COURSE CHANGE REQUEST Undergraduate Programs

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 $Email\ this\ form\ and\ syllabus\ to\ \underline{mjenning@fau.edu}\ seven\ business\ days\ before\ the\ UUPC\ meeting.$



INSTRUCTOR: Dr. James E. Cunningham

MEETING TIMES: Thursday, 12:00-12:50 (1 credit)

ROOM: AL 249
OFFICE: AL 249
OFFICE HOURS: TBA

OFFICE PHONE: (561) 297-2208 EMAIL: jcunning@fau.edu

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: This one-credit research-intensive course utilizes the didgeridoo as a vehicle for the creation of individual musical expression via experimentation with Aboriginal and contemporary approaches to composition, performance, and improvisation.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The locus of the Beginning Workshop is the didgeridoo, an ancient Australian Aboriginal aerophone that is played within its cultural context to accompany song and dance. Traditionally constructed from termite-hollowed eucalyptus wood with no finger holes, the didgeridoo is a long tube that features only one fundamental low-frequency tone that produces a wide variety of timbres and effects. The didgeridoo workshop begins with familiarization with the five basic playing techniques developed by its Aboriginal originators: pursed-tone production, rhythmic breathing, tongue effects, unvoiced "vowel" sounds, and voiced multi-phonics. The focus of the course then shifts quickly from fundamentals to the development of creative individual and group musical applications, such as improvisation, composition, and performance art.

GOAL: This one-credit course will focus on guided experimental and performative research with the goal of exploration and development of expressive, compositional, and creative skills, which can be applied to a wide range of other instruments, the human voice, as well numerous performance arts (i.e. theater, poetry, dance, etc.). Because of its ease of learnability and ability to produce a wide variety of timbres and rhythms, the didgeridoo is the perfect vehicle for musical exploration, ultimately providing students an alternative context for integration of diverse approaches to contemporary musical expression. The course also includes guided instruction into the construction of the didgeridoo, with hands-on didgeridoo-making exercises as an integral component in the process of music composition and performance.

REQUIREMENTS: The required text is *Didgeridoo: Ritual Origin and Playing Techniques*, Dirk Schellberg, Binkey Kok Publications, Holland, 2004. Prior musical experience is not necessary. Because of the hands-on nature of the course, students are required to attend and participate in all class sessions. The instructor must be notified in writing (email) of both anticipated and unexpected absences. **This course is open to the FAU general student population, and there are no prerequisites.**



STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **1: Knowledge.** Students are expected to understand and demonstrate an ability to perform the five basic didgeridoo playing techniques developed by the Australian Aboriginal originators of the tradition: pursed-tone production, rhythmic/circular breathing, tonguing, unvoiced vowel sounds, and multi-phonic vocalizations. Students will also participate in didgeridoo-making exercises and use their self-made instruments as a component of their final project.
- **2: Formulate Questions.** Although many questions in the class may revolve around the development of basic playing techniques, through experimentation and guidance students will be challenged to explore non-traditional techniques in the development of their original compositions. It is also important that individual compositions be named according to the thematic or programmatic nature of the piece.
- **3: Plan of Action.** Students will be required to develop a plan of action for the development of individual projects. Through a process of mentorship, experimentation, and choice students will develop musical ideas from their palate of available sounds into a cohesive composition.
- **4: Critical Thinking.** Students are expected to apply critical thinking skills in the development of expressive and experimental approaches to their compositional and performative ideas. Critical thinking will be nurtured and applied during in-class improvisatory exercises designed to stimulate creative thought. Special emphasis will be placed on critical thinking in the areas of aural analysis, problem solving, and self-awareness during group improvisational exercises.
- **5: Ethical Conduct.** Ethical issues in this course are closely associated with Australian Aboriginal cultural attitudes. Paramount to these issues is the question: What are the implications when a musical instrument (the didgeridoo) is abstracted from its traditional social and spiritual role in Aboriginal society? What are the ramifications of non-Aboriginals and females playing the didgeridoo?
- **6:** Communication. As a performance-based research course, students will be required to present a named composition in front of their peers as a realization of their final project. Performances will be filmed, and if possible, pieces will be performed as part of an end-of-semester concert. With students' permission, final video composition will be posted on the instructor's YouTube page.

OURI STATEMENT: This course contains an assignment or multiple assignments designed to help students conduct research and inquiry at an intensive level. If this class is selected to participate in the university-wide assessment program, students will be asked to complete a consent form and submit electronically some of their research assignments for review. Visit the Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (OURI) for additional opportunities and information at http://www.fau.edu/ouri.



ASSESSMENT: Students will be evaluated on both attendance and a final research-intensive assignment. As a research-intensive course, a significant portion of the work (50%) will be undertaken outside of class. In-class sessions will be utilized to evaluate student progress, provide listening and performance exercises designed to stimulate creative thought. Significant opportunities will be offered for peer-based reviews and critiques of individual compositions. In addition to class attendance students will be expected to practice basic didgeridoo playing techniques and develop ideas for individual compositions. A total of five points may be given for attendance/participation in each class (75 points possible). Final compositions will be performed before a live audience (i.e. a Music at Noon Friday Concert), and/or video-taped for posting on YouTube and the course Canvas site. Because of the subjective nature of musical expression, students' final projects will be graded on the integration and performance quality of their musical ideas through incorporation of the basic didgeridoo playing techniques. Final projects will be graded on a 75-point scale with the following breakdown:

- 25 points mastery of basic didgeridoo playing techniques
- 25 points performance demeanor and presentation
- 25 points degree of experimentation and non-traditional techniques

Final grades will be based on an adjusted percentage curve, with 100% determined by the highest student score, according to the grading scale below:

A = 93-100%, A- = 90-92%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C = 73-76%, C- = 70-72%, D+ = 67-69%, D = 63-66%, D- = 60-62%, F=below 60%.

COURSE SCHEDULE (may be subject to change)

Wk. 1 - INTRODUCTION, BASIC TONE PRODUCTION, DIDGE-MAKING I

Wk. 2 - VOCALIZATIONS

Wk. 3 - CONSONANTS/TONGUING

Wk. 4 - VOWEL SOUNDS

Wk. 5 - RHYTHMIC/CIRCULAR BREATHING

Wk. 6 - DIDGERIDOO-MAKING WORKSHOP II

Wk. 7 - COMPOSITION 1

Wk. 8 – GROUP IMPROVISATION 1

Wk. 9 - COMPOSITION 2

Wk. 10 - GROUP IMPROVISATION 2

Wk. 11 - COMPOSITION 3

Wk. 12 - GROUP IMPROVISATION 3

Wk. 13 – SONIC WALKABOUT (fieldtrip to on-campus acoustic sites)

Wk. 14 - COMPOSITION 4

Wk. 15 - FINAL PROJECT VIDEO TAPING/PERFORMANCES



ATTENDANCE POLICY STATEMENT: Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed 3 without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

DISABILITY POLICY STATEMENT: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at www.fau.edu/sas/.

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS) CENTER: Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to http://www.fau.edu/counseling/

CODE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY STATEMENT: Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high-quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001. If your college has particular policies relating to cheating and plagiarism, state so here or provide a link to the full policy—but be sure the college policy does not conflict with the University Regulation.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS: Any student, upon notifying his or her instructor, will be excused from class or other scheduled academic or educational activity to observe a religious holy day of his or her personal faith. Such notification shall be made no later than the end of the second week of the applicable academic term. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic or educational activity because of religious observances, practices or beliefs. Students should review course requirements and meeting days and times to avoid foreseeable conflicts, as excessive absences in a given term may prevent a student from successfully completing the academic requirements of a course. Students who are excused from class or a specific work assignment or other academic or educational activity for the purpose of observing a religious holy day will be responsible for the material covered in their absence but shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up any missed work. Missed work shall be made up in accordance with a timetable set by the student's instructor or as prescribed by the instructor at the beginning of the academic term.