

Instructor:**Mailbox:****Phone:****Office:****Office Hours:****Course Chair:** Melissa Howe

Description: This ensemble provides students with the opportunity to develop improvisational skills through free improvisation. Players are encouraged to create dynamic and rhythmic pieces using existing musical skills. Skills are expanded through the study of the musical elements, complex time signatures, form, and musical roles. Students learn to trust their instincts for the ebb and flow of music as they create satisfying ensemble pieces with no prior plan or discussion.

Course Objective: Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to improvise duets, trios and quartets in a variety of rhythmic idioms with no prior discussion or plan.

Required Text(s): None. Handouts will be provided by instructor.

Coursework and Out-of-Class Preparation: In order to maintain a performance level consistent with the level of materials presented in class, you should expect to spend three to four hours per week in out-of-class practice and preparation, distributed on a daily basis as part of your practice time.

Midterm and Final Performance Dates: To be arranged with the instructor.

Midterm: TBA**Final:** TBA**Grading Criteria:**

A (90-100)	Superior, Exceptional; control of course material enables excellent production.
B (80-89)	Good; grasp of material enables above-average production.
C (70-79)	Average; assimilation of material enables acceptable production.
D (60-69)	Below Average; exposure to material enables poor, but passable production.
F (below 60)	Not Passing; assimilation of material insufficient to demonstrate acceptable productive capacity.

Final Grade Determination:	30%	Performance of weekly assignments
	35%	Participation
	35%	Final performance

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all meetings of their ensembles. Instructors must be notified in advance if an unavoidable absence is foreseen. In addition, the student must arrange for a suitable replacement to fill his/her role in the ensemble. Failure to send a substitute player will result in a grade of "F" for the ensemble and can result in the loss of the seat in the ensemble. The grade of "F" will stand as a final grade except in cases of extraordinary circumstance as determined by the department chair. Unexcused absence(s) may result in a course grade of "F".

Deadline for Course Withdrawal: 5:00 PM, Friday following Midterm Week. See Academic Calendar.
Withdrawal from a course may not be initiated after that date.

Withdrawal Policy: You may withdraw from this class by completing a *Student-Initiated Withdrawal from a Class* form at the Office of the Registrar. The withdrawal form must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar before the end of the 9th week of classes in Fall and Spring semesters, or the end of the 8th week in the 12-week Summer Session. If you submit the withdrawal form by the deadline, you will receive a grade of “W” for the class. Withdrawing from a class cannot be done after the deadline.

The instructor will **not** withdraw you from the class for any reason (including absence) or submit the form for you. It is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. If you withdraw from this class, you continue to be financially responsible for the class and are not eligible for a tuition refund or replacement course. Please be aware that withdrawing from a class may affect scholarship, financial aid, and/or international student visa status. If you receive financial aid or veterans' benefits, your eligibility for aid may be reduced by withdrawing. If you are an international student, you may jeopardize your F-1 visa status.

In case of doubt about your status and options, ask the instructor, department chair and/or the Counseling & Advising Center.

Topical Course Outline

The Free Improvisation Lab gives students the opportunity to develop skills to express themselves and participate musically with no fear of “wrong” notes. Beginning with call-and-response in a non-tonal context, players are encouraged to create dynamic and rhythmic pieces using existing musical skills. Skills are expanded through the study of more complex time signatures, subdivisions and claves. Through the application of the musical elements (rhythm, melody, harmony, texture and timbre) students learn to trust their instincts for the ebb and flow of music as they switch improvisational roles from soloing to accompanying. The use of form will be demonstrated and practiced.