

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

School for New Learning  
HC 365 "Jazz and Chicago"  
Winter, February 2017

**Instructor:** Joe Cunniff, [jcunniff@depaul.edu](mailto:jcunniff@depaul.edu), (773) 728-0357. Call or email about an appointment or with any questions.

**Course Dates:** Wednesdays, Feb. 8, Feb. 15, Feb. 22, March 1, March 8, and March 15. 5:45-9 p.m. In class, we will agree to a date for a live jazz show downtown.

**Course Description:** Jazz is a great American art form, and Chicago has played a great role in jazz. This course will introduce students to real jazz. What is it? Where does it come from? Who are the greatest figures in jazz history? What makes a good jazz solo? How do you really listen to jazz? How do you follow a jazz improvisation? How does Chicago fit into jazz? By answering these and other questions, we will learn how to really enjoy jazz on a new level, and appreciate the role that Chicago continues to play in the story of jazz.

**Learning Outcomes, Competencies, and/or Objectives:**

By the end of this course students should have a new understanding and appreciation of jazz, its history, and the role of Chicago in jazz. Students will also have developed general listening skills, and abilities to understand and discuss artistic experiences.

**SNL Competencies:**

A1A: Students demonstrate this competence by learning to interpret the meanings and styles of jazz solos and relate what they have learned to their own intellectual and emotional experience.

A1C: Students demonstrate this competence by learning the form, content, and style in jazz songs, arrangements, or solos and analyzing these in terms of the music's form, content, and style.

H1X: Students write this competence themselves with the help of faculty.

**Learning Strategies and Resources:**

In the class, we will use recordings, film, lecture, and discussion on jazz. We will use a choice of books ("Jazz 101" by Jon Swed or "Jazz for Dummies" by Dirk Sutro). (Note: While humorously titled, the latter is actually a very good book and does not imply that we are anything but intelligent). Students are required to get a CD, "The Best of Ken Burns Jazz." We will have jazz handouts in each class.

**Learning Deliverables:** Each student should bring a notebook that he or she feels comfortable writing in. This notebook will be the course journal. Here students will keep class notes, plus assignments. In each class, the instructor will give a jazz listening assignment of jazz on radio online. We will make notes on the book and on jazz listening assignments. The course journal will be turned in at the end of the course. The instructor will always be able to help, and to look at the journal whenever a student asks to see how they're doing. Student will have the standard amount of time after the last class to get any missing work to the instructor.

**Assessment of Student Learning:** Student will be given an overall grade based on completeness of work, attendance, class participation and positive learning attitude. The course journal is designed to fulfill course outcomes and competency criteria.

**Grading Criteria and Scale:** Each student will submit a course journal including class notes, notes on listening, notes on the book, notes on the CD, and any other writings. Grading will be by standard letter grade: A, B, C, etc. unless otherwise arranged. Attendance and class participation will count for 20% of the grade, and 80% will be the final class journal. SNL students should read and re-read their competence statements carefully, and present their writing in such a way as to demonstrate competence skills. The instructor will help students with any question about doing this.

See additional information pertaining to grade designations for [undergraduate grades](#).

See the instructor with any question about [Pass/Fail Grading Options](#).

**Course Schedule:**

Class One: Feb. 8. What is jazz? Where and how did it begin? Following a jazz solo: Telling a story. Louis Armstrong and New Orleans. Chicago's role in early jazz. Prohibition.

Class Two: From New Orleans to Swing. Chicago's role in the Swing Era. Count Basie and Duke Ellington. The father of the tenor saxophone in jazz. Benny Goodman, the clarinet, and the Big Band.

Class Three: Bebop. The role of drums in jazz. Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Dizzy Gillespie. Jazz singing.

Class Four: Great pianists and saxophonists, John Coltrane and the Avant-garde. Discussion on a live jazz show.

Class Five: South American Jazz. Great drummers and singers. Dave Brubeck and new direction in rhythm. Notes for the future.

**Course Policies:**

Students are expected to be on time for all classes. Students are expected to take good notes, and observe high standards of etiquette. Looking at phones and talking in class will not be allowed. The course will strive to adhere to Vincentian standards, and will adhere to university standards on plagiarism. This course includes and adheres to the college and university policies described in the links below:

[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Incomplete Policy](#)

[Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences](#)

[Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability](#)

[Protection of Human Research Participants](#)

**Course Resources**

[University Center for Writing-based Learning](#)

[SNL Writing Guide](#)

[Dean of Students Office](#)

**Instructor Brief Bio**

Joe Cunniff has been on the jazz scene in Chicago for decades as a musician, a writer, and a critic. He has written for many years about jazz in Chicago, and as a longtime voting member of the Downbeat Magazine International Critics Poll. He has taught for DePaul for more than 25 years.