

# Commercial Piano I

## MUSA 2255

**Instructor:** Dr. Chris Reyman

**Office:** FFA 438

**Contact:** 747-7805, [creyman@utep.edu](mailto:creyman@utep.edu)

**Class Time:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 8:30AM-9:20AM

**Location:** Digital Keyboard Lab, FFA

### Office Hours:

Monday/Wednesday 11:30AM-12:00PM, Tuesdays/Thursdays 9AM

\*Please let me know if you'd like to meet (even if it is during my scheduled office hours). I will do my best to make myself available at times other than these listed - just ask!

### Attendance Policy

Students will be given daily grades for participation and progress in class. If a student is not in class (including tardiness), they will not receive credit for that class period. Of course, you will be excused for university-related events as long as they are approved by me at least two weeks in advance via email correspondence. **DO NOT COME TO CLASS IF YOU ARE SICK.** Each student will be given 3 excused absences due to illness; further absences can be made up on a case by case basis. Please stay in communication with me when you miss class for any reason.

### Course Description

An introduction to commercial piano styles and techniques through listening, transcribing, analysis, improvisation and performance.

### Course Goals

- Understand and execute fundamental elements of commercial piano styles and technique
- Develop an understanding of jazz/commercial theory and notation
- Build “Ears to Fingers” skills through ear training and call and response exercises
- Develop improvisational skills at the keyboard

## Course Overview

- diatonic chords and secondary dominants (root position and R/H chord-L/H bass note)
- hearing basic functional tonality (major and minor) and playing (ears to fingers)
- improvising (bass lines to melody lines)
- blues (form, melody, variations and voicings)
- ii- V I harmony (major/Ionian, minor/Dorian and dominant/Mixolydian)
- rootless 9th chords
- 3/7 voicings
- 4-note spread voicings
- tritone substitution
- basic accompaniment for melody instrument
- turnarounds

## Course Activities/Assignments

- “comping” and improvising over jazz harmonies
- transcribing, notating lead sheet and performing commercial/pop songs
- reading chord symbols and lead sheets
- reading traditional notation

## Course Schedule

\*\*All assignments are subject to change throughout the semester.

### Module 1: Weeks 1-4

#### Major Key Diatonic Chords, Functional Tonality and Secondary Dominants

- root position triads
- chord-scale relationships
- grooves: 2-beat, waltz, bolero

#### PERFORMANCE EXAM #1 - Sept. 20

- grooves (LH bass notes, RH chords)

### Module 2: Weeks 5-8

#### 7th chords and rootless voicings and The Blues (in C)

- 3/7 and 7/3 guide-tones
- The Blues (I IV V) form
- riff blues heads by ear

- walking bass lines
- improvise with blues scales

#### PERFORMANCE EXAM #2 - Oct. 18

- LH bass notes, RH chord voicings through blues
- LH walking bass line, RH 3/7 guide tones through blues
- RH riff blues melodies
- improvisation

#### Module 3: Weeks 9-12

##### UNIT 3: ii-7 V7 I and the Jazz Blues progression (altered dominant chords in F)

- 9th chords
- rootless 3-5-7-9 and 7-9-3-5 voicings
- ii-<sup>7</sup> V<sup>7</sup> I progressions in all 12 keys
- LH bass lines and RH chords
- melody and LH chords (Pfrancing)

#### PERFORMANCE EXAM #3 - Nov. 15

- LH bass lines and RH chords
- RH melody, LH chords

#### Module 4: Weeks 13-16

##### UNIT 4: Blue Bossa

- altered dominant chords
- minor tonality
- bossa groove
- melody and LH chords
- improvisation

#### Final Exam Monday, Dec. 4, 10AM-12:45PM

- Blue Bossa
- GROOVE: LH bass lines, RH chords
- RH melody, LH chords
- RH improvisation

#### **Grade Breakdown**

Weekly Progress Quizzes: 45%

Module Exams: 30%

Final Exam: 25%

### **Statement for Accommodations and Support**

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact *The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS)* at 747-5148, or by email to [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at [www.sa.utep.edu/CASS](http://www.sa.utep.edu/CASS).

### **Required Attendance**

October 10, 2023, 7:30PM, Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall  
Jazz Band concert

November 17, 2023, 7:30PM, Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall  
Dr. Dena Kay Jones Faculty Recital

December 9, 2023, 7:30PM, Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall  
Commercial Music Ensemble Recital

\*\*I want this class to be beneficial to you individually. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any concerns you may have about a particular assignment, the class as a whole or anything else.

\*\*\*The content of this course is subject to change at any time. I will be adjusting the course to fit the particular needs and interests of this group of students. If anything changes in how I will evaluate you, I will let you know as soon as I can.