



Department of Music

MUA3056c Private Piano - Commercial

1-2 Units

Spring 2026

Meeting days/times (Tuesday AM / TBD other times)

Meeting location CM220

Final Exam: Jury: Monday May 4<sup>th</sup> times TBA

INFORMATION	SPECIFICS FOR THE COURSE
Instructor title and name:	Bobby Cressey
Phone (cell):	310-991-7504
Email:	bcessey@pointloma.edu
Meeting Location:	CM220 / Practice Room G

**PLNU Mission**

**To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Private, applied instruction in a performing area is a vital part of the development of Music majors, as well as an appropriate elective for many non-majors. Students are assigned to a level according to their proficiency and mastery of materials listed for a given level. "C" Designation is for Commercial Music. Private piano lessons in beginning/intermediate improvisation. Topics covered may include interpreting basic lead sheets, chords and piano voicings, improvising, and accompanying in pop, jazz, and worship styles. May include some transcriptions or jazz/pop style solos and ear training.

**COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Although specific goals will vary according to the level and interests of each private student, by the end of the semester each student will be able to demonstrate a range of outcomes depending on the students' chosen focus include looking at a basic lead sheet and playing in these ways:

- Play the melody with the right hand while comping/accompanying with the left hand
- Improvise new melodies over the chord changes of a given lead sheet

- Create basic solo keyboard arrangements from lead sheets or hymns
- Create simple two-hand accompaniments to accompany singing or instrumental solos in pop, jazz, or worship style
- Play all major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads in all inversions
- Play these types of seventh chords in root position and inversion (Major, minor, diminished)
- Play simple to more complex ii-V-I progressions in all keys.
- Play left hand shell ‘Bud Powell’ style voicings and rootless ‘Bill Evans’ style voicings.

## TOPICS COVERED

The following topics may be covered, depending on the level and needs of the student:

- Triads and inversions
- Seventh chords and ninth chords in root position and inversions
- Arpeggio patterns
- Scales
- Chord extensions
- Altered chords
- Shell voicings
- Left hand voicings for comping
- Two-hand chord voicings and comping
- ii-V-Is in major and minor
- Major scales and jazz modes
- Playing by ear
- Playing/arranging church music
- Constructing bebop lines
- Transcribing jazz solos
- Ear Training

## REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

To be determined during lessons.

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

- **Weekly Grade** – The 2 components (1. Practice hours and days, 2. Assignment sheet) will be averaged together to create a grade for each lesson after lesson #1.
  - ***Practice hours and days***
    - Each week at your lesson, you will report the number of hours and the number of days you practiced over the past week
    - If you are studying for 1-unit, you are expected to practice a minimum of **4 hours per week/5 days per week**.
    - I’ll average your hours practiced with the goal set for practice hours.
    - Your recorded practice time should be on assigned literature only.
    - Practice rooms are available by checking out a key.

- **Assignment sheet** – Together, we will create an assignment sheet at each lesson; in consultation with you, I'll assign a grade for your progress on the previous week's assignments.
- **Completing Pieces** –
  - If you are studying for **1 unit**, you will memorize **2 pieces** during the semester; alternately, 3 lead sheets will count as one piece and don't need to be memorized:
    - The **first piece by week 8**.
    - The **second piece by our last lesson (before finals week)**.

You will receive 100% of the earned score for the weekly grade if you choose to meet the memory requirements by the due date. If you choose not to meet the requirements, the grade for that week will be 50% of the weekly grade earned that week. Subsequent weekly grades will be 50% until you have chosen to complete the memorize assignment.

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Grading components (details below):

1. **weekly grade (assignment sheets and practice hours/days).**
2. **memorization schedule.**
3. **attendance.**

### Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

## FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

The jury is the final examination. Successful completion of this class requires completing a jury on its scheduled day (See "Final Exam" above.)

- If you are a music major whose primary performing area is in this studio or you have a Music Department scholarship in your primary instrument, you are required to take a jury at the end of each term according to the requirements in the Music Department Catalog.
- Failure to do a required jury will result in course failure.
- The jury grade is considered in the student's final grade. The final grade instructor assigns must be no more than one grade higher or lower than the jury grade. For piano, composition and instrumental juries, the jury grade counts as 1/3 of the final grade.

## **STATE AUTHORIZATION**

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

## **INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Late assignments will lose 10% for each calendar day late. They will not be accepted after the class meeting following the due date. This type of regularity allows the students to receive prompt feedback.

## **PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY**

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

## **PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

## **PLNU RECORDING NOTIFICATION**

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

## **LANGUAGE AND BELONGING**

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

You may report an incident(s) using the [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#).

## **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND DISCRIMINATION**

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at [pointloma.edu/Title-IX](http://pointloma.edu/Title-IX). Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at [counselingservices@pointloma.edu](mailto:counselingservices@pointloma.edu) or find a list of campus pastors at [pointloma.edu/title-ix](http://pointloma.edu/title-ix).

## **PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center ([EAC@pointloma.edu](mailto:EAC@pointloma.edu) or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

### **PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY**

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

### **SPIRITUAL CARE**

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the [Office of Spiritual Development](#).