Towson University – Department of Music

Proficiency Levels for Applied Lessons

Discipline: JAZZ/COMMERCIAL GUITAR

General Information:

- The stated proficiencies below apply to all students taking lessons in the particular discipline.
- Level of difficulty for specific repertoire will be adjusted based upon the student’s degree program.
- These proficiencies are the minimums for a passing grade in the discipline.
- Any student wishing to take 300-level applied lessons must successfully pass an upper division jury demonstrating the proficiencies as articulated below.

Proficiencies for a 1-credit lesson
Each semester the student will be required to memorize and improvise on assigned compositions; transcribe a solo from a recording; and demonstrate improvement with sight-reading.

Freshman Level

- All 12 major scales and modes – 2 octaves
- Blues scale and its possible applications
- Drop 2 and Drop 3 seventh chords and inversions
- Common 7th chord arpeggios

Sophomore Level

- Melodic minor scales – ascending form only
- Harmonic minor scales
- Major and Minor Pentatonic scales – 2 octaves, Half-whole diminished, Whole Tone, Blues, and Chromatic scales
- Improvising on Rhythm Changes progression and Blues progressions
- Basic 7th chord arpeggios from any root
- Drop 2/Drop 3 root position through diatonic scale

**Upper Division Jury** (end of 2nd semester sophomore lessons)
- Proficiency in all material assigned in the first two years

**Junior Level**
- Modes of Melodic Minor focusing on modes 3, 4, 7
- Common 7th chord arpeggios with upper extensions
- Intervals 2nds – 7ths, 2 strings
- Scale sequences, intervals, triads, 7th chords
- Junior recital *(required based upon degree program)*

**Senior Level**
- Modes of Harmonic Minor focusing on 4, 5, 6
- Harmonized Triads in major and harmonic minor scales
- Prepared Etudes – Bach violin sonatas and partitas
- Drop 2/Drop 3 and inversions through diatonic scale
- Senior Recital *(required based upon degree program)*

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**Proficiencies for a 2-credit lesson**

*Each semester the student will be required to memorize and improvise on assigned compositions; transcribe a solo from a recording; and demonstrate improvement with sight-reading.*

**Freshman Level**
- All 12 major scales and modes – 2 octaves
- Blues scale and its possible applications
Cycle of 5ths 1235 patterns
Triads in harmonized scales (close-voiced)
Drop 2 and Drop 3 seventh chords and inversions
Common 7th chord arpeggios
Improvisation – thematic development, modal
Prepared Etudes – Bach violin sonatas and partitas

Sophomore Level
Melodic Minor scales – ascending form only
Harmonic Minor scales
Major and Minor Pentatonic scales – 2 octaves – Half-whole diminished, Whole Tone, Blues, and Chromatic scales
Improvising on Rhythm Changes progression and Blues progressions
Basic 7th chord arpeggios from any root – 2 octaves
Drop 2/Drop 3 and inversions through diatonic scale
Prepared Etudes – Bach violin sonatas and partitas

Upper Division Jury (end of 2nd semester sophomore lessons)
Proficiency in all material assigned in the first two years

Junior Level
Modes of Melodic Minor focusing on modes 3, 4, 7
Harmonic Minor triads in harmonized scales
Common 7th chord arpeggios with upper extensions
Intervals 2nds-7ths, 2 strings
Scale sequences, intervals, triads, 7th chords
Giant Step Sequence
Prepared Etudes – Bach violin sonatas and partitas
Junior recital (required based upon degree program)
Senior Level

- Modes of Harmonic Minor focusing on 4, 5, 6
- Expanded scale practice
- Prepared Etudes – Bach violin sonatas and partitas
- Hexatonics
- Harmonizing Chord Clusters
- Senior Recital *(required based upon degree program)*