

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 12-22

(Voting Units: Academic)

Minor in Jazz Studies

1. November 15th, 2020
2. Proposer Contact Information: Adam Meckler: Assistant Professor of Music, Director of Jazz Studies: abmeckle@mtu.edu
3. General Description:
 - a. The Jazz Program of the Visual and Performing Arts Department (within the College of Sciences and Arts) proposes a new minor called “Minor in Jazz Studies.” The minor is intended to replace the existing Jazz Idiom concentration within the Minor in Music (Students in the middle of their Music Performance: Jazz Idiom Minors will be shifted to the new title of Minor in Jazz Studies). This minor will provide training in Jazz Theory and Aural Skills, Jazz Arranging, Jazz Improvisation, and Small and Large Jazz Ensembles. This minor will be available to all undergraduate students.
 - b. The proposed program leverages existing faculty and resources in Jazz. This minor will provide tools and experiences for students interested in expanding their skills and knowledge of Jazz. It is not uncommon for students who major in other fields to also perform as an amateur and/or professional Jazz musicians throughout their careers. The Minor in Jazz Studies will provide these students with the tools and know-how to build a career as a performing and arranging Jazz musician upon their graduation.
 - c. Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this minor, students will be able to:

 - Sight-read music in a range of styles.
 - Navigate chord changes as an improviser.
 - Arrange existing music in a variety of Jazz styles and settings.
 - Compose original music in a variety of Jazz styles and settings.
 - Identify chord qualities and chord progressions by ear.
 - Perform in both small group and large ensemble settings.
 - Speak intelligently on the cultural and socio-political significance of Jazz music and the Black American musicians who developed the art form.
4. Rationale:

The current Minor in Music Performance: Jazz Idiom is confusingly titled, and is difficult for interested students to find. “Jazz Studies” is the most common title for majors and minors in Jazz at universities around the world. Changing the title to “Minor in Jazz Studies” will therefore be more in line with standard practices.

5. Related Programs:

Several universities within Michigan offer minors in Jazz Studies including Michigan State University and Western Michigan University. There is no minor in Jazz Studies offered at Northern Michigan University. The proposed minor in Jazz Studies at Michigan Tech will be a unique offering in the region, and a valuable recruitment opportunity.

a. Michigan State University:

<https://reg.msu.edu/academicprograms/ProgramDetail.aspx?Program=7339>

b. Western Michigan University:

http://catalog.wmich.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=18&poid=3846&returnto=629

6. Curriculum Design:

Title of Minor: Minor in Jazz Studies

Catalog Description: Jazz is a uniquely American artform. Its influence on modern music and culture is undeniable. Students who minor in Jazz Studies will study the history of Jazz music from New Orleans in the late 1800s to music happening in the Jazz community today; they will learn of the cultural and socio-political influence of Jazz, especially as it pertains to Civil Rights; they will study Jazz theory, and will learn to read and write chord changes and identify them by ear; they will learn to arrange and compose music in a variety of Jazz styles; they will perform Jazz music in a variety of ensemble settings; and they will learn to improvise in a variety of styles and harmonic landscapes.

List of Courses:

Required Courses	Credits
MUS 1100 Western Music Fundamentals (3)	
MUS 2030 History of Jazz (3)	
MUS 2103 Jazz Theory and Aural Skills (3)	
MUS 3130 Jazz Improvisation (3)	
MUS 4130 Jazz Arranging (3)	
MUS 4900 Final Project: Music (1)	
Elective Courses	Credits

Select 3 hours from the following courses	
MUS 1530 Workshop Big Band (1)	
MUS 2530 R&D Jazz Band (1)	
MUS 3530 Jazz Lab Band (1)	
MUS 4530 Jazz Combo (1)	
Total Credits Required	19

New Course Description:

Two new classes are approved courses beginning in '21-22. Jazz Theory and Aural Skills provides a music theory foundation that is related to Jazz and modern/contemporary music settings. Jazz Theory and Aural Skills ran Fall of 2020 as a FA4950 Special Topics class. This class will function as a prerequisite for existing courses Jazz Improvisation and Jazz Arranging. The Workshop Big Band was also proposed, which is currently running in its second year as a second section of the Research and Development Jazz Band. The Workshop Big Band was formed to accommodate the robust student interest in Jazz.

- a. Jazz Theory and Aural Skills: Jazz Theory and Aural Skills covers Jazz harmony, chord/scale theory, ear training, spelling chords, writing original chord progressions, analyzing Jazz solo transcriptions, and analyzing Jazz standards.
- b. Workshop Big Band: Workshop Big Band is an ensemble that learns and performs classic Big Band repertoire and New Orleans Brass Band music.

Prerequisite Courses:

MUS 1100: None

MUS 2103: MUS 1100

MUS 2030: None

MUS 3130: MUS 2103

MUS 4130: MUS 2103

MUS 4900: MUS 2103, MUS 2030, MUS 3130, MUS 4130

MUS 2530: None

MUS 3530: None

MUS 4530: None

MUS 1530: None

7. Restrictions: None

8. Program Costs: No additional costs are anticipated with the creation of the minor. The number of Minor in Sound students can expand to a 10-15 range with our current faculty and facilities. Beyond that number, there may be a need for further instructional staff.

9. Planned Implementation Date: Spring 2022