



## COURSE OUTLINE

**MUS 151**  
Course Number

**Jazz Improvisation I - Blues**  
Course title

**2**  
Credits

**1 lecture/2 lab**  
Hours

**Catalog description:**

An introductory level course emphasizing the use of the Mixolydian mode and the blues scale as applied to the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> family of chords. The student will explore the twelve-bar blues and related forms as vehicles for improvisation with an emphasis on swing and funk rhythms.

**Prerequisites:** The ability to play an instrument and to read musical notation.

**Corequisites:** None

**Required texts/other materials:**

N/A

**Last revised:** Fall 2018

**Course coordinator:** Scott Hornick, Assistant Professor of Music – CM 149; (609) 570-3716;  
*hornicks@mccc.edu*

## A. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Student will learn the Mixolydian mode on the roots of C, F, G, B<sup>β</sup>, E<sup>β</sup>, and D. (MCCC Core Skills B, D and F)
2. Student will learn to “run” the chords of C<sup>7</sup>, F<sup>7</sup>, G<sup>7</sup>, B<sup>β7</sup>, E<sup>β7</sup>, and D<sup>7</sup> using arpeggios of the 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup>. (MCCC Core Skills B, D and F)
3. Student will understand the theoretical and practical relationship between the Mixolydian mode and the dominant 7<sup>th</sup> family of chords, inclusive of their extended forms of the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup>. (MCCC Core Skills B, D and F)
4. Student will learn the minor pentatonic blues scale in the keys of C, F, G, and B<sup>β</sup>. (MCCC Core Skills B, D and F)
5. Student will master the 12-bar blues form in each of the aforementioned keys and demonstrate the ability to improvise with the form using the Mixolydian mode in a strict scale to chord relationship, as well as the technique of “harmonic generalization” using the blues scale. (MCCC Core Skills B, D, F and G)
6. Student master a repertoire of melodic constructs (“licks”) that make use of all of the scales and arpeggios described above (to ensure correct idiomatic usage of the jazz-blues language). (MCCC Core Skills B, D and F)
7. Student will experience the role of each instrument in a jazz ensemble setting, i.e., the rhythm section, chordal, and melodic instruments and their functional relationship. (MCCC Core Skills B, D, F and G)
8. Student will learn to tap their creative impulse as an improviser within the confines of the jazz language on the levels of rhythm, melody, and harmony. (MCCC Core Skills B, D and F)
9. Student will experience from the inside some of the subtleties, complexities, and nuances of the most artistically significant American musical art form. (MCCC Core Skills B, D, F and G)

### MCCC Core Skills

**Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving.** Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

**Goal C. Ethical Decision-Making.** Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations.

**Goal D. Information Literacy.** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

**Goal F. Collaboration and Cooperation.** Students will develop the interpersonal skills required for effective performance in group situations.

**Goal G. Intra-Cultural and Inter-Cultural Responsibility.** Students will demonstrate an awareness of the responsibilities of intelligent citizenship in a diverse and pluralistic society, and will demonstrate cultural, global, and environmental awareness.

**Student Success Coach:** Mercer students have a Student Success Coach available to support their efforts during their first semester through graduation. Students can connect with a Coach by emailing [Successcoach@mccc.edu](mailto:Successcoach@mccc.edu) or

calling 570-3451. [www.mccc.edu/coaching](http://www.mccc.edu/coaching) has useful information about coaching and student success. For additional information, please contact: Latonya Ashford Ligon at 570-3292 or by email [ashfordl@mccc.edu](mailto:ashfordl@mccc.edu).

**Academic Advising after your first semester:** Faculty advisors provide help with completing your major after your first semester. Your faculty advisor should be listed on the MyMercer portal. If you need further assistance please contact your division Executive Assistant.

Liberal Arts: Debbie Stotland LA162 570-3378 [Stotland@mccc.edu](mailto:Stotland@mccc.edu)  
Business & Stem: Doris Geck BS134 570-3482 [Geckd@mccc.edu](mailto:Geckd@mccc.edu)  
Health Professions: Barbara Pieslak MS126 570-3383  
[pieslakb@mccc.edu](mailto:pieslakb@mccc.edu)

**Use your “MyMercer” Portal:** Your “MyMercer” portal contains your MercerMail, financial information, class schedule, grades, your advisor and other information. Check your “MyMercer” portal every day. Visit [www.mccc.edu/mymercer](http://www.mccc.edu/mymercer) to access your portal.

**Center for Inclusion, Transition and Accessibility: Arlene Stinson, Director:** Mercer County Community College recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity and the Center for Transition, Inclusion and Accessibility works to ensure inclusive learning environments by encouraging the college community to examine accessibility and through the delivery of effective academic accommodations to qualified individuals. Mercer County Community College is in compliance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

For information on Universal Design for Learning, information regarding meeting the needs of students with disabilities, or information regarding the provision of academic accommodations please visit the Center for Transition, Inclusion and Accessibility in LB216 or contact:

Arlene Stinson [stinsona@mccc.edu](mailto:stinsona@mccc.edu), Lisa Ward [wardl@mccc.edu](mailto:wardl@mccc.edu) or Susan Onaitis [onaitiss@mccc.edu](mailto:onaitiss@mccc.edu)

**Tutorial Center: Charles Haas, Director**

Tutoring Center services are free and available for all students. Drop in or contact the following to schedule an appointment.

Charles Haas (WWC), LB214, 570-3452, [haasc@mccc.edu](mailto:haasc@mccc.edu)  
Angela Frumin, (TC) 311, [frumina@mccc.edu](mailto:frumina@mccc.edu) or John Kashmer, (WWC), LB214, [kashmerj@mccc.edu](mailto:kashmerj@mccc.edu)

**Career and Transfer Center:** Planning to go to work or to transfer to a 4-year college after completing your Mercer degree? Contact the Career and Transfer Center for support and advice.

Letrice Thomas (WWC transfer services), SC201, 570-3397,  
[thomasl@mccc.edu](mailto:thomasl@mccc.edu)

**Counseling Services:** Are you experiencing personal challenges, feeling overwhelmed? Are you having stress and anxiety? Counseling services are available free of charge. Contact:

Dorothy Gasparro Ed.S, LPC, NCC, SC239, 570-3354,  
[gasparrd@mccc.edu](mailto:gasparrd@mccc.edu)

**Veteran's Services:** If you are currently serving or have served in the US Armed Forces, or are a family member of someone who has, our Veterans Services Team is here to help you optimize your education benefits. Contact:

John Becker, SC220, 570-3240 or Jennifer Whitfield, SC222, 570-3269,  
[whitfiej@mccc.edu](mailto:whitfiej@mccc.edu) or [vets@mccc.edu](mailto:vets@mccc.edu)

**Important Fall 2018 dates:**

09/11/18 – Last day for 100% refund

09/30/18– Start FASFA for spring

10/02/18 – 10-week semester starts

11/09/18 – Last day to withdraw from 14-week class

**Academic Integrity Policy**

As stated in the student handbook, "A student will be guilty of violating academic integrity if he/she (a) knowingly represents the work of others as his/her own, (b) uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in the execution of academic work, or (c) gives fraudulent assistance to another student." Students should read the Academic Integrity policy in the MCCC Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

**Academic Dishonesty will result in failure of this course.**

**Accommodations**

Mercer County Community College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented differing ability or think that you may have a differing ability that is protected under the ADA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact Arlene Stinson in LB 216 [stinsona@mccc.edu](mailto:stinsona@mccc.edu) for information regarding support services.

### **Financial Aid Application Statement**

It is recommended that student complete an application for financial aid to determine eligibility for financial assistance. Visit [www.fafsa.edu.gov](http://www.fafsa.edu.gov) to complete your application. Applications should be completed **before** December 1, 2018. Students who are interested in MCCC Foundation scholarships are expected to complete an application as well.

## **B. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Prompt and regular class attendance.
2. Timely completion and practice of all study materials.
3. Two tests and a final evaluation.
4. Participation in one public performance of repertoire studied in class.

## **C. METHOD OF DELIVERY**

Course material will be presented in a combination of lecture segments in which theoretical constructs will be presented and explicated (inclusive listening to recordings of jazz greats) and immediate practical application of concepts in a group improvisation format.

## **D. TOPICAL OUTLINE**

WEEK 1      **The Mixolydian Mode**— structure, derivation and usage; dominant 7<sup>th</sup> chord structures

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the Mixolydian mode on C, F, and G.
- Learn the arpeggios of C<sup>9</sup> and C<sup>13</sup>, F<sup>9</sup> and F<sup>13</sup>, and G<sup>9</sup> and G<sup>13</sup>.
- Learn rhythm studies on each of the above chords.

WEEK 2      **The Mixolydian Mode** (continued)

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn melodic formulas 1 through 4 on C<sup>7</sup> and transpose to F<sup>7</sup> and G<sup>7</sup>.
- Begin improvising slowly over the chords of C<sup>7</sup>, F<sup>7</sup>, and G<sup>7</sup> using the scales, arpeggios, and melodic formulas.

WEEK 3      **The 12-Bar Blues Form**— Riff Study No. 1

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the chord sequence and melody of Riff Study No. 1 in C, and improvise over the chord changes, employing all the melodic devices studied so far.

WEEK 4      **The Mixolydian Mode (continued)**— Riff Study No. 2 in C

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn melodic formulas 5 through 8 on C<sup>7</sup> and transpose to F<sup>7</sup> and G<sup>7</sup>.
- Learn melody and chord sequence to Riff Study No. 2 and improvise over the chord changes.

WEEK 5      **Practice Tune**— “Blue Monk” and 12-Bar Blues Solo No. 1

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn melodic formulas 9 and 10 on C<sup>7</sup> and transpose to F<sup>7</sup> and G<sup>7</sup>.
- Learn chord sequence and melody of “Blue Monk” and improvise.
- Memorize 12-bar Blues Solo No. 1 and perform it over the chord changes to “Blue Monk”.

WEEK 6      **Mixolydian Practice Licks**

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn practice licks 1 through 5 on C<sup>7</sup> and 5 through 10 on F<sup>7</sup>.
- Transpose the above licks to the chord of G<sup>7</sup>.
- Review the “Blue Monk” and incorporate practice licks into improvisations.

WEEK 7      **The Blues Scale and Practice Licks**

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the blues scale in the keys of C and F as well as the accompanying practice licks.
- Review Riff Study No. 1 and 2, and “Blue Monk:” and begin incorporating the C blues scale into your improvisations.

WEEK 8      **MITERM EVALUATION**

Prepare two choruses of a composed “improvisation” to be performed over the chord sequence of “Blue Monk”. Incorporate Mixolydian-based ideas (scales, arpeggios, melodic formulas, practice licks) alongside judicious use of the blues scale in C. Also be prepared to improvise freely.

WEEK 9      **The Mixolydian Mode** (continued)— 12-Bar Blues in F

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the Mixolydian mode on the chord of  $B^{\beta 7}$ .
- Prepare a practice sheet on  $B^{\beta 7}$  that includes scale, arpeggios of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, melodic formulas 1 through 10, and assortment of practice licks.
- Memorize the chord sequence for the 12-bar blues in the key of F.
- Review the blues scale in F.

WEEK 10      **Practice Tune**— “Bessie’s Blues” and 12-Bar Blues Solo No. 2

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the melody and chord sequence to “Bessie’s Blues” and practice improvising in the key of F using Mixolydian material and the blues scale in F.
- Memorize 12-bar blues Solo No. 2 in C and transpose to key of F.

WEEK 11      **Blues in F continued and 12-Bar Blues Solo No. 3**

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the melody and chord sequence to “Bessie’s Blues” and practice improvising in the key of F using Mixolydian material and the blues scale in F.
- Memorize 12-bar blues Solo No. 2 in C and transpose to key of F.

WEEK 12      **Practice Tune**— “Eighty-One” and the Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> Sus. 4 Chord

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn “Eighty-One” and sus. 4 chord forms.
- Improvise over the chords using a freer (less idiomatic) approach to your solo.
- Review “Blue Monk” and “Bessie’s Blues”.

WEEK 13      **The Mixolydian Mode continued and 12-Bar Blues in  $B^{\beta}$**

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the Mixolydian mode on the chord of  $E^{\beta 7}$ .
- Prepare a practice sheet on  $E^{\beta 7}$  that includes scale, arpeggios of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, melodic formulas, and practice licks.
- Learn the blues scale in  $B^{\beta}$ .
- Review “Bessie’s Blues” and “Eighty-One”.

WEEK 14     **Practice Tune**— “Bluesology” and 12-Bar Blues Solo No. 4

ASSIGNMENT:

- Learn the melody and chord sequence of “Bluesology”.
- Memorize 12-Bar Blues Solo No. 4 in B<sup>♭</sup> and transpose to key of F.
- Improvise over the chord sequence of “Bluesology” using the appropriate Mixolydian modes, the blues scale, melodic formulas, and practice licks combined to form a cohesive musical statement.

WEEK 15     **Consolidate and Review**

ASSIGNMENT:

- Review “Bluesology”, “Eighty-One,” “Bessie’s Blues,” and “Blue Monk” in addition to all four 12-Bar Blues solos, melodic formulas, and practice licks in the three blues keys studied thus far.

WEEK 16     **FINAL EVALUATION**

Prepare and memorize an original 12-bar blues composition in the key of G, along with an original 12-bar solo to be performed in class during exam period. You will need to run the chord of D<sup>7</sup> in the key of G so prepare necessary practice materials.