analysis

*Sonny Rollins and the Challenge of Thematic Analysis*. Gunther Schuller

Week 11. Critical Improvisation Studies

*Beneath Improvisation* Vijay Iyer

Week 12 Conclusion

What have we learned? How to organize knowledge. Preparing for the final

## 1.4 Final Exam

Exam time and location is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

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## 2 Instructional Support

### 2.1 Instructional Support Team

<b>Instructor:</b>	Howard Spring
<b>Email:</b>	hspring@uoguelph.ca
<b>Telephone:</b>	+1-519-824-4120 x58579
<b>Office:</b>	JHNN 112

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## 3 Learning Resources

### 3.1 Required Resources

**As assigned at the beginning of the course. (Readings)**  
See schedule

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## 4 Learning Outcomes

### 4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Develop critical and creative thinking through engagement with, and discussion of the historical, cultural, and analytical literature concerned with jazz improvisation.
2. Develop literacy through the requirement of written reports that will entail extracting information and ideas from various sources, assessing their quality and validity, and

writing good prose

3. Gain inter-cultural competence through the socio-cultural understanding of the historically and geographically diverse improvisational practices of jazz.

4. Develop oral and written communication skills through oral and written reports and discussion.

5. Hone professional and ethical behaviour through team projects and engagement with ethical issues in the jazz research literature. 6. Identify the various meanings and understandings of “improvisation” in their appropriate cultural and historical contexts through an examination of the various scholarly approaches found in the readings for the course. 7. Analyze various kinds of improvisation through the application of appropriate techniques. 8. Integrate and compare various scholarly and practical approaches to the issues found in the discussion and analysis of improvisation. 9. Create improvisations based on various academic and performance models.

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## 5 Teaching and Learning Activities

Discussion of assigned readings and listening.

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## 6 Assessments

### 6.1 Assessment Details

#### **Take home exam (30%)**

A final take home exam. Long answer format

#### **Weekly literature report (60%)**

No more than two pages double-spaced. Due by Saturday night at midnight after the week’s discussion. Deposit in the Courselink Dropbox. The purpose of these reports is to help student clarify their understanding of the content of each reading so that they can get

an overview of the main currents of academic thinking through comparison by the end of the course. They can also serve to keep me up date on your progress so that I can deal with any emerging problems in a timely manner. Students are invited to email me with any questions they have about the reading or to try some of their answers out on me before it gets marked. Each report is worth 5% for a total of 60% (5 x 12).

### **Improvised performance (10%)**

Create an improvisation related to the ideas of a specific reading. One student each week. They should be short. Can be done "live" or video recorded. Deposit recorded video to discussion section of Couselink site. Due no later than the Sunday night, midnight, the week after the reading. The student who created the improvisation will lead a short discussion of the procedures and problems in the creation of their improvisation and how it relates to the ideas discussed in class. The purpose of these performances is for students to understand improvisation and the its issues in a personal and embodied way. Students are invited to try their ideas and performances out on me first for comment without getting marked before the actual "performance". (10%) Marks depend on how well you use the ideas we've been talking about.

## **7 University Statements**

### **7.1 Email Communication**

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

### **7.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

### **7.3 Drop Date**

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and

alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

## 7.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

## 7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website

<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

## 7.6 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community-faculty, staff, and students-to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that



instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

## 7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

## 7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>

## 7.9 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

## 7.10 Illness

The University will not require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for the fall 2020 or winter 2021 semesters.

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