

# Freshman Jazz Ensemble ~ 2016-2017

New Trier High School

Course Outline, Expectations, Dates, and General Information

---

Director: Nic Meyer

[meyern@newtrier.k12.il.us](mailto:meyern@newtrier.k12.il.us)

847-784-6701

Assistant Directors: Dan Pierson, Isaiah Spencer

## Websites

[www.ntjazz.com](http://www.ntjazz.com)

## The following items are required for this class

- ♪ Pencil!
  
- ♪ Metronome (this does not need to be fancy, but must be digital) – *may be kept at home*
  
- ♪ Tuner (also does not need to be fancy) – *may be kept at home, except for guitarists and bassists*
  
- ♪ 1 spiral bound notebook of music manuscript paper (we will be ordering these for the group)
  
- ♪ Trumpets and trombones - valve oil, slide grease, and mutes (trumpets should have cup mute, harmon mute, and plunger; trombones should have cup mute and plunger)
  
- ♪ Saxophones – a minimum of **five** working reeds at all times
  
- ♪ Percussionists – sticks, brushes, and 4 vibraphone mallets in a stick bag
  
- ♪ Guitarists and bassists – **two** working patch cables

## What is Freshman Jazz Ensemble, and what will I learn in this class?

*Freshman Jazz Ensemble* is New Trier's introductory jazz ensemble, and the first of four curricular jazz ensembles. The purpose of this course is to present a comprehensive introduction to the subject of jazz music. We will study a variety of styles within the jazz idiom, but will focus on the traditions of swing. Every student will study the rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic elements of jazz, and will be encouraged to explore this information both with the class and at their own speed outside of class. We will begin to learn about the historic figures in jazz through listening and discussions. We will learn the skills necessary to perform as an ensemble, and will have the opportunity to play in both large and small group settings. We will begin to address topics specific to jazz improvisation, and students will have the opportunity to delve deeper into improvisation during *Freshman Jazz Improvisation*, a voluntary, after school class that will meet once a week.

## **Important Dates – please get these in your family calendars immediately**

Please see attached calendar

### **What do we wear to our concerts?**

Concert dress will be our jazz festival t-shirt and coordinating pants (either khaki or black, depending on the color of the shirt). Dark dress shoes for men and women will also be needed. More info to follow...

### **Private Lessons**

All students are *highly* encouraged to study privately with a master teacher on their instrument. New Trier's private lesson faculty is comprised of many of the finest artist teachers in the Chicago area, and our students should take advantage of this phenomenal resource!

### **Upgrading Instruments**

While the instrument you are playing on will likely suffice if it is in good playing condition, many students and their families decide to invest in a higher quality instrument sometime during their high school music experience. I highly encourage students and their parents to discuss instrument purchases with their private lesson teachers and either Mr. Meyer or Mr. Temple before any purchase is made.

### **Practicing**

Students will not be graded on the *quantity* of their practicing, but rather on their *musical growth* and *rehearsal preparation*. Practice strategies will be addressed continually in *Freshman Jazz Ensemble*, however, it is important for students and their parents to understand that consistent practice outside of rehearsal will be necessary in order to succeed in New Trier's music program. 30 minutes 5 days a week might be a good guideline

### **Listening**

Music, after all, is the organization of sound and silence. We must listen in order to understand music. As jazz students, we must listen to recordings of our music's finest practitioners. Suggested recordings will be mentioned often in class. Your private teacher can be a wonderful resource for recordings specific to your instrument. It is my experience that the most successful jazz students are those who develop an understanding for how the music can become their best teacher. Please make sure you are incorporating jazz listening into your routine!

## **The Jazz Rehearsal Environment**

Our music requires bravery, freedom, personality, creativity, individuality, and perhaps beyond all else, empathy. In order to be a collaborative member of a jazz ensemble, you must be able to empathize with the other members of the ensemble. This is true in all ways musical, but it also applies to the way we treat one another. Our rehearsal space must be a place where everyone feels safe to be themselves without the threat of ridicule. In fact, we will succeed musically when every musician is empowered to be the purest form of themselves as they perform. To this end, we will foster a supportive and collaborative learning environment for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, class, level, or physical or mental ability.

As members of the ensemble, you may notice behavior that does not live up to our standards of mutual respect. It is your obligation to let me know if you spot these behaviors so they can be corrected. Please don't assume that I am aware of a problem if one exists.

Count Basie made a point of hiring musicians that were not only stellar players, but were also like-minded in their desire to live harmoniously. He insisted upon this because his band spent a lot of time together (as we will) and he was certain that only a happy band could truly swing. It is my sincere hope that we will thoroughly enjoy each other's unique contributions this year, and that we will swing together as a very happy band!

Finally, we will walk on the path of New Trier's finest callings: "to commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity."

## **Grades**

Please refer to the jazz ensembles grading policy. In this class, you are expected to be tracking your own grade. Please pay particular attention to your attendance; if you miss a class, make plans to make up the absence. A furious rush to make up absences at the end of the semester is not enjoyable for anyone involved. You are free to check in with me at any time about your grade, and you will receive a grade report prior to the end of each quarter.

## **Digital Devices**

We will not typically be using digital devices in this class, so please keep cell phones, tablets, and laptops off and put away during class unless specifically directed otherwise.

## **Recommended Digital Practice Aides (not required for this class)**

- *Tonal Energy* Tuner, Metronome, and beyond!
- *Cleartune* – simple,
- *iReal Pro* – real book and play along generator
- *Harmony Cloud* – ear training app specific to jazz
- *Learn That Song* – looping and slow-downer

## Jazz Program Schedule

**2016-2017**

\*updated 9/6/2016

DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT	VENUE	ENSEMBLES
October 5, 2016	Wednesday	After school	IMEA Auditions	Stevenson HS	select students, by audition
October 6, 2016	Thursday	6:30 - 8:00 (apx)	Freshman Go To School Night - Jazz 1 combos perform	Northfield cafeteria	Jazz 1 combos
November 19, 2016	Saturday	8:00 AM - 4:00 PM	IMEA Dist. Jazz Fest	Lake Zurich High School	students selected through audition
December 1, 2016	Thursday	During Class	Fall Jazz Dress Rehearsal	Wilmette Junior High	FJE, CJE, LJE
December 1, 2016	Thursday	7:00 PM	Fall Jazz Dress Rehearsal	Wilmette Junior High	Jazz 1
December 2, 2016	Friday	7:00 PM	Fall Jazz Ensembles Concert	Wilmette Junior High	FJE, CJE, LJE, Jazz 1
December 12, 2016	Monday	7:30 PM	Tim Warfield's All-Star Septet	Cornog	All jazz students in attendance
February 2, 2017	Thursday	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Jazz Fest Dress Rehearsal	Gaffney	Jazz 1
February 3, 2017	Friday	3:30 PM - 9:00 PM	Jazz Fest Setup	Winnetka Campus	All Jazz Students
February 4, 2017	Saturday	All Day	New Trier Jazz Festival ***	Winnetka Campus	FJE, CJE, LJE, Jazz 1
February 11, 2017	Saturday	TBD	Evanston HS Jazz Festival	Evanston HS	FJE, CJE, LJE, Jazz 1
February 28, 2017	Monday	daytime	All-School Seminar Performance	TBD	Jazz 1
Spring Break			New York City!		Jazz 1
April 5, 2017	Wednesday	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Spring Jazz Dress Rehearsal	Gaffney	Jazz 1
April 6, 2017	Thursday	7:30 PM	Spring Jazz Ensembles Concert	Gaffney	FJE, CJE, LJE, Jazz 1
May 17, 2017	Wednesday	7:00 PM	Combo Concert	Northfield B Lounge	All Jazz Students

Additional performance opportunities may arise but will be communicated well in advance

# NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ ENSEMBLE GRADING POLICY

“It is the philosophy of the Music Department that grades should reflect the effort, ability, attitude and visible dedication that each student demonstrates on a consistent daily basis in a particular ensemble.”

A positive attitude is the underlying ingredient *necessary* to the success of each ensemble and in turn each member of that ensemble. In reading the New Trier High School Music Department Grading Policy, one finds principles that serve as benchmarks for a positive attitude. One must leave one’s “ego at the door and become a team player” approaching “all new music” and ideas “with an open mind, seeing each as an opportunity to learn.” An individual “acts as a professional when rehearsing and performing, and does not thrive on complaining or finding fault with the direction or leadership of the ensemble, or the efforts of its members,” but rather “employs creative thinking skills to solve problems or voice concerns” with respect and care. We must work together to achieve success together, and what better way is there than through music? In a very real way this process of music making is a metaphor for making our way through life with our fellows.

The jazz ensemble grading policy is based on a 100-point system that includes the following components **(Please note that your grade is cumulative over the semester and the final semester grade represents calculations based on the entire semester):**

## **I. Daily Attendance: Total of 50 points per semester**

Absences and tardiness disrupt the learning environment. Students need regular day-to-day attendance and must be punctual to maintain a sense of continuity in their program. Even one absence can affect the success and educational outcome for the individual and the entire class on that day. **Music rehearsals are particularly difficult to make-up since the process is so experiential.** It is impossible to re-create what the other students experienced the preceding day.

<b>0 absences = 50 points</b>
<b>1 absence = 47 points</b>
<b>2 absences = 44 points</b>
<b>3 absences = 41 points</b>
<b>4 absences = 38 points</b>
<b>5 absences = 35 points</b>
<b>6 absences = 32 points</b>
<b>7 absences = 29 points</b>
<b>8 absences = 26 points</b>

<b>9 absences = 23 points</b>
<b>10 absences = 20 points</b>
<b>11 absences = 17 points</b>
<b>12 absences = 14 points</b>
<b>13 absences = 11 points</b>
<b>14 absences = 0 points</b>
<b>15 absences = 0 points</b>

Points missed for *unexcused absences* **cannot** be made up. Three *unexcused tardies* count as **ONE unexcused absence** after which every additional unexcused tardy counts as an unexcused absence!

Points missed for *excused absences* can be made up by completing one or more of the following options. The number of make-up points will be commensurate with the time needed to complete the make-up work, as determined by the director.

- a 30 minute recording (SmartMusic, CD, or tape) of you practicing your jazz band music
- a one-page single-spaced type-written report on a jazz icon whose music we have studied
- a signed program from a concert you attended that either involves the instrument you play or features a jazz ensemble
- a signed program of a concert you performed in, excepting those scheduled or performed by the band class for which you are enrolled
- there are other creative possibilities for which you must receive director preapproval

If a student’s excused absence is because of involvement in another music event during that excused absence, director approval will exonerate the student from having to make up the points.

# NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ ENSEMBLE GRADING POLICY

## II. Assessments: Total of 50 points per semester

The number of assessments will vary each semester. Each assessment will receive points for the quality of work. Assessments will be averaged for the entire semester and given a final number (0-50) for the “Assessments” portion of the grade. In some cases, assessments can be redone or improved upon. The responsibility of making up assessments is that of the student.

Audio recordings may be required for playing tests and auditions. SmartMusic is the preferred method of recording and subsequent submission for each playing assignment. Since many of you will already have SmartMusic subscriptions, this will be relatively simple. For those of you without a SmartMusic subscription, I will leave it up to you to figure out a method for recording yourself. Please see me if you need help with this. There will also be instances where I will ask you to play an “in-person” assessment. Generally, students will be given ample time to prepare for these assessments.

## III. Concert Performance

Students are expected to be at concert performances. For each absence from a concert performance, the final semester grade will be reduced by one letter (i.e. 10 point deduction from your attendance portion of the semester grade). Please refer to the Music Department policies for clarification.

...if the absence is *excused*, points to reverse this reduction may be earned by completing make-up work assigned by the director.

...if the absence is *unexcused*, the grade reduction may not be reversed.

## IV. Attitude/Conduct/Professionalism:

You are expected to be professional and respectful at all times and to be accountable for your actions. For examples, please refer to the Music Department policies. To that end, if the student’s attitude, conduct and professionalism are not appropriate, the following actions will be taken:

Incident 1 - Warning.

Incident 2 - Conference with director.

Incident 3 - Conference with director and parents.

Incident 4 - Student must drop class. (The Music Department Chair and a representative from the Administrative Team can arbitrate an appeal process).

## V. Grading Scale:

<b>90-100</b>	<b>= A</b>
<b>80-89</b>	<b>= B</b>
<b>70-79</b>	<b>= C</b>
<b>60-69</b>	<b>= D</b>
<b>0-59</b>	<b>= F</b>

## NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

It is the philosophy of the Music Department that grades should reflect the effort, ability, attitude and visible dedication that each student demonstrates on a consistent daily basis in a particular ensemble.

Punctuality to class, rehearsals, and concerts is essential. Tardiness cannot be allowed. Policies regarding class attendance and tardiness with respect to grading have been established by the school. **Individual teachers will define specific class requirements.**

### CONCERT PARTICIPATION

There are approximately two major concerts each semester for every performance organization. Concerts are a culmination of daily rehearsals and class work and are **REQUIRED** laboratory experiences equal in importance to regular class attendance. Concerts are a unique musical experience, the value of which cannot be duplicated. It is essential that **ALL** students be present for each performance, as it is a "team" effort, and the absence of **ANY** student reduces the educational and enjoyment value for all.

The week of a concert is critical, every member is essential to the ensemble. In the event a student misses a **dress rehearsal** or **performance**, the following procedure will be in effect:

**EXCUSED ABSENCE** (which must be verified with a note from a parent/guardian) will result in the semester grade being reduced by **ONE LETTER GRADE** for each absence from a scheduled concert or dress rehearsal. Points to reverse this reduction and restore the student's grade may be earned by completing make-up work assigned by the director.

Excused absences from a concert or dress rehearsal include:

- A. Student illness
- B. Death in the family
- C. Family emergencies
- D. Religious holidays (director must be notified in advance)

All other absences from a scheduled concert or dress rehearsal will be considered **UNEXCUSED**, and will result in the semester grade being reduced by **ONE LETTER GRADE** for each absence. Grade reduction resulting from unexcused absence **CANNOT** be reversed.

Unexcused absences from concert or dress rehearsal include:

- A. Study or private lessons
- B. Family vacations or trips
- C. College visitations
- D. Work

Students assume the responsibility for making up all missed class work. In the event of any excused absence, it is the **student's** responsibility to contact the director and discuss material missed or to obtain additional help.

\*\*\*\*\*

Students are required to notify their director regarding conflicts (curricular excursions, athletic events, etc.) as early as possible so that conversations will occur between director and sponsor of conflicting event. Any unresolved conflicts that arise in the application of these procedures will be resolved by the Music Department Chair and the school administration.

## EXPECTATIONS

Safe and Respectful Learning Environment - We all come to this class as unique individuals. Behavior based on courtesy, respect, and an appreciation of our differences and similarities will create an environment in which each of us can grow and learn. Together we will create an environment in which each of us can grow and learn in a safe place for everyone; regardless of gender, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, class, level or physical or mental ability.

Mobile devices, including iPads, generally will not be used in this classroom. There may be times when your instructor will ask you to use your mobile devices for specific activities. At all other times, your device must remain off and stored away in order to focus your attention on the current classroom activity. Off task use or behavior that is detrimental to our learning environment will result in temporary loss of this privilege. A second offense will result in a call home and a meeting with the Adviser Chair.

"The best discipline is SELF-discipline." ALL time spent on discipline matters is a waste of time and effort. Therefore, a grading policy that takes into account the attitude of a performer is vital to the development of a performance group that maintains a positive, professional atmosphere in rehearsals and performances. Participation in a performance-based class is clearly connected to New Trier's goal of developing students that demonstrate ethical conduct and global citizenship.

It is important that the students understand exactly what is expected. Attitudes almost always translate into actions and affect the conduct and citizenship of the individual and group.

An individual with a positive attitude and self-discipline:

1. Is considerate of the needs and feelings of others;
2. Leaves one's "ego" at the door and becomes a team player;
3. Helps others to learn their part;
4. Is helpful and attentive in situations when the director is not present (e.g. sectionals, student or substitute teachers);
5. Refrains from making jokes at the expense of others;
6. Is courteous to the non-teaching school employees as well as members of the faculty;
7. Turns in all music when requested, so as not to become a burden to others who must refile parts returned late;
8. Refrains from using profanity;
9. Tries to support other members of the department by attending concerts presented by peers;
10. Treats all performers with respect, understands what it means to be a "good audience member," and appreciates all performances with appropriate, supportive behavior;
11. Is present at ALL concerts and dress rehearsals, or produces an acceptable excuse well in advance;
12. Does not act in an immature manner when in public places while with the ensemble;
13. Always employs the best technique and sensitivity in warm-up, rehearsal, and concert;
14. Is on time to rehearsals and concerts;
15. ALWAYS brings necessary materials to class;



16. Approaches ALL new music with an open mind seeing each piece as an opportunity to learn;
17. Recognizes warm-up time as an important part of class;
18. Uses a pencil to mark parts;
19. Is quiet at the proper times during rehearsals;
20. Acts as a professional when rehearsing and PERFORMING;
21. Practices music regularly;
22. Attends concerts away from school of groups performing music similar to that of one's ensemble;
23. Maintains in proper condition, and wears the appropriate uniform for concerts;
24. Participates in extra-curricular music activities;
25. Assists in keeping the rehearsal and performance areas neat, clean, and orderly;
26. Does not participate in or encourage vandalism of school property, or the belongings of others;
27. Assists after performances or rehearsals with equipment that needs to be moved or attended to;
28. Abides by school rules and regulations;
29. Does not deface signs posted in the building;
30. Does not mistreat school instruments, pianos, etc.;
31. Turns in excursion cards and any other forms, completed and on time;
32. Does NOT thrive on complaining or finding fault with the direction or leadership of the ensemble, or the efforts of its members;
33. Employs creative thinking skills to solve problems and voice concerns.

# NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF MUSIC

The New Trier High School Music Department believes in educating our students toward the realization of our school motto... 'To commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity.' To that end, all repertoire studied and performed by student ensembles is selected solely on the basis of musical and artistic merits and includes literature spanning a wide variety of eras and genres.

## Criteria for the Selection of Music

A good composition, no matter what the level of difficulty, has qualities that are lasting. When selecting music for study or performance, the following criteria are considered:<sup>1</sup>

- overall musical quality of composition
- aesthetic and musical effect created
- potential for musical development
- characteristics of musical elements for study:
  - rhythm, melody, harmony, form, style, texture, timbre, expressive elements (contrast, variety, mood)
- appropriate difficulty for ensemble:
  - sophistication of composition, technical requirements, rehearsal time required
- individual strengths of personnel, voicing, instrumentation of ensemble
- variety and balance in programming:
  - length, audience appeal, balance of styles and genres, musical effect, uniqueness
- significance of composer or arranger
- text (for vocal composition):
  - literary value of text, poet/lyricist, language, tone painting, sounds for their own sake, musical setting of text
- accompaniment:
  - characteristics, difficulty, relationship of parts, musical opportunities for students

<sup>1</sup>(adapted from *Comprehensive Musicianship Through Performance Project*, 1977)

## Rationale for the Study of Sacred Music

The **National Association for Music Education**, the nation's leading association of music educators, has adopted the position that "the study of religious music is a vital and appropriate part of the total music experience in both performance and listening. To omit sacred music from the repertoire or study of music would present an incorrect and incomplete concept of the comprehensive nature of the art."<sup>2</sup>

Although the First Amendment does not forbid all mention of religion in public schools, it does prohibit the advancement or inhibition of religion by the state. Taking a neutral approach concerning music with a sacred text, neither promoting nor inhibiting religious practices, the music program at New Trier High School exercises caution, sensitivity, and good judgment when selecting sacred music for study and performance.

Pieces chosen for study, whether sacred or secular, are significant examples of musical literature and are selected solely on the basis of their musical and educational value, fitting the criteria stated, not on their context. In addition, sacred music selections are presented objectively as a part of a secular curriculum. The following guidelines are used to ensure that rehearsals and performances at New Trier High School remain religiously neutral:

- The literature is selected to focus on musical, artistic, stylistic, historical, and cultural considerations.
- The neutral role, neither promoting nor inhibiting religious views, is emphasized in both rehearsals and performances.
- The use of religious symbols or scenery and performances in devotional settings are both limited.
- The traditions of diverse people and cultures are shared and respected.

- The various religious beliefs and sensitivities represented in the community are understood.

Studying art without the works with scriptural themes, architecture without the places of worship, or literature without the mention of the Bible, Koran, Talmud, etc. is just as incomplete a curriculum as studying music without sacred literature. It is important that the school music curriculum be more inclusive, not exclusive, and that it be comprised of music from all styles, forms, periods, and cultures. Since music with a sacred text or of a religious origin, particularly choral music, comprises such a substantial portion of music literature and has such an important place in the history of music, it should and does have an important place in music education.

<sup>2</sup>(adapted from *Religious Music in the Schools*, Music Educators National Conference, Reston, VA)

## Alternative Musical Experiences

The Music Department acknowledges religious and moral differences. Therefore, students and parents who express a significant concern about a piece of music presented for study may request an alternative musical experience. However, it must be noted, the activity will not be a comparable experience due to the unique nature of music performance. Therefore, an alternative activity will be assigned and accepted only after private discussion in which the student brings his or her concerns to the teacher's attention.

Alternative musical experiences could include:

- musical analysis of similar literature
- research paper about a composer, historical period, genre, style, etc.
- taped evidence of individual practice during time away from rehearsal and/or performance
- concert or rehearsal critiques

## **Procedures for Seeking Alternative Musical Experiences**

---

If a student is concerned about the study or performance of any piece of music:

1. The student should initiate a conference with the classroom teacher. Ideally, the student and teacher will reach an agreement which allows the student to be present during rehearsal and performance. The Department Chair will be informed of the agreement.
2. If an agreement is not reached, the matter will be referred to the Music Department Chair.
  - In an interview with the student, the Department Chair will evaluate the nature of the concern.
  - Alternatives will be considered if the Department Chair determines that the student has a legitimate objection to the music being studied. The selected alternative must be equivalent to the time and effort invested in the rehearsal and performance in the classroom.

---

*The New Trier Motto:  
To commit minds to inquiry,  
hearts to compassion, and  
lives to the service of humanity.*

---

*This brochure was produced by the  
New Trier High School Music Department  
in conjunction with members of the  
New Trier High School  
Board of Education.*

---

Linda Yonke, Ed. D.  
Superintendent

Paul Sally  
Assistant Superintendent  
for Curriculum and Instruction

Timothy Hayes  
Assistant Superintendent  
for Student Services

Denise Dubravec  
Principal, Winnetka

Paul Waechtler  
Principal, Northfield

David Ladd  
Chair, Music Department



---

NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP  
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203

Winnetka Campus  
385 Winnetka Avenue  
Winnetka, Illinois 60093-4295  
(847) 446-7000

Northfield Campus  
7 Happ Road  
Northfield, Illinois 60093-3411  
(847) 446-7000



---

NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP  
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203  
Music Department

## **NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION OF MUSIC**

# Acknowledgement Signature Form

We have received, read, and understand the following (please initial):

Student	Parent	
_____	_____	The New Trier High School Music Department Guidelines
_____	_____	The Music Department Guidelines for the Selection of Music
_____	_____	The specific grading policy for my music ensemble(s)
_____	_____	Seniors only – The ensemble commitment letter
_____	_____	The 2016-2017 performance calendar(s) for my music ensemble(s).
		Music ensemble (s) _____

Parent or Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Parent or Guardian's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*