

Commercial Piano I

11663 - MUSA 2255 - 100

Instructor: Dr. Chris Reyman

Teaching Assistant: Carlos Barba (cebarba2@miners.utep.edu)

Office: FFA 133

Contact: 747-7805, creyman@utep.edu

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30-11:30am, 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-5:20pm

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
- 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 lead sheets

Course Schedule

Aug. 27-Sept. 11

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. 11

PERFORMANCE EXAM #1

- grooves (LH bass notes, RH chords)
- walking bass lines

Sept. 13-Oct. 9

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. 9

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. 11-Nov. 6

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 in all 12 keys
- LH bass lines and RH chords
- RH improvising over changes with LH chords

- melody and LH chords (Pfrancing)

Nov. 6

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. 8-Dec. 6

UNIT 4: Jazz Standards (Blue Bossa and All of Me) and turnarounds

- 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.

***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:

Chris Reyman Faculty Recital, November 12

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, December 11th, 4-6:45pm