

# History of Jazz

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Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

**Course prefix:** MUSI

**Course number:** 3630

**Section:** FC

**CRN**

31400

**Instructor first name:** Frank

**Instructor last name:** Clark

**Semester:** Spring

**Academic year:** 2026

**Course description:**

This class will examine Jazz from its origins in early 20th century New Orleans to the multiplicity of styles in the present-day. Special attention will be given to pivotal figures in the history of Jazz such as Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Ornette Coleman. Throughout the course, the history and development of the Jazz language will be connected to the historical, social, and economic contexts in which it developed. The majority of class time will be spent listening to, analyzing, and discussing a wide variety of recorded Jazz performances as well as specific ideas and concepts presented in the documentary miniseries Jazz directed by Ken Burns. Outside of class you will be attending live Jazz performances, listening to recordings and reading about the artists that brought this music to life. The overarching course goal is to help you increase your understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of this great American art form, as well as developing listening skills and your ability to communicate clearly and intelligently about music.

**Academic honesty/integrity statement:**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

**Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):**

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational

academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

- This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:
  - How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?
- Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:
  - Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.
- Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:
  - Ethical Reasoning
  - Information Literacy
  - Intercultural Competence