

JAZZ/COMMERCIAL MUSIC LESSONS

DIVISION SYLLABUS

FALL 2025

Faculty

Dave Ballou

J/C Trumpet/ J/C
Composition/Director Jazz
Orchestra
CA 2090
410-704-2831
dballou@towson.edu

Jon Birkholz

J/C Guitar
jbirkholz@towson.edu

John Dierker

Jazz Combos/Improvisation
ensemble.
jdierker@towson.edu

Eric Kennedy

J/C Voice/ J/C Drum Set/
Jazz Combos/
Pop Music Ensemble/ Vocal
Jazz Ensemble
ekennedy@towson.edu

Mike Kuhl

J/C Drum Set/ Jazz Combos
mkuhl@towson.edu

John Lee

J/C Guitar/ Jazz Guitar
Ensembles
CA 2105
410-704-2820
jmlee@towson.edu

Jim McFalls

J/C Trombone
CA 2109
410-704-2680
mjim@towson.edu

Savino Palumbo

J/C Piano
spalumbo@towson.edu

Jeff Reed

J/C Bass (Electric and
Acoustic)
jreed@towson.edu

Jason Rigby

J/C Saxophone/Saxophone/
J/C Composition
CA 2091
410-704-3272
jrigby@towson.edu

Below are listed the minimum requirements which all students must fulfill (minimum means C work), regardless of credit level. If you have any questions about returning to the campus & music courses Spring 2025, please email Dave Ballou at dballou@towson.edu

Lessons

Lessons are offered in all instruments and open to all students at the University. Priority is given to J/C degree seeking students. See the Department of Music website for information regarding registration for lessons.

Jazz/Commercial Applied Lessons:

MUSA 101-601 J/C Composition
MUSA 140-640 J/C Guitar
MUSA 141-641 J/C String Bass
MUSA 142-642 J/C Piano
MUSA 143-643 J/C Drums
MUSA 144-644 J/C Trumpet
MUSA 145-645 J/C Saxophone
MUSA 146-646 J/C Trombone
MUSA 147-647 J/C Electric Bass
MUSA 148-648 J/C Voice
MUSA 149-649 J/C Miscellaneous

Attendance:

Regular attendance is required at lessons. For each credit (1) you will receive 13, 25-minute lessons (Two credit (2) lessons will be 13, 50-minute lessons). This is approximately one lesson for each week. Any lesson missed due to instructor absence will be rescheduled. Unscheduled school closings (i.e. snow) will

be rescheduled if possible. Lessons missed because of student absence (illness or any other reason) will be rescheduled, if possible, at the discretion of the instructor. If a student is absent, it is his or her

responsibility to contact the instructor. 24-hour notice of a missed lesson must be given for a lesson to be rescheduled. Lessons canceled within 24 hours will only be rescheduled at the discretion of the professor and may result in a reduction of the final grade.

For each unexcused absence from a lesson, master class or required Jazz/Commercial music division event, the final grade will be reduced by one mark (ex: A- to B+). A total of 6 absences from the lessons, masterclasses and events, excused or unexcused, will result in an automatic failure for the semester.

Students are required to demonstrate proficiency levels appropriate to their level (100-600 level) and credit enrollment (1 vs. 2 credits) of applied lessons. Refer to the following webpage for the specific proficiency expectations by discipline:

<https://www.towson.edu/cofac/departments/music/programs/proficiency.html>

Weekly Master class

Students must NOT register for any classes which meet Tuesdays from 11 am -12:15 pm. All students enrolled for applied Jazz/Commercial lessons must attend this weekly master class given by the J/C faculty.

To utilize all the time available in master class for performing, any student who has passed the upper division jury must be prepared to perform in class EVERY WEEK. Any student at this level may be called on to perform by any instructor. Be Prepared!

The schedule of master classes is at the end of this document. There will be several times during the semester that each teacher will meet with his or her studio only. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of which days these meetings will occur and which room they will be in.

Attitude in master class: Text messaging, cell phone, iPad, laptop, or other electronic device usage is not permitted during master class. All cell phones must be silenced during master class. Your attitude as a J/C student is a critical part of the learning process. You are asked to respect your colleagues while performing and be respectful of their performance and effort. Any criticism you may offer in master class or elsewhere must be constructive and positive.

Juries

Juries for J/C applied lessons are an opportunity for students to perform for and listen to their cohort. Rather than playing for a grade, lesson grades will be based upon the work a student did during the semester. Students may not turn a failing lesson grade into a passing grade by the performance at the jury. All students enrolled in lessons MUST attend the Jazz/Commercial Music Juries. Students with an unexcused absence from the jury will receive a reduction on the final grade by one letter grade.

J/C majors will perform at this jury while other majors have the option to perform. However, performing or not, all students taking J/C lessons MUST attend the jury.

The following list of songs are recommendations for students to learn they have something they can play together. Other tunes are acceptable if the group knows the song.

All Of Me
All The Things You Are
Beatrice
Blue Bossa
Black Narcissus
Body And Soul
Central Park West
Confirmation
Donna Lee
Dolphin Dance

Easy Living
Giant Steps
If I Were A Bell
My Romance
On Green Dolphin Street
Pannonica
Recordame Take The A Train
There Is No Greater Love
There Will Never Be Another You

Upper Division Juries

At the end of the second semester of MUSA 200 level lessons, J/C majors and students wishing to take 300 and 400 level J/C lessons will perform an Upper Division jury. Outside of the Junior and Senior recitals, the Upper Division jury is the most critical checkpoint in the applied music experience at Towson University. It is both a review of student achievement to that point, and a critical assessment of the student's potential to present recitals in their junior and/or senior years. The jazz/commercial music faculty regards the Upper Division jury as the final examination assessing musical, expressive, and technical achievements of the freshman and sophomore years. It is therefore essential that students regard this jury both as an excellent opportunity to demonstrate progress and as the applied examination which must be passed to continue in the major. Students who do not pass this jury will be allowed to repeat the Upper Division jury ONLY ONCE by the end of the following semester. Failure to pass the second attempt means the student will no longer be allowed to register for jazz/commercial applied lessons. This jury will be approximately 20 minutes long.

Upper division juries for all J/C majors will be performed with a live rhythm section. Students are expected to lead the rhythm section through the performances of the selections. Students will partially be evaluated on their ability to communicate and lead the ensemble.

- 1) Perform a 12-bar blues form.
- 2) Perform a rhythm changes form
- 3) Perform a selection from the list of compositions prepared during the first 2 semesters of study
 - Student will provide a list of all compositions memorized in lessons to the date of the upper division jury.
 - Adjudicators will select one or more of these compositions to be performed- from memory.
 - Students should provide lead sheets for the rhythm section ONLY if the tunes are not a commonly known tune.

Sight-reading will be selected by the adjudicators.

Scales:

Instructors will determine the appropriate scales and exam for each student. This exam will take place during the last lesson of the semester or at a time of the instructors choosing.

Upper division juries for non-J/C majors (BS, MUED and non-music students) will not be performed with a live rhythm section. Instead, these students will perform a “double-jury.” This jury can take place during the last lesson of the semester or at a time scheduled during exams. Each instructor will determine the parameters of the double jury. 2 faculty (one being a full-time J/C faculty) should be present for this double jury.

Degree recitals

Visit for <https://www.towson.edu/cofac/departments/music/resources/recitals/> links to detailed information on other aspects for preparing for your recital. You are responsible for adhering to the regulations given to you when you registered for your recital by Ms. Criss. Pay close attention to the deadlines for submitting your authorizations and for program submission.

Failure to adhere to the schedule could result in cancellation of your recital by the department chair.

EXCEPT FOR EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES you will not be allowed to cancel or postpone your recital less than THREE WEEKS before your assigned date.

Dress rehearsal: See the link above regarding scheduling a dress rehearsal. The primary applied faculty member must be present for any dress rehearsal.

All degree recitals receive a grade based upon averages of the qualitative ratings from recital evaluation record.

There must be at least TWO faculty members present to assess the recital. One MUST be your primary studio teacher and the other a Jazz/Commercial music faculty member. Department of Music full time faculty may substitute for J/C faculty but only after notice to the J/C division coordinator.

Students will work with their applied teacher to select an appropriate repertoire and program to the expectations described below. Recitals must reflect thoughtfulness and level of expertise with the material exhibited through execution and presentation. “Jam session” recitals will result in significant reduction of grade and possible grade of “unsatisfactory”.

Recital Jury

All J/C students (including BS and MUED) giving a recital must pass a “recital jury” no less than 3 weeks to their scheduled recital date. This is separate from the dress rehearsal and must include all the prepared music with the actual band; this “jury” isn’t required to take place in the recital hall or Kaplan but serves rather as a preparation marker for the student. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule this jury with their applied teacher and at least one other J/C professor. This jury requires that all music and arrangements will have been rehearsed as a band by the recital jury, so that the actual recitals are of higher performance quality.

General guidelines: a clear plan for each selection, at least 75% performance-ready, obvious prior rehearsing as a whole band.

If a student does not pass this recital jury, the scheduled recital will be postponed. The student will arrange for a later recital date repeating the above process until passing the recital jury.

Suggested guidelines for Jazz/Commercial performance degree recitals

Jazz/Commercial degree recitals have varied greatly in content and level of competency. This document is an effort to bring some continuity to the planning, execution, and grading of these recitals and help the student to realize the best performances possible.

- Students and their Professor decide what material will be presented on the recital.
- Although jazz/commercial BM and MM students may study classical repertoire, or double on other instruments, there is no requirement that they perform this repertoire or on these instruments.
- Ultimately, the Professor will guide the student to create a program that is professional, sincere, and highlights the student's abilities to not only perform the music but to organize the entire concert.

Junior recital

The junior recital should demonstrate the student's comprehension of fundamental jazz/commercial practices. This will be exhibited through the successful performance of key compositions of the jazz/commercial repertoire. Evidence of a maturing personal style grounded in a clear approach to improvisation will be obvious. Competent leadership shall be demonstrated through a well-rehearsed ensemble that performs each composition without major flaws. Students must perform a program that presents the audience with a coherent musical statement. The recital will be a minimum of 25 minutes of music in length.

Senior recital

The senior recital is the capstone experience of the BM in Jazz/Commercial performance. This performance should demonstrate the student's approach to improvisation, composition and/or arranging, ensemble leadership, and overall concept of music. In other words, this performance is a mature, professional quality concert demonstrating the student's musicality to this point in his/her development. The ensemble is well rehearsed and performs each composition without obvious faults. The student performs each piece without major technical issues and demonstrates a mature approach to their instrument or voice. The recital will be a minimum of 50 minutes of music in length.

Master's recital

The master's degree recital is expected to be of the highest professional quality and content. Care should be taken to insure there is a connection between the student's research paper and the presentation of the recital. The ensemble will be well rehearsed and perform the music with no audible flaws. A clear and mature demonstration of the student's musical identity will be made not only through the performance of the compositions and improvisations but by his/her stage presence. The recital will be a minimum of 50 minutes of music in length.

Jazz Rehearsal Rooms 2075 and 3081

2075 and 3081 are classrooms and teaching studios in addition to rehearsal spaces. There are times the spaces are reserved during the week for these events and unavailable for student use. If you do not see anyone in the room Monday- Friday, do not assume it is not reserved!

Students needing to use the rehearsal space for recital preparation take priority in the use of the rooms. In order for them to secure the room they must send Dave Ballou an email at dballou@towson.edu detailing the dates and exact times needed. He will then add these dates to the times the rooms are unavailable.

For all others, there is no official “sign up” policy. Students gain access to the rooms by sending an email to Dave Ballou at dballou@towson.edu including a request to gain access for the semester and their TU id#. He then approves the request and sends this information to the music office where access is given. Students then can use the room on a first come first serve basis- HOWEVER, please be mindful of others and do not monopolize a room. No one should need to use the room for more than 2-3 hours. If you have been using the room, please allow others to use it if they ask.

ALL students with card access to the rooms accepts responsibility for:

- a. The condition of the room- leave the room BETTER than you found it. Remove all trash and anything you carried into the room. These are classrooms and studios and need to be respected as such.
- b. The condition of the equipment in the rooms.
 - I. Guitar/bass and keyboards amps are to be turned off when done and no instrument cables are to be left plugged into the amps
 - II. Drum sets will be set up ready for the next person to use. All clutches, felts and bolts will be replaced.
 - III. Pianos will be closed and covers will be replaced. No covers should be found on the floor!
 - Electric pianos will be turned off.
- c. Door will be locked and the lights turned off when you leave. Be sure the door is fully closed and locked.
- d. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU ALLOWED TO LET PEOPLE YOU DO NOT KNOW USE THE ROOM!
 - I. These rooms are for ENROLLED TU music majors- alumni or non-music majors need to contact Dave Ballou for access (dballou@towson.edu).
- e. These rooms are not to be used for groups outside of Towson University unless special permission is granted by The Department of Music.
- f. Students will be respectful and mindful of others intentions to use the room. NO ONE may use the rooms for doing homework or hanging out. Only pianists and drummers will be allowed to use the space for individual practice. When there is a group wishing to rehearse, the pianists or drummer will finish the practice session and give the room over to the group.

Any violation of the above conditions will result in denial of all access to both rooms. If there is damage to the equipment and no one takes responsibility to make repairs- all that have card access will be charged for the repair or replacement of the equipment.

Access to 2075 and 3081 is a privilege and we are happy to provide these opportunities for our students. However, abuse of this privilege hurts everyone. There is no fund to replace equipment and once there is damage to equipment, students will be required to carry their own instruments to the building for every lesson and rehearsal- drum sets, keyboards and amps. Leaving the rooms littered and in disarray is disrespectful of the opportunity and others

J/C Equipment

As a convenience and courtesy, Towson University provides drums sets, keyboards, amplifiers and PA systems for student use. This equipment is for enrolled TU students only! Replacement and repair of this equipment is not guaranteed.

Performers not enrolled as students at Towson are expected to provide their own instruments. Students may request use of the TU equipment by contacting Dave Ballou at dballou@towson.edu. Requests MUST be made at least a week before the event. Requests made less than a week will not be accepted.

Students that request the use of TU equipment accept FULL responsibility for the care and condition of the equipment and will pay replacement or repair costs.

TU equipment MAY NOT be removed from the Center for the Arts without express approval of Dave Ballou, Jason Rigby, or John Lee.

Recording studio

The Recording Studio at Towson University Department of Music is available as a resource to the students and faculty of the Department of Music.

Please see this link <https://www.towson.edu/cofac/departments/music/resources/recording-studio/> for more information regarding procedures for use of this facility.

Murray Jazz Residency Program

Each semester the Jazz/Commercial music division brings an internationally recognized jazz/improvisation artist or alumni to the campus for a weeklong residency. This provides a unique opportunity for students to meet and learn from artists that are making a life in the arts. These artists are invited to the campus for their ability to exemplify how students might engage their own potential to be creative and productive.

Each artist presents two concerts during the week:

1. with a focus on the music and musicians they currently are working with.
2. with a student ensemble with which they rehearse during the week.

Students are selected for the residency performing group based upon the program director's experience of them through class participation, performances in student concerts and recommendations of J/C applied teachers.

Additional Performance Opportunities

Often the Jazz/Commercial Music Division is asked to make recommendations for students to perform at various functions. Some are University functions that serve to enhance the profile of the division and the Department of Music; some are public events that help promote the University in general. The division coordinator fields these requests and responds to with recommendations of students to organize the music for the event. Some of these events pay and some do not but the coordinator takes great effort to strike a balance for the students accepting these responsibilities.

All students are eligible for these opportunities and are constantly being evaluated for maturity, responsibility as well as musical ability. Often students will be asked to perform at lesser profile events before given more responsibility.

The monthly Noontime Jazz at the Library is a series co-sponsored with the Cook Library and has served as a test case for students to become eligible for other opportunities.

If you would like to perform on the Noontime Jazz at the Library Series contact the division leader via email.

Master Class Schedule- subject to change

Tues.	Aug. 26	11am	Opening Convocation	Kaplan
Tues.	Sep. 2	11am	J/C division masterclass	2079
Tues.	Sep. 9	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Tues.	Sep. 16	11am	J/C division masterclass	2079
Tues.	Sep. 23	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Tues.	Sep. 30	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Tues.	Oct. 7	11am	J/C division masterclass	Kaplan
Tues.	Oct. 14	11am	Convocation: All-Department Advising Session	Kaplan
Tues.	Oct. 21	11am	J/C division masterclass	2079
Tues.	Oct. 28	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Tues.	Nov. 4	11am	J/C division masterclass	
Tues.	Nov. 11	11am	Friedman/Gordon Recital	Kaplan
Tues.	Nov. 18	11am	MJR Mike Holober	2079
Tues.	Nov. 25	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Tues.	Dec. 2	11am	J/C division masterclass	2079
Tues.	Dec. 9	10:15am-12:15pm	J/C division juries	2079
		1pm	Upper division J/C juries	2075

J/C Division Events
Required events are in Bold

Week 1	Mon.	Aug. 25	First Day of Classes		
	Tues.	Aug.	11am	Opening Convocation	Kaplan
Week 2	Tues.	Sep. 2	11am	J/C division masterclass	2079
	Wed.	Sep. 3	Add/Drop Deadline		
Week 3	Tues.	Sep. 9	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Week 4	Tues.	Sep 16	11am	J/C division masterclass	
	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Sep. 16</i>	<i>12 pm</i>	<i>Noontime Jazz in the Library</i>	<i>Cook Library</i>
	Fri.	Sep. 19	12-2 pm	High Zero Guest Artists	RH
	Sun.	Sep. 21	3 pm	J/C Faculty on the Latin American Music Concert	RH
Week 5	Tues.	Sep. 23	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Week 6	Tues.	Sep. 30	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Week 7	Tues.	Oct 7	11am	J/C division masterclass	
	Tues.	Oct. 7	5:30 pm	First Tuesday	3071
	Tues.	Oct 8	8 pm	Deep Listening: Pauline Oliveros	RH
Week 8	<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Oct. 13</i>	<i>Music Major for a Day</i>		
	Tues.	Oct. 14	11am	Convocation: All-Department Advising Session	Kaplan
Week 9	Tues.	Oct. 21	11am	J/C division masterclass	
	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Oct. 21</i>	<i>12 pm</i>	<i>Noontime Jazz in the Library</i> <i>Latin Ensemble</i>	<i>Cook Library</i>
	<i>Thur.</i>	<i>Oct 23</i>	<i>7:30 pm</i>	<i>COFAC Latin American Music Celebration</i>	<i>RH</i>
Week 10	Tues.	Oct. 28	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
Week 11	Mon.	Nov. 3	Last Day to Withdraw		
	Tues.	Nov. 4	11am	J/C division masterclass	
	Tues.	Nov. 4	5:30 pm	First Tuesday	3071
	Thur.	Nov 6	5:30 pm	George Garzone Masterclass	3071
	Sun.	Nov 9	3 pm	Jazz Faculty Ensemble Recital	RH
Week 12	Tues.	Nov. 11	11am	Convocation: Friedman/Gordon Recital	Kaplan

Week 13	Murray Jazz Residency Week				
	Mon.	Nov. 17	2 pm	Mike Holoher visits the Jazz Arranging Class	2092
	Tues.	Nov. 18	11am	J/C division masterclass- Mike Holoher	2079
	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Nov. 18</i>	<i>12 pm</i>	<i>Noontime Jazz in the Library</i>	<i>Cook Library</i>
	Wed.	Nov 19	2 pm	Mike Holoher visits the Jazz Arranging Class	2092
			8 pm	MJR Concert with Mike Holoher	RH
	Fri.	Nov. 21	8 pm	MJR Concert with Mike Holoher and students	RH
Week 14	Tues.	Nov. 25	11am	J/C division masterclass Separate	2079
	Mon.	Nov. 24	8 pm	Jazz Showcase I (Reed T 5:30 combo, 2 Jazz Guitar Ens.)	RH
	Weds.	Apr. 30	3:30 pm	J/C Composer's Recital	RH
	Fri.	May 2	8pm	TU Jazz Orchestra	RH
Week 15	Mon.	Dec. 1	8pm	Jazz Showcase II (Kuhl M 5:30, W 7:30, Latin Ensemble, Dierker F 2 combo)	RH
	Tues.	Dec. 2	11am	J/C division masterclass	2079
	Tues.	Dec. 2	5:30 pm	First Tuesday	3071
	Wed.	Dec. 3	3:30 pm	JC Composers Recital	RH
	Wed.	Dec. 3	8pm	Improvisation Ensembles (Dierker)	RH
	Thur.	Dec. 4	8 pm	Jazz Orchestra	RH
Week 16	Mon.	Dec. 8	Last Day of Classes		
Week 16	Mon.	Dec. 8	8pm	Jazz Showcase III (Kennedy M 3:30 combo, M 5:30; Vocal Jazz Ens.)	RH
Juries	Tues.	Dec. 9	10:15am-12:15pm	J/C division juries	2079
			1pm	Upper division J/C juries	2075

JAZZ/COMMERCIAL MUSIC UPPER-DIVISION JURY REQUEST FORM

Complete this form and return it to the J/C division coordinator no later than two weeks before final exams.

This form is to be completed by the student. Print clearly or type.

DATE

NAME

STUDENT ID#

SEMESTER/YEAR	NAME	GRADE FOR LESSONS
----------------------	-------------	--------------------------

RELATED COURSES	GRADE
------------------------	--------------

Complete this section even if these courses are transferred from another institution.

MUSC 131 THEORY and MUSICIANSHIP 1

MUSC 132 THEORY 2

MUSC 134 MUSICIANSHIP 2

MUSC 231 THEORY 3

MUSC 233 MUSICIANSHIP 3

MUSC 232 THEORY 4

MUSC 234 MUSICIANSHIP 4

MUSC 201 MUSIC IN THE U.S.

or MUSC 202 MUSIC CULTURES OF THE WORLD

MUSC 222 FOUNDATIONS OF JAZZ COMMERCIAL MUSIC: HARMONY

MUSC 223 FOUNDATIONS OF JAZZ COMMERCIAL MUSIC: RHYTHM

MUSC 224 FOUNDATIONS OF JAZZ COMMERCIAL MUSIC: IMPROVISATION

PIANO CLASS I

LIST OF WORKS THAT YOU HAVE PREPARED DURING LOWER LEVEL LESSONS.

May be in a separate document if necessary

(This portion is to be filled out by your primary J/C applied teacher)

Applied Teacher indicating student is prepared for the UDJ: _____