Commercial Piano I  
11743 - MUSA 2255 - 100

**Instructor:** Dr. Chris Reyman  
**Teaching Assistant:** Carlos Barba  
**Office:** FFA 133  
**Contact:** 747-7805, cereyman@utep.edu

**Office Hours:** Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30-11:30am, Mondays 12:30-1:30pm, Thursdays and Thursdays 3:30-4:30pm

*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

Course Schedule

Aug. 28-Sept. 14
  UNIT 1: Major Key Diatonic Chords, Functional Tonality and Secondary Dominants
  • root position triads and 7th chords
  • chord-scale relationships
  • Grooves: 2-beat, waltz, bolero, bossa
  • walking bass lines

Sept. 14
  PERFORMANCE EXAM #1
  • grooves (LH bass notes, RH chords)
  • walking bass lines

Sept. 19-Oct. 10
  UNIT 2 - 7th and 9th chords and rootless voicings and The Blues (in C)
  • 9th chords
  • 3-5-7-9 and 7-9-3-5 voicings
  • 3/7 and 7/3 guidetones
  • The Blues (I IV V) form
  • riff blues heads by ear
  • walking bass lines
  • improvise with blues scales

Oct. 10
  PERFORMANCE EXAM #2
  • LH bass notes, RH chord voicings through blues
  • LH walking bass line, RH 3/7 guide tones through blues
  • RH riff blues melodies
• RH improvisation with blues scales

Oct. 12-Nov. 7

UNIT 3: ii-7 V7 I and the Jazz Blues progression (altered dominant chords in F)
  • spread voicings
  • altered dominant chords
  • ii-7 V7 I progressions
  • LH bass lines and RH chords
  • RH improvising over changes with LH chords
  • melody and LH chords (Pfrancing)

Nov. 7

PERFORMANCE EXAM #3
  • spread voicing through jazz blues
  • LH bass lines and RH chords
  • RH improvising over changes with LH chords (or guide tones)
  • RH melody, LH chords

Nov. 9-Dec. 7

UNIT 4: Jazz Standards, turnarounds and whole-tone/octatonic scales
  • spread voicings
  • altered dominant chords
  • ii-7 V7 I progressions
  • LH bass lines and RH chords
  • RH improvising over changes with LH chords
  • melody and LH chords

Final Exam Dec. 12, 4-6:45pm
  • Blue Bossa and All of Me
  • RH melody, LH chords
  • LH bass lines, RH chords
  • RH improvisation, LH chords

Grade Breakdown

• Written and playing assignments: 30% (2-3% each)
• Class participation and preparation: 25% (1% each class, not including exams)
• EXAMS
  • Performance Exam 1: 5%
  • Performance Exam 2: 7%
  • Performance Exam 3: 8%
  • Final Performance 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, 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.***

**Important Dates:**
FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 12th, 4-6:45pm