

NC State Jazz Ensembles

Frequently Asked Questions:

What ensembles do you have?

- We typically have up to 7 jazz ensembles each semester. The Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Lab Band, and Jazz Studio Bands are all big bands playing a wide variety of music, and the jazz combos range in experience from highly skilled (Cates Avenue and Bell Tower combos) to intermediate (Brickyard Jazz and Jazz Workshop combos).

When do the big bands meet?

- **The Jazz Studio Band** (MUS 142-002) is a 1-hour credit course that meets on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30-2:45** in Price Music Center room 101.
- **The Jazz Lab Band** (MUS 142-001) is a 1-hour credit course that meets on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30-5:45** in Price Music Center room 101.
- **The Jazz Orchestra** (MUS 144) is a 1-hour credit course that meets on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00-7:30** in Price Music Center room 101.

When do the jazz combos meet?

- The jazz combos (MUS 141, sections 001 and 002, and MUS 143, sections 001 and 002) typically meet on a TBA basis depending on the compatibility of the schedules of those selected for each group. These groups meet at least once per week for 75 minutes, but the members often elect to meet two times per week when possible. Two of the combos will meet on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 4:30-5:45 and 6:00-7:15 in Price Music Center room 201.

How do auditions work?

- We audition for every ensemble during the first two weeks of classes every fall. This Fall auditions run from August 20th through the 26th, and they consist of scales, prepared etudes, sight reading, and optional (but recommended) improvisation. The audition music will be fully uploaded by July 1st, and can be found by clicking this link: [2024/2025 NC State Jazz Audition Materials](#)

How do I register for jazz ensembles?

- Dr. Parker can handle your registration once you are placed into an ensemble after your audition. Please make sure you have at least 1-credit hour available in your schedule so you can be registered (18 hours is a full load). *Students registering for 19 hours or more need to obtain approval from their academic advisors.*

How many performances do the jazz ensembles have each year?

- The Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Lab Band, and Jazz Studio Band typically perform on campus one or two times in the fall and two or three times each spring. The jazz combos have one end of semester performance, but the more advanced combos often perform multiple times for various functions throughout each semester.

How can I get help preparing for my audition?

- We usually hold an Audition Clinic/Open Jam Session each Fall semester on the Friday before the 1st day of classes in Price Music Center room 101 (August 16th). This is an opportunity for you to meet others from the jazz program and to play through your audition music with a live rhythm section. We run this like a jam session to make it fun, and we usually end up having a great time!

I am not very experienced in jazz, should I even bother auditioning?

- YES! Audition and let us decide whether or not you have what it takes to be a part of the NC State Jazz Program. We have a wide variety of experience levels here, and many of our most experienced players found themselves wondering the exact same thing when they were stepping onto campus for the first time. Do not worry about how well you can play the audition music, we are experienced at identifying potential from even the most basic of auditions. We need pianists, bassists, guitarists, drummers, trombonists, saxophonists, and trumpet players to continue our long tradition of jazz excellence at NC State. Come audition to be an integral part of that tradition!

I still have questions, who can I ask?

- [Email Dr. Wes Parker, Director of Jazz Studies with additional questions](#)