Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Department of Music

Stage Band
MUEN 1128.001
Spring 2020 Semester
Location of Class: CA 227
Dr. Brian R. Thacker
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Office Hours: TBA
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MWF 12:00 p.m. – 12:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Designed for both music majors and non-majors, this course specializes in jazz ensemble performance in a professional setting. Students will encounter standard jazz repertoire and become familiar with stylistic traits of jazz performance and improvisation. In addition to the traditional big band ensemble setting, students will be expected to perform in small combo with an emphasis on individual improvisation.

REQUIRED TEXT & MATERIALS

Students must have the following materials at every rehearsal:

1. Instrument(s)
2. Assigned music
3. Accessories (mutes, mallets, reeds, etc.)
4. Pencil

Rehearsal schedules are posted at the beginning of the week on the band board outside of CA 111. All students should acquaint themselves with the schedule in order to be prepared for each day's rehearsal. Failure to have all required materials may result in dismissal from the rehearsal and loss of a letter grade. All music and music folders are the property of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Any damage or loss is the financial responsibility of the student. Transcript and registration holds will be placed on student accounts until all university materials are replaced or returned.

BLACKBOARD ACCESS

This class utilizes Blackboard technology for assignments and supplemental materials. Students needing access instructions or help with Blackboard can refer to the Island Online website (http://distance-education.tamucc.edu). Be sure and check the Student Resources Link (https://distance-education.tamucc.edu/student_resources.html) which includes useful documents such as Steps to Preparing Your Computer for Blackboard (https://distance-education.tamucc.edu/techreq.html).
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Achieve higher levels of musicality in the jazz idiom.
2. Learn professionalism for a commercial environment.
3. Expand knowledge of jazz improvisation.
4. Become familiar with standard jazz repertoire.

COURSE ACTIVITIES

1. Rehearsal of standard repertoire.
2. Studies in improvisation, including an introduction to the basic elements of the “jazz language”.
3. Rehearsal, experience and performance opportunities in arranged big-band ensemble work.

GRADING PROCEDURES & POLICIES

Each student begins the semester with the grade of A. It is possible for that grade to be lowered for the following reasons:

1. Unexcused Rehearsal Absence. Each unexcused rehearsal absence will result in the lowering of the grade by one letter. An absence is defined as arriving to rehearsal more than 30 minutes past the start of the scheduled class time or leaving more than 30 minutes before the end of the scheduled class time. Below is a grading chart for unexcused absences:

   0 Absences A  
   1 Absence B  
   2 Absences C  
   3 Absences D  
   4 Absences F

2. Performance Absence. One unexcused performance absence may result in an automatic failing grade for the semester and removal from the ensemble.

3. Late Arrival to Rehearsal. Two unexcused tardies to rehearsals (entering rehearsal after the scheduled start time) are equivalent to one unexcused absence. Students should arrive at rehearsal warmed up and ready to perform, or early enough to be able to do so on their own. Rehearsal warm-ups are designed to establish ensemble sound and intonation, NOT to warm up each individual player. Percussionists should arrive early enough to set-up for the first work by the beginning of the warm-up, so as to not distract.

Excused Absences. Rehearsal time is extremely valuable, and it is treated as such by the director. However, there may be a time when it is absolutely necessary to miss rehearsal. Members will only by excused if:

1. An official Absence Request Form (located in Blackboard) is submitted no less that 24 hours prior to the date and time of the absence (and as far in advance as possible); and
2. A competent substitute is sent for the missed rehearsal (when possible).

The **ONLY** excuses for absences are:

1. Personal Illness (requires a written and signed doctor's note) and
2. Family Emergency (death, funeral, major surgery) in the immediate family

In cases of sudden emergencies, when you may not be able to access the request form, the form must be submitted within 48 hours of the absence. Attendance disputes cannot be reconciled at the end of the semester if a request was not submitted during this timeframe. Work of any kind - including working with local high school bands - is not a valid excuse.

The Absence Request Form should also be used in instances when you know you will be late to the scheduled start of class time, or if it is necessary for you to leave early. The same policies for rehearsal absences apply for arriving late and leaving early.

Requesting an absence does not guarantee approval. Verbal requests are not accepted.

Stage Band is a performance-oriented class, and grades are based entirely on your participation. Excessive absences by any member - even if they are excused - diminishes the quality of the ensemble and may result in the lowering of the letter grade and/or removal from the group. Every member of the ensemble plays an important role in the success of the band, and you must use your best judgment regarding your attendance.

**OTHER POLICIES**

**Participation**

Positive participation is expected of all members. Students who talk during instruction, arrive to rehearsal unprepared, and act rudely detract from the atmosphere necessary for effective learning. Disruptive students exhibiting these behaviors may be dismissed from rehearsal and will receive an unexcused absence for the day.

Students who are consistently disruptive will be removed from the ensemble.

**I. CONCERT ETIQUETTE**

Concerts are important events as they represent the culmination of hard work by many different people. It is important that ensemble members respect these performances through their behavior on the stage and throughout a performance. The expectations for band members are:

1. There will be a minimum of talking between pieces. There will be no talking and little motion between parts of a multi-movement work.
2. After a piece has ended, look to the podium for instruction. Do not touch your music or work on your instrument. As the audience has sat patiently listening to your performance, so you should acknowledge their applause for your efforts.
3. Stay engaged during performance. Do not look around the stage or allow your mind to wander. Listen to the music around you when you are not playing because you are always performing.
4. Assume that someone is always watching you. Act accordingly.
II. DRESS CODE

The dress code policy is designed so all players look professional and uniform. It is expected that all members will adhere to the dress code. Those found in violation of the code will be dismissed from the concert and be subject to the consequences as outlined in the Grading Policy section of the syllabus.

Men
Shirt, tie, dress pants, dress socks, dress shoes

Women:
Dress clothes with the following parameters:

• Pants: must be full-length, to the top of the shoes. No stretch pants, leggings, pajama pants or jeans.
• Shirt: full neckline, arms covered to the wrist (no plunging necklines, spandex, sheer fabric, or exposed shoulders, arms and/or back)
• If you wear a jacket, you may wear a shirt underneath. No print shirts of any kind are allowed.
• If you wish to wear a DRESS or SKIRT, it must be full length, touching the top of your shoes and cover arms to the wrist.

Everyone
No perfume, cologne or strong lotions
No bright and/or dangling jewelry

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in the loss of a letter grade.

DROPPING A CLASS

It is hoped that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 10th will be the last date to drop your class and receive a “W”.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

GRADE APPEALS PROCESS

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

DISABILITY SERVICES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.