



Shanghai University of Finance & Economics

2021 Summer Program

MUS 110 History of Jazz

Course Outline

Term: July 12 – August 6, 2021

Class Hours: 12:00-13:50 (Monday through Fridays)

Fridays: Recordings and Videos; Music and Drumming Skills - 2 hours.

Course Code: MUS 110

Instructor: Bert Seager, jazz pianist, composer, Faculty NEC

Home Institution: New England Conservatory, Boston Massachusetts

Office Hours: TBA

Email: bert@bertseager.com

Credit: 4

Class Hours: This course will have 52 class hours, including 32 lecture hours, professor 8 office hours, 8-hour TA discussion sessions, 4-hour review sessions.

Course Description and Goals:

From its very beginning about one hundred years ago and throughout its entire history, jazz music has evolved by bringing together elements of overlapping cultures. Understanding its evolution as a reflection of the places and times it sprang from helps us appreciate the mystery, majesty, and genius of its creators. In this course you will learn not only the relevant facts of American history that allowed this indigenous art form to flourish, but also gain an understanding of the musical innovations that propelled this art form to the future. In this course you will gain an appreciation of how to listen and understand the music. Jazz has always excited people and I trust that this will be the same for you. We will, of course listen intently. You will learn about rhythm by drumming on your laps, marching in-place to the music, and even, on your own, singing along with it; all as a way to understand, hear, and feel it better. You will begin to both intellectually and intuitively sense the basic symmetries and forms of the music. And then be able to grasp the music's inner meanings, its ties to the blues, and its relationship with popular culture and high-brow artistic culture.



By learning to how listen, you will increase your familiarity with the sounds that the individual instruments make, giving rise to a new depth of your appreciation. We will learn about the roles that each instrument plays and the innovations and departures from those roles that these great musicians discovered. My goal is to help you begin to discern for yourselves the skill level and breadth of imagination of the performer, composer, and arranger so that you leave class with a desire to listen further to the artists you enjoyed the most, exploring more deeply the artists that piqued your interest, and cultivating a life-long love of this music

Course requirements:

It is important to recognize this fact, that we will not be able to meet in person due to the pandemic which keeps us apart. This requires that the class be taught via prerecorded lectures. A little more than seven hours of lectures per week over four days - and once each week I am available to meet remotely to discuss the assignments and musical concepts and any other questions you may have. A short paper about a musical piece will be assigned. Your writing should be informed by our classwork and will demonstrate your repeated close listening to a track of music. Instead of a text book we are using a video : Ken Burns 10-episode film documentary Jazz.” Available on iTunes, YouTube, Amazon Prime. It is a wonderful movie, with great music, and performances, interviews and history, and it will help ignite your passion for this great art form. There is a version out there with Chinese subtitles. Attendance and Participation: Attendance will be taken by the platform we are using to distribute the lectures. ECNU policy is that any student who has more than three absences” will fail the course. Any unexcused absence may impact a students grade.

In this course, grading will be based on the following:

Grading System (1 ~ 100)

A : 94 - 100 A- : 90 – 93

B : 83 - 89 B- : 80 – 82

C : 73 - 79 C- : 70 – 72

D : 63 - 69 D- : 60 – 62

F : Fail

Attendance and participation 25%

One paper: 20%

Two assignments: 30%

Final in-class essay/listening exam 25%



Course Schedule:

Week 1 Precursors of Jazz: Up to the 1890s

The Blues- origins

Ragtime

New Orleans Jazz- the advent of recording
technology Chicago Jazz

New York piano jazz

Paper assigned- due Monday

In class musical topics for practice: pulse, meter, subdivision, Mardi Gras

Indian Rhythms

Week 2 Kansas City Jazz

Duke Ellington

The Swing Era

The advent of radio

The birth of bebop

Second paper assigned-due Monday

In class musical topics to practice- blues scale and form, the ride cymbal beat, call and response

Week 3 Bebop- Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, et al

Hard Bop- Horace Silver, Art Blakey

Blue Note Records

Miles Davis

John Coltrane

Third paper assigned-due Monday

In class musical topics to practice: playing time with recordings, comping rhythms

Week 4 The Fragmentation of Jazz Styles

Free Jazz- Ornette Coleman

Fusion- Miles and Beyond

Latin Jazz

European Jazz- ECM

Current artists/trends

The internet

In class musical topics to practice- Latin rhythms, more playing with recordings Final exam