

Music 614  
**SEMINAR IN CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF JAZZ**  
 Class Syllabus

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Office #238, Music Bldg. (Office hours determined every semester)

Class meeting times and location found in Student Handbook

Prerequisites: For continuing students (from SDSU who earned a B. M. in Jazz Performance Studies) Music 166, 266, 366, 466, 566A and 566B is required, with the cumulative passing grade of "B." Transfer students must successfully complete the Jazz Studies Department Theory Placement Barrier Exam. **This course is designed for Jazz performance majors and may not be the best choice for graduate students whose knowledge of jazz is limited.**

Lectures and their Objectives: This course takes up where Music 466, Elements of Jazz IV, left off. The aesthetic focus of this course revolves principally around the music of the last forty-four years and the important creative developments that have transpired within this time frame.

Students will be expected to demonstrate theoretical and applicative knowledge in areas A through G, listed below.

Analysis and Theory

- A) Modes and their applications.
  - 1) Diatonic Modes
  - 2) Jazz Melodic Minor Modes
  - 3) Harmonic Minor Modes
  - 4) Harmonic Major Modes
  - 5) Other Altered Modes
  - 6) Overview of George Russell's Lydian Chromatic Concept
- B) Melody Generating Concepts
  - 1) Study and analysis of solos transcribed by the instructor.
  - 2) Study and analysis of solos transcribed by the students.
- C) Selected topics from A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody, by Dave Liebman
- D) Chromatic Modal Harmony.
  - 1) Analysis of Chromatic Modal repertoire.
  - 2) Compositional procedures in the chromatic modal idiom.
- E) Abstracted harmony and its compositional applications.
- F) Analysis of Open Ended and Alternately Structured Forms.
- G) Compositional procedures in open ended or alternate form idioms.

*Written Projects*

Transcribed Solo (Part I)

A transcription of a recorded jazz solo from a commercially released album, computer engraved, or in ink (an original and one photocopy are required if in ink).

The length of the transcription is to be 64 measures. The student must also provide the instructor with a CD copy of the solo for grading and correction purposes when the transcription is turned in.

Transcribed Solo Annotation (Part II)

When the first draft of the solo is corrected by the instructor and returned to the student, complete corrections and edits on the transcription. Along with that, prepare a detailed annotation (analysis) of the solo that includes the following:

- a) Melodic Generating Concepts as defined in class.
- b) Comparison of density and space in terms of the rhythmic/melodic activity.
- c) Identification of any developed rhythmic devices.
- d) Overall structural unity and pacing.
- e) Soloist "signatures" in terms of melodic and rhythmic elements.

*Written Projects* cont.,

Periodic Journal Entries\*

These papers are to be three to four pages in length. They should represent your observations and insights on assigned reading, class lectures and discussions, as well as any outside reading on jazz topics. Grading will be determined by content as well as spelling and grammar. Remember, the instructor expects these journals to be written in an academic research paper style. Please refer to the latest edition of “A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations” by Kate Turabian (University of Chicago Press) for proper formatting, as it has to do with citations and quotes.

[There will be a total of three journal entries for the semester.]

Original Compositions

*Project 1*

Scored for rhythm section (three to four rhythm section players) and one horn. The compositions will be written in such a manner as to reflect the instruments played by members of the class. The score and parts are to be computer engraved (preferred) or in dark pencil (for photocopy reproduction). This composition is to be composed in the chromatic modal harmonic idiom and can include fixed, but flexible, forms. The instructor will not accept Be Bop style compositions or contrafacts.

The piece can be composed in either sectional or thru composed formats. Minimum length is 26 measures. Maximum length is 32 measures.

*Project 2*

Scored for rhythm section (three to four rhythm section players) and one horn. The compositions will be written in such a manner as to reflect the instruments played by members of the class. The score and parts are to be computer engraved (preferred) or in dark pencil (for photocopy reproduction). This piece is to be composed in an alternate form idiom. In other words, the improvisational structure for the composition will not include a fixed harmonic form. Open-ended forms with cues, closed rhythmic forms, ostinato forms and other improvisational structures can all be used.

Grading for both projects will be based on the following criteria:

- a) Melodic/harmonic structural unity and form.
- b) Melodic and rhythmic inventiveness.
- c) Strong improvisational structure, either via harmonic, open ended or alternately structured forms.
- d) Overall creativity.

Repertoire Analysis Project

Students will pick two representative compositions by one jazz composer for the following analysis procedures:

- a) Form, harmonic, rhythmic and melodic analysis.
- b) Identification of unique compositional devices in rhythmic, melodic and harmonic languages.
- c) Comparison of compositional devices in the three pieces that define (or represent) the style and uniqueness of the composer.

*Format of the Repertoire Analysis Project Lead Sheets*

The harmonic, rhythmic and melodic analyses will be notated directly on the lead sheets of the compositions in a manner demonstrated in text examples and other materials given to the class by the instructor. Computer generated lead sheets are required.

*Format of Written Portion of Repertoire Analysis Project*

- 1) Biographical information on the composer’s career, including professional and/or collaborative relationships, along with important historical and sociological context.
- 2) Historical information on each piece that would include the time period the piece was written, compositional motivation, title importance.

Repertoire Analysis Project cont.,

- 3) Form analysis along with the identification and comparison of compositional devices that reveal the composer’s unique use of melody, harmony and rhythm as it relates to each piece individually.
- 4) Comparative analysis of composer’s “signature” devices in terms of melodic, harmonic and rhythmic components.
- 5) Additionally, the student will provide a representative listing of recordings of the compositions by the composer and other artists (no more than five are required) that includes the album names, recording dates, personnel and record label.
- 6) Short bibliography and footnotes.

Excluding the analyzed lead sheets, this research paper should be between 5 to 7 pages, typewritten. Again, refer to Turabian’s “A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations” for proper academic formatting. As with the Journal entries, Grading will be determined by content as well as spelling and grammar.

Grading

3 Journal Entries			
Content		7%	
Grammar/Spelling/Writing Style		3%	
Solo Transcription			
Transcription Accuracy		10%	
Analysis		9%	
Annotation Content		9%	
Grammar/Spelling/Writing Style		6%	
Original Composition Project 1		19%	
Original Composition Project 2		19%	
Repertoire Analysis Project			
Structural and Harmonic Analysis of Music		7%	
Written Portion Analytical & Historical Accuracy		6%	
Grammar/Spelling/Writing Style		5%	
A	100%-93%	A-	92%-90%
B+	89%-87%	B	86%-83%
B-	82%-80%	C+	79%-77%
C	76%-73%	C-	72%-70%
D+	69%-67%	D	66%-63%
F	59% and lower		

Due Dates are selected each semester  
(Read page 4 for assignment due date policies)

1) Transcription

- a) Solo title and artist
- b) 1st Draft of Solo Transcription
- c) Final Draft of Solo Transcription with annotation and written analysis

2) Original Compositions

- a) 1st drafts
- b) Final drafts

Overt plagiarism on either composition project will automatically disqualify the student with a failing grade in the class in accordance with university policy.

3) Repertoire Analysis Project

- 4) Three Periodic Journal due dates are;
- #1 "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody"  
Reading insights, Observations and Issues on Class Lectures and Discussions
- #2 "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody"  
Reading insights, Observations and Issues on Class Lectures and Discussions
- #3 "A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody"  
Reading insights, Observations and Issues on Class Lectures and Discussions

### Required Books and Materials

#### Graduate Seminar in Conceptual Analysis of Jazz (Rick Helzer) [Reawakening Publishing]

A reader prepared and authored by the instructor.

(Rick Helzer) [©Reawakening Music/Montezuma Publishing]

Text cost determined by Montezuma Publishing.

- 1) The text and Audio CD will be packaged together in a coil bound reader and will be available in the Book Store under the instructor's name and the course number and name:
- 2) Music 614 – Graduate Seminar in Conceptual Analysis of Jazz
- 3) Author's Name: Professor Rick Helzer

#### A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody (Dave Liebman) Advance Music

It is the student's responsibility to individually order the Liebman book. It is available from Jamey Abersold. The 24 hour phone order number is 1-800-456-1388. The book can also be ordered on-line at [www.jazzbooks.com](http://www.jazzbooks.com). The book can be delivered overnight, 2-day air, etc., or can be delivered via normal surface delivery with a 1 to 2 week delivery window.

*A Chromatic Approach to Jazz Harmony and Melody* is also available from Sher Publishing. The toll free number is 1-800-444-7437. The Sher website is [www.shermusic.com](http://www.shermusic.com).

### Other Recommended Study and Reading

*Thinking in Jazz--The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Paul F. Berliner), The University of Chicago Press

*Contemporary Harmony* (Ludmila Ulehla), Advance Music

*Modal Jazz Composition and Harmony, Vols. I & II* (Ron Miller), Advance Music

*Milestones* (Jack Chambers), Quill, William Morrow Press

*Forces in Motion, The Music and Thoughts of Anthony Braxton* (Graham Locke), Da Capo Press

*Ornette Coleman, A Harmolodic Life* (John Litweiler), William Morrow and Company, Inc.

*Blues People* (Leroi Jones, a.k.a., Amiri Baraka), Morrow Quill

*Black Music* (Leroi Jones, a.k.a., Amiri Baraka), William Morrow & Co.

*Jazz Composer's Companion* (Gil Goldstein), Advance Music

*Keeping Time (Readings in Jazz History)* (Edited by Robert Walser), Oxford University Press

*Jazz Cultures* (David Ake), University of California Press

*Weather Bird (Jazz at the Dawn of Its Second Century)* (Gary Giddins), Oxford Press

*Footprints (The Life and Work of Wayne Shorter)* (Michelle Mercer), Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin

*The Making of Kind of Blue (Miles Davis and his Masterpiece)* (Eric Nisenson) St. Martin's Griffin, N.Y.

*Coltrane, the Story of a Sound* (Ben Ratliff) Farrar, Straus and Giroux, NY.

*Thelonious Monk – The Life and Times of an American Original* (Robin D. G. Kelley) Free Press

### Assignment Due Date Policies

It is very important to get assigned work in on the specified due dates because there are grading penalties for work turned in late. If the transcription (which has two due dates), original compositions (both 1st drafts), or periodic journal entries are one calendar day late, a 5% penalty will be incurred. If any of the above items is turned in the Thursday following Tuesday's class, a 10% penalty will be given. Assignments will not be accepted after the Thursday following class. The grade given will be an F with "0" points.

Specific Directions for Turning in Late Assignments

Assignments turned in one calendar day late, or two calendar days late, from a Wednesday due date must be turned in on Thursday or Friday to the music department office, and must be date stamped by office personnel. They will, in turn, put it in my mailbox. (Remember, the music department office closes on Fridays at 12 noon.)