

**San Diego State University**  
**School of Music and Dance**  
**Jazz Studies Department**

**Scholarship and Placement Audition Policies**

The SDSU Jazz Studies Department has designed the following policies to apply to students who are seeking to audition for placement in the program as incoming freshmen, undergraduate transfer students (upper division) and graduate students.

The SDSU Jazz Studies web page, <http://jazz.sdsu.edu/index.php>, contains the following downloadable documents in PDF format:

Audition Repertoire list

Undergraduate and Graduate Scale Syllabi (please click on Resources and Requirements link)

**Live Auditions**

The purpose of this audition is to determine a student's qualifications for placement as a jazz performance major. To accurately facilitate that evaluation, the following repertoire policies are required. Live auditions are conducted by jazz studies faculty members.

Students who reside in San Diego, Orange, Riverside, Imperial and Los Angeles counties will be required to audition live at San Diego State University on the specified audition dates.

***Freshman Brass Players, Woodwind Players, Guitarists, Bassists and Vibraphonists***

- 1) The auditioning student will perform two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Freshman Repertoire List that is included along with these policies.
- 2) Jazz faculty will provide piano accompaniment. Please have copies of your music (in lead sheet form) available for them in concert key.
- 3) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 4) The auditioning student will sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire.
- 5) The auditioning student will also sight read and improvise over a set of chord changes.
- 6) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play major scales in all keys, one and a half or two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ), as is determined by individual instrument ranges.

***Freshman Pianists***

- 1) The auditioning student will perform two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Freshman Repertoire List that is included along with these policies.
- 2) Jazz faculty will provide bass line accompaniment in the bass register of the piano in the manner of a jazz bassist.
- 3) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 4) The auditioning student will sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire.
- 5) The auditioning student will also sight read and improvise over a set of chord changes.
- 6) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play major scales in all keys, one and a half or two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ), as is determined by individual instrument ranges.

***Freshman Drum Kit Players***

- 1) The auditioning student will be required to play a number of different rhythmic styles accompanied by jazz faculty.
  - 2) The auditioning student will also sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire accompanied by jazz faculty.
- Drum kit players who are accepted as jazz studies performance majors will take private lessons on drum kit and jazz vibraphone.

***Junior Level (Upper Division) Transferring Brass Players, Woodwind Players, Guitarists, Bassists and Vibraphonists***

The student will prepare a Junior Level Examination that will include the following:

- 1) Prepare two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Junior Level Repertoire List that is included along with these policies. Jazz faculty will provide piano accompaniment. Please have copies of your music (in lead sheet form) available for them in concert key.
- 2) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 3) The auditioning student will sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire.
- 4) The auditioning student will also sight read and improvise over a set of chord changes.
- 5) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play the listed scales in all keys, one and a half or two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ), as is determined by individual instrument ranges:
  - a) Melodic Minor Mode (Jazz Form)
  - b) Harmonic Minor Mode
  - c) Lydian Mode
  - d) Lydian Dominant Mode (a.k.a. Lydian  $\flat 7$ )

***Junior Level (Upper Division) Transferring Pianists***

The student will prepare a Junior Level Examination that will include the following:

- 1) Prepare two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Junior Level Repertoire List that is included along with these policies. Jazz faculty will provide piano accompaniment. Jazz faculty will provide bass line accompaniment in the bass register of the piano in the manner of a jazz bassist.
- 2) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 3) The auditioning student will also sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire.
- 4) The auditioning student will also sight read and improvise over a set of chord changes.
- 5) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play the following scales in all keys, two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ), hands together in parallel motion:
  - a) Melodic Minor Mode (Jazz Form)
  - b) Harmonic Minor Mode
  - c) Lydian Mode
  - d) Lydian Dominant Mode (a.k.a. Lydian  $\flat 7$ )

***Junior Level (Upper Division) Transferring Drum Kit Players***

The student will prepare a Junior Level Examination that will include the following:

- 1) The auditioning student will be required to play a number of different rhythmic styles accompanied by jazz faculty.
- 2) The auditioning student will also sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire accompanied by jazz faculty.
- 3) If the auditioning drum kit player has experience improvising jazz on the vibraphone, prepare two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Freshman Repertoire List or Junior Level Repertoire List.
- 4) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play the major scale in all keys, two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ).

Drum kit players who are accepted as jazz studies performance majors will take private lessons on drum kit and jazz vibraphone.

***Graduate Brass Players, Woodwind Players, Guitarists, Bassists and Vibraphonists***

- 1) The auditioning student will perform two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Graduate Repertoire List that is included along with these policies.
- 2) Jazz faculty will provide piano accompaniment. Please have copies of your music (in lead sheet form) available for them in concert key.
- 3) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 4) The auditioning student will sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire.
- 5) The auditioning student will also sight read and improvise over a set of chord changes.
- 6) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play the listed scales in all keys, one and a half or two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ), as is determined by individual instrument ranges:
  - a) Melodic Minor (Jazz Form)
  - b) Harmonic Minor
  - c) Diminished Scale (dominant form)

***Graduate Pianists***

- 1) The auditioning student will perform two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Graduate Repertoire List that is included along with these policies.
- 2) Jazz faculty will provide bass line accompaniment in the bass register of the piano in the manner of a jazz bassist.
- 3) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 4) The auditioning student will sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire.
- 5) The auditioning student will also sight read and improvise over a set of chord changes.
- 6) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play the following scales in all keys, two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ), hands together in parallel motion:
  - a) Melodic Minor (Jazz Form)
  - b) Harmonic Minor
  - c) Diminished Scale (dominant form)

***Graduate Drum Kit Players***

- 1) The auditioning student will be required to play a number of different rhythmic styles accompanied by jazz faculty.
- 2) The auditioning student will also sight read various excerpts from jazz band repertoire accompanied by jazz faculty.
- 3) If the auditioning drum kit player has experience improvising jazz on the vibraphone, prepare two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Junior Level Repertoire List or Graduate Repertoire List.
- 4) The auditioning student will also be prepared to play the following scales in all keys, two octaves, in eighth notes, ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ):
  - a) Melodic Minor (Jazz Form)
  - b) Harmonic Minor

Drum kit players who are accepted as jazz studies performance majors will take private lessons on drum kit and jazz vibraphone.

### **DVD and VHS Tape Auditions**

Students who live outside of San Diego, Orange, Riverside, Imperial and Los Angeles counties may audition via DVD or VHS tape. Audio compact discs will be accepted with DVDs or VHS tapes as backup audition performance documentation, not in lieu of DVDs or VHS tapes. Taped auditions for jazz majors (all instruments) are for provisional acceptance only. If accepted provisionally, you will still have to perform a second audition which will include sight-reading of various excerpts from jazz band repertoire and sight reading and improvisation over a set of chord changes at the close of your first semester of study at SDSU for final acceptance into our program.

The jazz faculty will expect all DVDs and VHS tapes to clearly indicate the auditioning student's name, instrument and selected repertoire. While the jazz faculty does not expect "professional" level production quality, it is very important that DVDs and VHS tapes have an audio quality sufficient for the committee to clearly hear the auditioning student's performance.

### ***Freshman Brass Player, Woodwind Player, Pianist, Guitarist, Bassist and Vibraphonist DVD and VHS Tape Auditions***

- 1) The auditioning student will perform two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the required Freshman Repertoire List that is included along with these policies.
- 2) Ideally, the committee would prefer to hear the auditioning student perform with a live rhythm section. If this is not possible, Abersold play along tracs are acceptable as long as they are properly balanced.
- 3) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 3) The auditioning student will also record his or her performance of Major scales in all keys, one and a half or two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ) as is determined by individual instrument ranges. Pianists will be expected to play two octaves, hands together in parallel motion. The major scales may be performed around the circle of 5ths or chromatically.
- 4) If conditionally accepted, the first semester jury will also include the aforementioned sight-reading component that will determine final acceptance into the program.

### ***Freshman Drum Kit Player DVD & VHS Tape Auditions***

- 1) The auditioning student will be required to play a number of different rhythmic styles which would include swing, bossa nova, samba, jazz waltz and funk styles with a rhythm section including piano and/or guitar and bass. Please limit each excerpt to between sixteen or twenty-four measures.
  - 2) In the swing style, in a twelve measure blues with a rhythm section, play four measures of time and four measures of solo over the form for three choruses.
  - 3) If conditionally accepted, the first semester jury will also include the aforementioned sight-reading component, which will determine final acceptance into the program.
- Drum kit jazz studies performance majors will take private lessons on drum kit and jazz vibraphone.

### ***Junior Level (Upper Division) Transferring Brass Player, Woodwind Player, Pianist, Guitarist, Bassist and Vibraphonist DVD & VHS Tape Auditions***

The student will prepare a Junior Level Examination that will include the following:

- 1) Prepare two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Junior Level Repertoire List that is included along with these policies.

Junior Level (Upper Division) Transferring Brass Player, Woodwind Player, Pianist, Guitarist, Bassist and Vibraphonist DVD & VHS Tape Auditions cont.,

- 2) Ideally, the committee would prefer to hear the auditioning student perform with a live rhythm section. If this is not possible, Abersold play along tracs are acceptable as long as they are properly balanced.
- 3) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.
- 4) The auditioning student will also record the following modes in all keys, one and a half or two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ) as is determined by individual instrument ranges. Pianists will be expected to play two octaves, hands together in parallel motion.
  - a) Melodic Minor Mode (Jazz Form)
  - b) Harmonic Minor Mode
  - c) Lydian Mode
  - d) Lydian Dominant Mode (a.k.a. Lydian  $\flat 7$ )
- 5) If conditionally accepted, the first semester jury will also include the aforementioned sight-reading component, which will determine final acceptance into the program.

***Junior Level (Upper Division) Transferring Drum Kit Players DVD & VHS Tape Auditions***

The student will prepare a Junior Level Examination that will include the following:

- 1) The auditioning student will be required to play a number of different rhythmic styles which would include swing, bossa nova, samba, jazz waltz and funk styles with a rhythm section including piano and/or guitar and bass. Please limit each excerpt to between sixteen or twenty-four measures.
- 2) In the swing style, in a twelve measure blues with a rhythm section, play four measures of time and four measures of solo over the form for three choruses.
- 3) If the auditioning drum kit player has experience improvising jazz on the vibraphone, prepare and record two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Freshman Repertoire List or Junior Level Repertoire List.
- 4) The auditioning student will also record his or her performance of the major scale in all keys, two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ). The scales may be performed around the circle of 5ths or chromatically.
- 5) If conditionally accepted, the first semester jury will also include the aforementioned sight-reading component, which will determine final acceptance into the program.

Drum kit jazz studies performance majors will take private lessons on drum kit and jazz vibraphone.

***Graduate Brass Player, Woodwind Player, Pianist, Guitarist, Bassist and Vibraphonist DVD & VHS Tape Auditions***

- 1) The auditioning student will perform two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the required Upper Division Undergraduate Repertoire List, which is included along with these policies.
- 2) Ideally, the committee would prefer to hear the auditioning student perform with a live rhythm section. If this is not possible, Abersold play along tracs are acceptable as long as they are properly balanced.
- 3) The auditioning student will be expected to accurately perform the themes of the pieces he or she has chosen and improvise on those pieces.

Graduate Brass Player, Woodwind Player, Pianist, Guitarist, Bassist and Vibraphonist DVD & VHS Tape Auditions cont.,

4) The auditioning student will also record his or her performance of the following modes in all keys, one and a half or two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ) as is determined by individual instrument ranges. Pianists will be expected to play two octaves, hands together in parallel motion.

- a) Melodic Minor (Jazz Form)
- b) Harmonic Minor
- c) Diminished Scale (dominant form)

5) If conditionally accepted, the first semester jury will also include the aforementioned sight-reading component, which will determine final acceptance into the program.

***Graduate Drum Kit Players DVD & VHS Tape Auditions***

1) The auditioning student will be required to play a number of different rhythmic styles which would include swing, bossa nova, samba, jazz waltz and funk styles with a rhythm section including piano and/or guitar and bass. Please limit each excerpt to between sixteen or twenty-four measures.

2) In the swing style, in a twelve measure blues with a rhythm section, play four measures of time and four measures of solo over the form for three choruses.

3) If conditionally accepted, the first semester jury will also include the aforementioned sight-reading component, which will determine final acceptance into the program.

4) If the auditioning drum kit player has experience improvising jazz on the vibraphone, record two pieces in contrasting tempos, keys and styles from the Junior Level Repertoire List or Graduate Repertoire List with rhythm section.

(Ideally, the committee would prefer to hear the auditioning student perform with a live rhythm section. If this is not possible, Abersold play along tracs are acceptable as long as they are properly balanced.)

5) The auditioning student will also record his or her performance of Melodic Minor (jazz form) and Harmonic Minor scales in all keys, two octaves, in eighth notes ( $\downarrow = 100-120$ ). The scales may be performed around the circle of 5ths or chromatically.

6) If conditionally accepted, the first semester jury will also include the aforementioned sight-reading component, which will determine final acceptance into the program.

Drum kit jazz studies performance majors will take private lessons on drum kit and jazz vibraphone.