

# Teaching Music Improvisation with Technology

## Course Outline 2018

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### Pre Assignment:

Read *Ch. 1: Introduction to the Mechanics of Improvisation* from Teaching Music Improvisation with Technology. In a Google Doc, complete the Chapter 1 Review on p. 26 of the PDF.

Web Link for Ch. 1 -

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8VDaqhHZV7DdWsyjVIM0FiUGM/view?usp=sharing>

### Day 1 - Improv Overview and Auto Accompaniment Software

1. Welcome and Ice Breaker
2. Google Classroom overview
3. Introduction to the Mechanics of Improvisation (overview)
  - a. Branford Marsalis Interview - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTfDL0ju2tA>
4. Keyboard Improv Jam - (example - <https://goo.gl/0mRLKM> )
5. Auto Accompaniment Software: Band-in-a-Box
  - a. Black Keys Only: Eb Jam Blues
    - i. Improv with black keys, phrasing
  - b. Blues Variation: Freddie Freeloader
    - i. Record a modal improv
    - ii. Jam session!
  - c. Modal Improvisation: So What
    - i. QWERTY keyboard Wizard
6. iPad Connection: iReal Pro
7. Ch. 2 Review (p.74-75)

### Day 2 - Notation Software

1. BIAB: Chord Bracketing: Autumn Leaves
2. Creating a Lead Sheet: Für Elise by Beethoven
3. Creating an Exercise Sheet: Money by Pink Floyd
  - a. Aebersold p. 10 for exercises
  - b. Practice exactly as written, then modify rhythm, then mixup patterns
4. Creating a Motif-based Solo: Four by Miles Davis

- a. Finding licks - Aebersold p. 29 (Major) p. 46 (ii-V-I); Baker "How to Play Bebop, Vol 2"
- b. Import XML, copy/paste, transpose
- c. Create BIAB accomp and practice your solo
- d. ...OR export MIDI from Note Flight and import into BIAB
5. Creating a Chord-tone Solo: All the Things You Are
6. Ch. 3 Review (p.102)

### **Day 3 - SmartMusic, Audacity, and GarageBand**

1. Chord Bracketing Review: Four and All the Things
2. The Power of MIDI in Notation Software: Export MIDI from BIAB and import into Note Flight
3. iPad Connection: forScore
  - a. Import PDF, scanning overview, organizing, add audio accomp, record performance, export score to Google
4. Classic SmartMusic (demo)
  - a. Exercises
    - i. Jazz - Blues, ii-V-I scales/arpeggios, iii-VI-ii-V-I scales/arpeggios
    - ii. Blues Licks - ear training exercises
  - b. Jazz Improvisation
    - i. Alfred materials
    - ii. SmartMusic Improv materials
    - iii. Wynton materials
    - iv. Piano/Bass/Drum transcriptions
    - v. Transpose, Patterns, Learn Chords
  - c. Big Band charts - Shiny Stockings
5. New SmartMusic
  - a. Method Books > Essential Elements for Jazz Ensemble
  - b. Band/Orch > Search "jazz"
  - c. Jazz Improv > Alfred, SM, and Marsalis
    - i. Transcriptions for Piano, Bass, & Drum parts
  - d. Creating a class and inviting students.
6. Audacity
  - a. Isolating and Slowing Down Audio in Audacity: Miles Davis solo on So What
    - i. Download a song of your choice and slow down a portion
  - b. Comparing Melodies in Audacity: All Along the Watchtower by Dylan, Hendrix, and Matthews
    - i. Download multiple versions of the same tune and compare the melody.

- c. YouTube to MP3 converter - <https://ytmp3.cc/>
- 7. GarageBand
  - a. Importing MIDI into GarageBand: Maiden Voyage by Herbie Hancock
- 8. Ch. 4 Review (p.130-131)

#### **Day 4 - Web Resources for Listening/Posting/Organizing**

- 1. Chord Bracketing practice - *Cantaloupe Island* and *Afternoon in Paris*
- 2. GarageBand
  - a. Why GarageBand? Improved sound, easy editing to make custom sections, record audio (voice or instrument)
  - b. Finish Maiden Voyage (voice recording)
  - c. High Quality Audio Recording in GarageBand and Audacity: Reprise of All the Things You Are Chord Tone Solo
- 3. iPad Connection: Creating Accompaniments Using Smart Instruments in GarageBand for iOS: Little Sunflower by Freddie Hubbard
- 4. Web Resources for Listening
  - a. Using YouTube to Teach Musical Improvisation
  - b. Using Spotify to Teach Musical Improvisation
  - c. iPad Connection: YouTube and Spotify Apps
  - d. Ch. 5 Review (p.145-146)
- 5. Web Resources for Posting
  - a. Preparing Audio Files for Web Posting
  - b. Posting to SoundCloud
  - c. Posting and Sharing with Google Drive
  - d. iPad Connection: Posting to SoundCloud and YouTube from GarageBand for iOS
  - e. Ch. 6 Review (p. 159)
- 6. Web Design to Organize Online Material (Weebly)
  - a. Web Design Overview
  - b. Web Design with Weebly - Example site: [www.improvwithtech.weebly.com](http://www.improvwithtech.weebly.com)
  - c. iPad Connection: Weebly App
  - d. Ch. 7 Review (p. 185)

#### **Day 5 - Final Project**

- 1. Select a song that you will use with your school ensemble. Develop improvisation practice/listening materials for that specific song. You may use the song you selected for your pre-assignment or any other tune that fits the suggested repertoire guidelines including any song we covered throughout class this week. You should create all or some of the following:

- a. Audio play-along accompaniment file(s) created using Band-in-a-Box, iReal Pro (iPad), and/or GarageBand.
- b. Improvisation practice files (such as a chord tone exercise, lick-based solo, and/or chord tone solo) created using Note Flight.
- c. Audio excerpts of famous recordings of the tune captured using Audacity. You may want to include a slowed-down version of some clips.
- d. YouTube and/or Spotify playlist including instructional videos and/or example recordings of the tune.

**Post Assignment:**

Organize all of the material you developed in your Final Project using a Weebly website. Your website should include:

1. Linked or embedded audio play-along accompaniment files and audio excerpts of famous recordings posted on Google Drive and/or SoundCloud.
2. Linked or embedded notation files with improvisation practice exercises (such as a chord tone exercise, lick-based solo, and/or chord tone solo).
3. Linked or embedded YouTube and/or Spotify playlist(s) including instructional videos and/or example recordings of the tune.