

# **Commercial Piano I**

## **11743 - MUSA 2255 - 100**

**Instructor:** Dr. Chris Reyman

**Teaching Assistant:** Carlos Barba

**Office:** FFA 133

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

\*\*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