

Audition Requirements for the Bachelor of Music in Jazz/Commercial Performance Or Jazz/Commercial Composition

The Music Department at Towson University

Standards:

Candidates for the Bachelor of Music in Jazz/Commercial Performance or Jazz/Commercial Composition are expected to demonstrate technical proficiency, musical expression and improvisational skills. Additionally, candidates must demonstrate the potential to succeed and excel in the field of music.

It is expected that all applicants be prepared for the rigors of the music curriculum through dedicated and continued study of their primary performance area with a qualified private instructor.

All Applicants*

- Concert Bb, Eb, A and Db major scales memorized, two octaves where possible, in one consistent format determined by candidate
- A chromatic scale starting on concert Bb 2 octaves if possible.
- Interview

PREPARED SELECTIONS FOR SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE AREAS:

Trumpet and Trombone

- Prepare one of the following etudes from *Jazz Conception* (Advance Music) by Jim Snidero: "Rose," "IND Line," "Friends," "Two Plus Two," "Lunar," "Tunisia," "Bird Blues," "Somewhere" or "Passage." Etude will be performed with the accompanying CD and must be provided by the applicant.
- If the Snidero etudes are not available, the applicant may substitute any transcription of a major Jazz trumpeter or trombonist. The transcription will be performed with a

recording of the solo provided by the applicant. If the applicant is performing the solo from memory, he/she must also provide a notated version of the solo.

- Improve over a recording of a chord progression such as blues or a standard tune. The applicant must bring a pre-recorded track in CD or flash drive format. The track may be a professional product such as Jamey Aebersold or self-recorded by the applicant. (It is useful but not necessary to have a full rhythm section on the recording.)

Saxophone

- Prepare one of the following etudes from *Jazz Conception* (Advance Music) by Jim Snidero: "Rose," "IND Line," "Friends," "Two Plus Two," "Lunar," "Tunisia," "Bird Blues," "Somewhere" or "Passage." Etude will be performed with the accompanying CD and must be provided by the applicant.
- If the Snidero etudes are not available, the applicant may substitute any transcription of a major Jazz saxophonist. The transcription will be performed with a recording of the solo provided by the applicant. If the applicant is performing the solo from memory, he/she must also provide a notated version of the solo.
- Improve over a recording of a chord progression such as blues or a standard tune. The applicant must bring a pre-recorded track in CD or flash drive format. The track may be a professional product such as Jamey Aebersold or self-recorded by the applicant. (It is useful but not necessary to have a full rhythm section on the recording.)

Guitar

- Applicant should perform the audition on an electric guitar and bring a patch cord. (An amplifier will be provided. Applicants should not bring an amplifier.)
- Prepared chord melody solo of a standard tune using chord forms or counterpoint. Example: Barry Galbraith *Guitar Solos*, Mel Bay Pub.
- Sight-reading melodies and chord progression such as those found in the beginning pages of William Leavitt *Melodic Rhythms for Guitar*, Berklee Press.
- Applicant will play the following chord forms: Amaj.7, Amin.7, A7, A7b9, A7#9, A7b5, A7#5, A7#5#9.
- Improve over a recording of a chord progression such as blues or a standard tune. The applicant must bring a pre-recorded track in CD or flash drive format. The track may be a professional product such as Jamey Aebersold or self-recorded by the applicant. (It is useful but not necessary to have a full rhythm section on the recording.)

Bass (electric or acoustic – applicants do not have to play both for the audition) -- All bassists, pick **two (2)** of the following:

- Medium tempo 12 bar blues. Play Head, Walk, Solo.
- Pick one: a Medium standard, bossa nova feel, or jazz waltz. Play melody, walk/bass line, Solo.
- Something to demonstrate applicant's technical proficiency. Play an excerpt from a book or play a transcribed solo. Transcription will be performed with a recording of the solo provided by the applicant. If the applicant is performing the solo from memory, he or she must also provide a notated version of the solo.
- Improvise over a recording of a chord progression such as blues or a standard tune. The applicant must bring a pre-recorded track in CD or flash drive format. The track may be a professional product such as Jamey Aebersold or self-recorded by the applicant. (It is useful but not necessary to have a full rhythm section on the recording.)

For Electric Bassist (an amplifier will be provided. Applicants should not bring an amplifier, but **MUST** bring a patch chord), pick **one (1)** of the following:

- Play something in a rock or funk feel (played without accompaniment) to show applicant's facility and knowledge of the instrument.
- Perform the First Movement (Prelude) of Johann Sebastian Bach's Cello Suite No. 1 in G major from memory.

For Acoustic Bassist -- pick **one (1)** of the following:

- Franz Simandal, Book 1 (Fisher Ed.) page 32, No. 8
- Bow a melody from a standard jazz ballad

Piano

- Bb, Eb, E and A major scales two hands, two octaves
- Prepared solo piano arrangement of a standard or jazz standard tune. A portion of the arrangement must include an improvisation using the form of the tune.
- Improvise over a recording of a chord progression such as blues or a standard tune. The applicant must bring a pre-recorded track in CD or flash drive format. The track may be

a professional product such as Jamey Aebersold or self-recorded by the applicant. (It is useful but not necessary to have a full rhythm section on the recording.)

Percussion (scales to be performed on a keyboard mallet instrument or piano – see above*)

Drum Set

- Prepared notated solo (solo transcription or other composition) piece for drum set
- Demonstrate creativity around the drum set with one of the selected snare drum rudiments from the 40 Percussive Arts Society International Drum Rudiments: closed/multiple bounce roll, double-stroke roll, paradiddle rudiments, flam rudiments, and ratamacues
- Swing at slow tempo $\frac{1}{4}$ note = 74 for 8 bars
- Swing at medium/medium up tempo 1/3-120-180 for 8 bars
- Basic bossa nova at $\frac{1}{4}$ note = 110-130 for 8 bars
- Play a funk, rock or hip-hop pattern for 16 bars
- 8 bars of ballad time with brushes at $\frac{1}{4}$ note= 64-70
- Improvise one chorus of 12 bar blues
- 16 bars of trading fours with yourself (alternate 4 bars soloing and 4 bars playing time) at a medium swing tempo, $\frac{1}{4}$ = 120-160

Jazz Voice (scales will be only within the applicant's range – see above*)

- Applicant must sing two previously prepared selections demonstrating good intonation, pleasing voice quality, proper diction and phrasing. The compositions should be of artistic merit, such as a jazz standard, blues or other non-classical genre.
- An accompaniment for these compositions is optional and must be provided by the applicant when used. The Department of Music will provide a stereo with CD player only. The applicant may bring a pre-recorded track in CD or flash drive format. The track may be a professional product such as Jamey Aebersold or self-recorded by the applicant. (It is useful but not necessary to have a full rhythm section on the recording.)
- Improvising in the performance of the compositions is not required but strongly encouraged.

JAZZ/COMMERCIAL COMPOSITION

Candidates for the Bachelor of Music in Jazz/Commercial Composition must display evidence of promise as a creative composer. Additionally, candidates must demonstrate proficiency in at least one area of performance (must pass Department of Music audition in applicant's primary performance area – see separate audition requirements set forth above for your instrument or voice).

- Submit a complete portfolio containing the following (incomplete portfolios will not be reviewed):
 - Two or three completed original compositions that showcase the applicant's interests and current ability
 - ✦ Compositions must appear in notated form—lead sheet or complete score (no parts)
 - ✦ Compositions must be submitted as a PDF file or hard copy.
 - ✦ If a work only exists in electronic media, please contact Dave Ballou at dballou@towson.edu for further instructions.
 - Recordings of the submitted works
 - ✦ Live performances are highly recommended.
 - ✦ Recordings will be accepted in any format except from a notation program: MP3, WAV, AIF; web links, etc. are acceptable.
 - ✦ If no live performance recording is available, a midi representation is acceptable. Midi representations **MUST** be in one of the formats listed above. **No Finale or Sibelius files will be accepted.**
 - A written statement of two pages (maximum)
 - ✦ Describe engagement with composition to this point in applicant's career. Include the following:
 - How you came to music.
 - What compositions of others have inspired you?
 - Why do you want to study Jazz/Commercial composition?
 - What do you want to do with a degree in Jazz/Commercial composition?

Portfolios may be submitted electronically through a file server (WeTransfer, for example), web links, email, or hard copy. Complete portfolios may be sent by email to Jason Rigby (jrigby@towson.edu), Dave Ballou (dballou@towson.edu) and Mary Ann Criss (mcriss@towson.edu).

If sending a hard copy of the portfolio, CDs, DVDs, or a flash drive with sound files is acceptable. Hard Copies can be sent to:

Jason Rigby, Dave Ballou, and Mary Ann Criss
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