Commercial Piano I
12247 - MUSA 2255 - 100

Instructor: Dr. Chris Reyman
Office: FFA 133
Contact: 747-7805, cereyman@utep.edu

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30-11:30am, 1:30-2:30pm
Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-4 pm

*Please let me 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!

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30pm-5:50pm
Location: Digital Keyboard Lab, FFA

Attendance Policy

Students will be given daily grades for participation in class. If a student is not in
class (including excessive tardiness), they will not receive a grade for that class period.
Students with three or more unexcused absences will not receive a grade higher than a
B. 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.

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
• upper structure triads
• tritone substitution
• basic accompaniment for melody instrument
• turnarounds
• minor key tonality
• altered chord-scale relationships (whole-tone and diminished)

Course Activities/Assignments

• comping and improvising over jazz harmonies
• transcribing, notating lead sheet and performing commercial/pop songs
• reading lead sheets
• arranging tune (intro, ending)
• solo ballad arrangement

Course Schedule

week 1-2
hearing basic functional tonality and playing diatonic and secondary dominant chords

week 3-4
the blues (form, melody, voicings, bass lines and improvisation)
rootless 9th chords

week 5-7
ii- V Is (progression, tonicization and improvisation)
3/7 chords
tritone substitution
basic turnarounds

week 8-9
minor key tonality and altered chords
upper-structure triads (9/#11, 13/flat-9, #9/flat13)
All of Me/Autumn Leaves basic accompaniment

week 10-12
whole-tone and diminished chord-scale relationships (chords and improvisation)
continue upper-structure triads
week 12-14
ballad accompaniment
more improvisation
more comping

**Grade Breakdown**

written and playing assignments (35%)
class participation and preparation (25%)
two performance exams (20%) TBA
final performance exam (20%) TBA, this exam is cumulative

**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, 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.

**I want this class to be beneficial to you personally. 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.**

**NO CLASS:**
Sept. 2, Sept. 4 and Oct. 9