

The Fusion of Learning Theory and Technology in a Music History Course Redesign

NORTHERN
ARIZONA
UNIVERSITY



FLAGSTAFF



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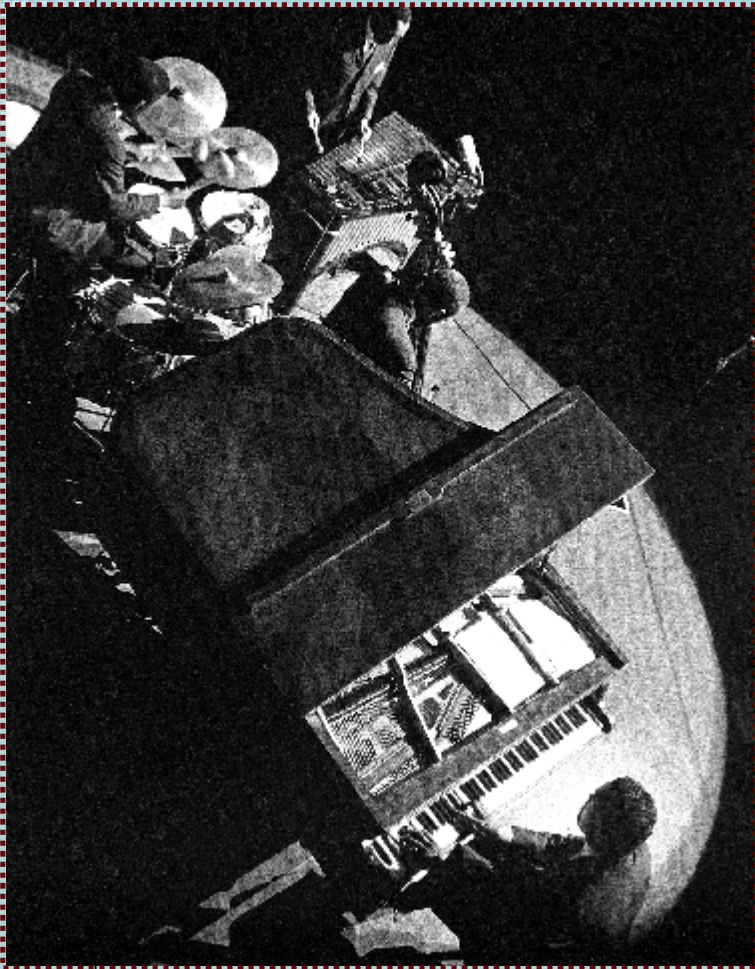
Blase Scarnati, Associate Professor, School of Music

Jazz History & Styles



- § Junior-level course
- § Music majors
- § Non-majors fulfilling Liberal Studies (General Education) requirement

Need for Re-design



- § Traditional lecture course
- § Interactive Instructional Television
- § Very large enrollment
(400-600 students)
- § Integration of media
- § Copyright issues for broadcast



Focus of the Course

How and why people historically construct, socially maintain, and individually create and experience jazz



Learning Theory

- § Learning is centered on what the students know rather on what they don't know
- § Students actively involved in learning
- § Students construct knowledge while guided by instructor
- § Learning is achieved through exploration and discovery

Web course goals

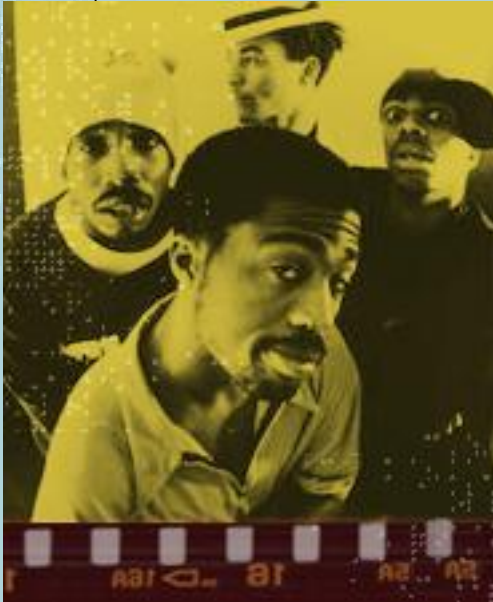
- § Reverse chronology starts with music students are familiar with
- § Audio and video clips bring topic to life
- § Online discussions develop a community of learners
- § Interactive games teach music theory, concepts, terms
- § Written assignments and exams assess learning

Course construction

Opportunity to partner with
Joel DiBartolo,
School of Music

1. Introduction and
Roots of Jazz
2. Jazz styles overview
3. Topics

Begin with what students know



- § Reverse chronological order
- § Familiar musical styles and strategies

Rich resource and media environment

- § 100 video clips and over 200 audio clips
- § Pop-up bibliographic references
- § Links to Grovemusic Online
- § Online sheet music and performance transcriptions
- § Pop-up glossary entries
- § Listening charts

Rich and interactive learning environment

§ In discussions

- students collaborate
- evaluate new material
- work through ideas for written assignment
- build a community

Rich and interactive learning environment

- § Game strategy used to teach music theory
- § Music majors have a more in-depth jazz theory section



Exploration and discovery

§ Written Assignments

- Outline & Thesis Statement
- Draft paper
- Final Paper

§ Wynton Marsalis and Herbie Hancock, “Soul, Craft, and Cultural Hierarchy”

Student attitudes towards course innovations

Table 1: Academic Level

Freshman	1	1%
Sophomore	5	6%
Junior	22	28%
Senior	48	62%
Graduate Student	2	3%

Table 2: Age Groups

20 and under	12	15%
21-25	36	46%
26-35	13	17%
Over 35	17	22%

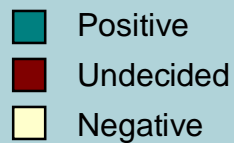
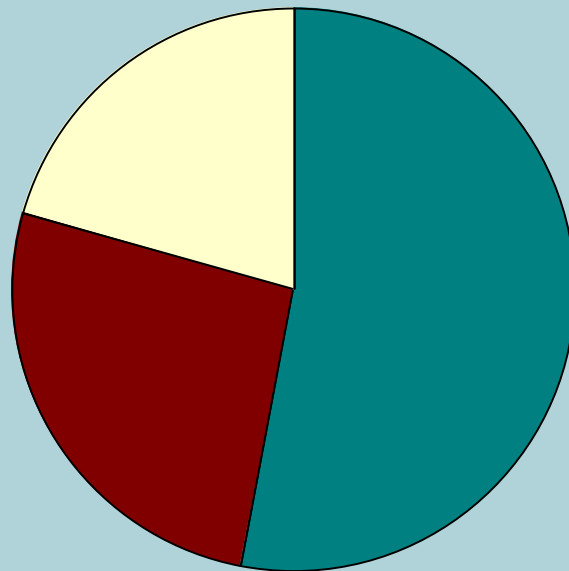
N=78

24 male

54 female

Reverse chronology

The reverse chronology was an effective way to learn.

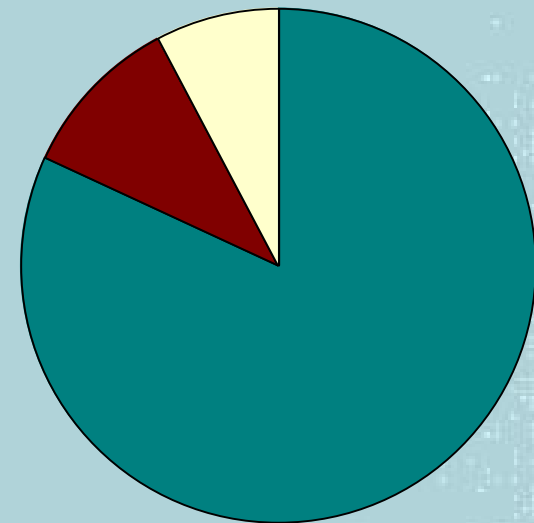


- § “I think it was structured well. I liked that the first material was things I have some prior knowledge about and got less familiar from there.”
- § “It was a different way of learning, one which I found to be interesting and enlightening.”
- § “I would have preferred that it went in chronological order, simply because it is easier for my brain to remember things that way. Also you can see where different styles and ideas lead to as opposed to from.”
- § “I appreciated the format, but I can’t say that it would have been more effective than if it were 1900-present day.”

Audio and video clips

- § “I enjoyed it, and the listening and video examples were really helpful.”
- § “The music clips and videos are great and really bring you into the world of Jazz.”
- § “The clips really helped get points across and definitely made the course more interesting. The more, the better!!”
- § “This class, with its video and audio clips, provided me with a new found love of jazz music.”
- § “I enjoyed the course and listening to the music clips definitely made things more personal, just like it would if you were sitting in a classroom.”

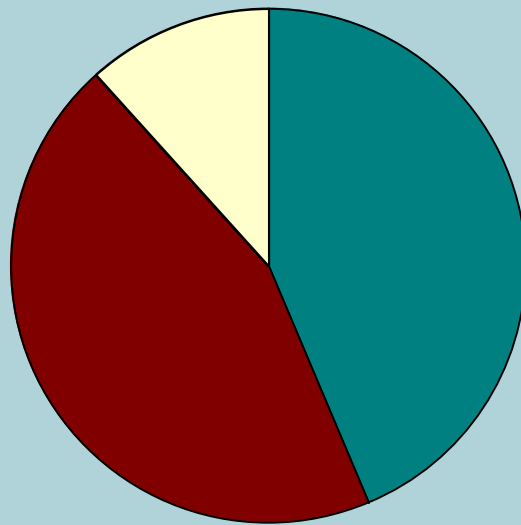
The audio and video clips enhanced my learning.



■ Positive
■ Undecided
■ Negative

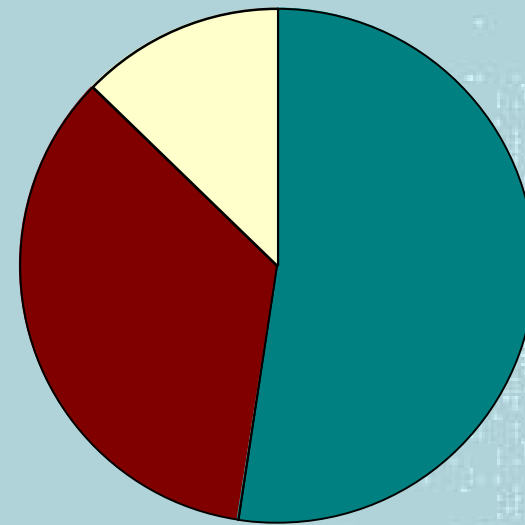
Online discussions and community

The online discussions enhanced my learning.



■ Positive
■ Undecided
■ Negative

I felt like I was part of a community of learners.



■ Positive
■ Undecided
■ Negative

Evidence of learning

- § “For a non-music major I enjoyed the course, and continue to listen to Jazz. What is funny when various forms of jazz are played I can identify about 90%.”
- § “This course gave me a better understanding and appreciation for Jazz. Now I can say that I enjoy listening to jazz even picking out certain tunes that I did not relate to jazz in the past.”
- § “I found myself discussing the course with other students and my parents (music performers) because I finally felt like I had a real grasp on the formal timeline and structural differences between time periods.”

Contact information

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NAU's E-Learning Center

<http://www4.nau.edu/elearning/>

Resources

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