

## MODULE SPECIFICATION

<b>Module Title</b>	History of Jazz
<b>Module Code</b>	MUS 321
<b>Credits</b>	4
<b>Pre-requisites</b> ( <i>including Year 1</i> )	ENG 101 and MUS 201

## Description

<b>Course Overview</b>
<p>This course examines the historical development of jazz as both a musical art form and a cultural expression. Students explore the origins of jazz in African musical traditions and early African American musical practices, followed by the evolution of jazz through major stylistic periods including ragtime, early New Orleans jazz, swing, bebop, Latin jazz, avant-garde experimentation, and contemporary global jazz.</p> <p>Through focused listening, historical readings, and class discussion, the course investigates the musicians, ensembles, and artistic movements that shaped jazz. Particular attention is given to the relationships between jazz and broader cultural forces such as migration, race relations, gender roles, technological change, and globalization. Students will also develop skills in critical listening and musical analysis.</p>
<b>Method of Teaching and Learning</b>
<p>This module will be taught using a combination of lectures, tutorials and consultation hours. Learning will also be reinforced by appropriate readings from the course text.</p>
<b>Syllabus</b>
<p>Modules</p> <p><b>Module 1 – African Musical Heritage and Early Influences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core elements of African musical traditions</li> <li>• Call-and-response structures and rhythmic complexity</li> <li>• Spirituals, blues traditions, and work songs</li> <li>• Listening focus: rhythm, vocal expression, and improvisation</li> </ul> <p><b>Module 2 – Ragtime and the Origins of Jazz</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ragtime within American popular culture</li> </ul>

- Early composers including Scott Joplin
- Shift from composed forms toward improvisational practices
- Listening focus: syncopation and formal structure

### **Module 3 - New Orleans and the Birth of Jazz**

- Cultural environment of New Orleans
- Collective improvisation in early jazz ensembles
- Early pioneers including Louis Armstrong
- Listening focus: ensemble interaction and polyphonic textures

### **Module 4 - Jazz and the Harlem Renaissance**

- The Great Migration and urban cultural change
- Jazz as an expression of African American creativity
- Gender dynamics and performance venues
- Listening focus: emergence of the jazz soloist

### **Module 5 - The Swing Era**

- Rise of big band orchestras
- Key bandleaders such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Benny Goodman
- Race relations and the jazz industry
- Listening focus: arrangement techniques and rhythm sections

### **Module 6 - Bebop and the Rise of Modern Jazz**

- Post-World War II cultural shifts
- Innovators including Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, and Thelonious Monk
- Bebop as artistic innovation and resistance to commercialization
- Listening focus: harmonic complexity and fast improvisation

#### **Module 7 - Cool Jazz, Hard Bop, and Modal Developments**

- Regional stylistic differences in jazz
- Contributions of Miles Davis and John Coltrane
- Intellectual and artistic influences in jazz culture
- Listening focus: modal harmony and tonal color

#### **Module 8 - Latin Jazz and Cross-Cultural Exchange**

- Afro-Cuban and Brazilian musical traditions
- Fusion of jazz with Latin rhythms
- Transnational influences in jazz performance
- Listening focus: percussion patterns and rhythmic layering

#### **Module 9 - Avant-Garde and Free Jazz**

- Experimental approaches to jazz structure
- Music as a form of political and artistic expression
- Expansion of improvisational freedom
- Listening focus: texture, abstraction, and spontaneity

#### **Module 10 - Jazz in the Contemporary Era**

- Jazz developments in the late 20th and 21st centuries
- Jazz fusion, hip-hop influences, and global collaborations
- Institutionalization of jazz education
- Listening focus: stylistic integration and innovation

Final Exam

## Assessment

Assessment Type	% of Final Mark
Listening Reflection Journals	25%
Short Analytical Essays	20%
Midterm Examination	20%
Research Project	20%
Participation and Class Discussion	15%

### Listening Reflection Journals (25%)

Students submit regular reflections evaluating assigned recordings. These entries emphasize musical characteristics, stylistic traits, and historical context.

### Short Analytical Essays (20%)

Brief written responses addressing themes from readings, listening assignments, or historical case studies.

### Midterm Examination (20%)

The midterm includes listening identification, short analytical responses, and historical interpretation questions.

### Research Project (25%)

Students conduct an independent investigation into a jazz artist, genre, or cultural issue, incorporating historical and scholarly sources.

### Participation (10%)

Active participation in listening sessions, discussions, and peer engagement.

<i>Range</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>
90% - 100%	A
80% - 89%	B
70% - 79%	C
60% - 69%	D
< 60%	U

## **Textbooks and Study Materials**

### **Listening Materials**

Instructor-provided playlists featuring historically significant jazz recordings (streaming access required).

### **Required Readings**

Selections of scholarly articles, historical texts, and musician interviews distributed through the course platform.

### **Recommended Reference**

Ted Gioia. The History of Jazz.