JAZZ THEORY – MUST 250 - Instructor – Mark Buselli
Fall 2026
Rm MU117
Monday - Wednesday – 10 – 10:50AM email: mbuselli@bsu.edu

Required Text:

The Jazz Theory Book by Mark Levine – Sher music – ISBN 9781883217044

"If you are able to free yourself through expression in music, it must be jazz. And even the greatest players are only fortunate enough to experience that freedom for a couple of minutes at a time. Jazz is the only music in the Western world in which the most risk yields the greatest results."
Keith Jarrett.

Course Objectives:

In this course, you will learn how jazz works. You will become familiar with the basic rhythmic, harmonic, melodic and formal conventions of jazz. You will also learn the basic scale, key and chord theory, which is applicable to all Western music. You should leave this course with an understanding of how chords and scales work and the ability to manipulate them in real time.

Course Requirements:

Blank music paper and pencils are required. All homework is to be done with paper and pencil. No computer notation will be allowed until I see that you can do paper and pencil. Please bring your instruments to class when announced.
HOMEWORK IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS. If you forget it you have ONE get-out-of-jail card. After that no late homework will be accepted.

Grade criteria:

Six Quizzes:	143 pts.
Midterm:	100 pts.
Final:	100 pts
16 Homework:	385 pts
TOTAL of	728 possible points

Late homework is not accepted and will receive a ZERO grade.

Grading: A= 91.5% A- = 87.5% B+ = 84.5% B = 81.5%
B- = 77.5% C+ = 74.5% C = 69.5%

Your grade is determined by the amount of points accumulated divided by the total amount of points.

Attendance: Although your grade is not based on attendance, your presence at each class is vital, and expected. Since there is so much material to cover, information will be

presented only once. If you miss a class, it is YOUR responsibility to gather the information missed.

Note: If classes are missed, it is the responsibility of the STUDENT to notify the instructor in advance of the absence and to get copies of missed notes and handouts from the instructor. If you are sick, you must email me the homework by the end of class.

Assigned reading: There will be material found in your assigned reading that will not be presented in class, however, you may find this material on a QUIZ!! Your reading assignments are a way of augmenting the information presented in class. Do NOT get behind in your reading assignments. Not only will you have too much to do at the end, but you will also be "out of the loop" on class discussions when material appearing only in assigned reading and handouts is discussed. Note: You are expected to have read each assigned reading prior to the class during which it will be discussed.

Class Schedule (Subject to change)

Week 1- (Aug. 24th – 20th) – NO CLASS - (people still registering) GET BOOK!

Week 2 - (Mon. August 31st) - Introduction – Intro; Terminology and chord symbols; terms – intervals Listen to selected music.
Read JT - 3 - 12. HMW – ear training: sing intervals

Week 2 – (Wed. Sept. 2nd) - Triads - M,m,+,dim - Keys - Major scale and 7th chords Diatonic harmony. Read JT 13 - 24 -
HW#1 – memorize all 2-5-1 progressions thru the cycle.
Hand out diatonic exercise sheet. Learn in key of C

Week 3 – (Mon. Sept 7th) – NO CLASS LABOR DAY.

Week 3 – (Wed. Sept 9th) Intervals, Read JT 25 - 30 – **HW#2** - voice leading (Guide Tones)

Week 4 – (Mon. Sept. 14th) - **Quiz #1** - Other chord progressions
Read JT - 31 – 42. **HW#3** – identify chord extensions

Week 4 – (Wed. Sept. 16th) - Major scale harmony- Ionian, Dorian, Mixolydian, Lydian
Read JT - 43 – 55. **HW#4** – TBA

Week 5 – (Mon. Sept. 21st) - Major scale harmony - Mixo sus chord - Phrygian, Aeolian Locrian. Read JT 55 -63. **HW#5** – Major Scale Harmony

Week 5 – (Wed. Sept. 23rd) - **Quiz #2** - Melodic Minor scale Harmony - Minor Major, Sus b9 Read JT - 64 -70 **HW#6** – TBA

Week 6 – (Mon. Sept. 28th) - Melodic Minor Scale Harmony - Lyd. augmented, Lyd. dom. fifth mode, Locrian #2 Read JT 70-77. NO HW.

Week 6 – (Wed. Sept. 30th) - Melodic Minor Scale Harmony - Altered Dom., minor 2 – 5's. Read JT 78 – 88. **HW#7** – Minor Scale Harmony

Week 7 – (Mon. Oct. 5th) - **Quiz #3** - Diminished Scale Harmony - half step whole and the whole step half. Read JT 89 -94, 95 – 102. NO HW
Week 7 – (Wed. Oct. 7th) - Whole Tone Harmony - How to practice scales (bring instruments) Read JT - 103 - 110 **HW#8** – Dim/WT

Week 8 – (Mon. Oct. 12th) – NO CLASS – FALL BREAK
Week 8 – (Wed. Oct. 14th) - Slash Chords - Read JT - 113-119. **HW#9** – slash chords

Week 9 – (Mon. Oct. 19th) - **Quiz #4** - Sequences - Read JT - 114-140 **HW#10** – Seq.
Week 9 – (Wed. Oct. 21st) - listen to the players from the reading (120-140) Read JT - 141 – 149. HWM-Study for Midterm

Week 10 – (Mon. Oct. 26th) – MIDTERM EXAM
Week 10 – (Wed. Oct. 28th) – Go over MIDTERM – Talk about what is next

Week 11 – (Mon. Nov. 2nd) - Triadic Improvisation - Read JT - 150 – 162. **HW#11** – Triadic Improvisation
Week 11 – (Wed. Nov. 4th) - 7th chord sequences - Common tones -Stretchin' changes Read JT - 171 -179.
HW#12 – Common Tones - listen to "Wingspan"

Week 12 – (Mon. Nov. 9th) - Check out "Wingspan" - Bebop scales Read JT - 183-192.
HW#13 – Bebop scales
Week 12 – (Wed. Nov. 11th) - **QUIZ #5** -Playing "outside" - Read JT - 193-202;208-218 NO HW

Week 13 – (Mon. Nov. 16th) - Pentatonic scales. Read JT - 219-236. **HW#14** – Pent.
Week 13 – (Wed. Nov. 18th) - Blues. - Read JT - 237-244. **No HW**

Week 14 – (Mon. Nov. 23rd) - Basic Reharm. - Read JT - 259-278. **HW#15** – Blues/Rhythm/Tritone
Week 14 – (Wed. Nov. 25th) – NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING Read 279-318 (Basic)

Week 15 – (Mon. Nov. 30th) - **Quiz #6** - Basic Reharmonization. Read JT – 318 - 330. NO HW
Week 15 – (Wed. Dec. 2nd) – REVIEW SESSION!

FINAL is MONDAY Dec 7th! – During class

University Rules on withdrawals, incompletes, cheating, and plagiarism are strictly observed. Specifically, this means:

a. If I have proof of cheating or plagiarism, I will give you the grade of "F" on that exam or paper and will report the incident to the dean of students.

b. After the automatic "W" date I will give you a "W" if and only if your work to this point is passing (D or better). No "W's" are given during the last 2 weeks of class.

c. I will give the grade of Incomplete if and only if you meet ALL of the following conditions:

    1) You have to miss class during the last 2 weeks of the semester because of illness or equivalent stress.

    2) You have documented proof such as a physician's note.

    3) Your work to this point is passing (D or better)

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our Beneficence Pledge. For Bias Incident Response information, please click here or e-mail reportbias@bsu.edu.

Students of the university must conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty will be treated in accordance with the "Student Academic Ethics Policy". Please see the Student Code in the BSU Student Handbook.

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the campus community are welcome through our practice of valuing the various experiences and world views of those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as evident in our Beneficence Pledge. For Bias Incident Response service information, go to bsu.edu/multiculturalcenter/bias or e-mail mc2@bsu.edu.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.