Only those persons whose undergraduate preparation has been at least equivalent to the comparable undergraduate music curriculum at Northern Illinois University will be admitted to a program leading to the Master of Music degree. Jazz Studies Graduate students are admitted conditionally, with the stipulation that they take the Jazz Studies Diagnostic Examinations immediately prior to the first term of admission and, if necessary, remove any deficiencies indicated by the exams no later than the end of the second semester of matriculation. In some cases, the completion deadline may be extended by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

Deficiencies in jazz theory may be satisfied by successfully completing (grade of C or higher) MUTC 205, Jazz Theory, while those in jazz aural skills may be satisfied by completing (grade of C or higher) one or both semesters of Aural Foundations of Improvisation, MUSP 203 and 204, as needed. In the area of jazz history, deficiencies are removed by successfully completing (grade of C or higher) MUHL 230, Jazz Literature.

The Jazz Studies graduate diagnostic examinations are administered once each year, typically on the Friday preceding the start of the fall semester. Failure to take the diagnostic examinations or to remove deficiencies within the specified time will result in termination of admission to the Graduate School.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

For the jazz history examination:

Jazz Discography Project: [http://www.jazzdisco.org](http://www.jazzdisco.org)

Oxford Music Online, available here through the NIU Music Library (look down the left hand column of Core Databases on this page):
[http://libguides.niu.edu/content.php?pid=167008&sid=1407393](http://libguides.niu.edu/content.php?pid=167008&sid=1407393)

For the jazz theory and aural skills examinations:

JAZZ HISTORY REVIEW

The jazz studies graduate diagnostic examination in jazz history consists of three sections and is primarily concerned with jazz from the 1920s through 1960s. The first section is short answer identification of individuals, periods and jazz terminology. See (I) below for lists of each. The second section is identification of recorded examples from the playlist (II) below. In the third and final section you will be asked to respond to one or more of the essay questions in (III).

I. Short answer subjects
   You should be prepared to describe/define these individuals, periods and terms in a few sentences and/or to identify a description of them.

   A. People (know their instrument and major contributions and associations):

      Louis Armstrong  Jelly Roll Morton  James P. Johnson  Fletcher Henderson
      Coleman Hawkins  Duke Ellington  Count Basie  Lester Young
      Benny Goodman  John Hammond  Billie Holiday  Ella Fitzgerald
      Fats Waller  Art Tatum  Mary Lou Williams  Charlie Christian
      Charlie Parker  Dizzy Gillespie  Thelonious Monk  Charles Mingus
      Miles Davis  John Coltrane  Sonny Rollins  Clifford Brown
      Horace Silver  Art Blakey  Bill Evans  Max Roach
      Ornette Coleman  Cecil Taylor

   B. Periods, styles, and terms (be able to briefly describe and identify key individuals and stylistic aspects as appropriate):

      Ragtime  New Orleans Polyphony  Swing Era  Bebop
      Cool Jazz  Hardbop  Avant Garde  Fusion  Country Blues
      Classic Blues  riff  break  stride piano
      polyrhythm  swing  clave  contrafact
      blue notes  modal jazz

II. Playlist
   You must set up a Spotify account to access the playlist, which is available here:

      https://play.spotify.com/user/1222959179/playlist/0PIGfn3tTschw4QUsgmqqF

   or here:

      http://tinyurl.com/qxaor8j

   As we use Spotify for several jazz classes at NIU, you will need regular access to it. The most basic Spotify account is free to create and use.
In the exam, you will hear approximately one minute each of ten examples from the playlist. The examples will not necessarily be played for the beginning. For each, you will identify the following information as in the example below:

- **Artist Name (leader):** Miles Davis (leader, trumpet)
- **Title:** Flamenco Sketches
- **Year Recorded:** 1959
- **Album (if appropriate):** Kind of Blue
- **Composer:** Miles Davis and/or Bill Evans (this one’s controversial!)
- **Soloists or important sidemen and instruments:**
  - John Coltrane (ten.sax.),
  - Julian Adderley (alto sax.),
  - Paul Chambers (bass),
  - Jimmy Cobb (drums),
  - Bill Evans (piano)

Note that this information is not provided in this study guide or on Spotify, but is widely available on the internet and elsewhere for these recordings. See Recommended Resources above for some suggestions.

**III. Essay Questions**

You will be asked to respond to one or more of the following essay questions. Your answer should be thorough and specific, 3-4 paragraphs in length, and include approximate dates, full names of musicians, references to specific recordings and/or performances, and contextualization with historical events.

1. Discuss the development of Bebop in the 1940s and 1950s. Include stylistic elements, social and economic factors, and the influence that bebop had or continues to exert on musicians and American culture.

2. Describe some of the radical changes to jazz that flourished in the 1960s. Who were the key pioneers, and what were their particular contributions? How did this relate to the cultural revolution(s) of the era?

3. Describe the cultural and musical environment of New Orleans circa 1900. What factors contributed to the development of early jazz in that city?

4. What factors, musical and societal, led first to the rise and then to the demise of the big bands in the 1930s and 1940s?
JAZZ AURAL SKILLS REVIEW

The jazz studies graduate diagnostic examination in aural skills consists of three components: identification of individual chords, identification of chord progressions, and melodic dictation.

1. Chord identification
   Students should be able to identify the following chords played on the piano in typical open and close voicings. Students will only be asked to notate the chords in close position, however; it is not necessary to recognize the exact voicing on the exam.
   a) Major, minor, diminished and augmented triads in root position.
   b) Major and minor triads in first inversion.
   c) Major 9/6 and minor 9/6 chords.
   d) Major, minor, dominant, dominant sus, half diminished and diminished 7th chords in root position.
   e) Extensions of the major chord including 9, #11 and 13.
   f) Extensions of the minor chord including 9 and 11.
   g) Extensions of the dominant 7th chord including 9, #11, and 13.
   h) Two altered dominant chords, #9#5 and b9b5.

2. Chord progressions
   a) Diatonic progressions including but not limited to:
      (1) ii-V7-I
      (2) iiø-V7b9-i
      (3) iii-vi-ii-V7-I
      (4) I-IV-iii-vi-ii-V7-I
   b) Common progressions employing secondary dominants including but not limited to:
      (1) Cycle of 5ths, i.e. the bridge of rhythm changes
      (2) #iv-V7/iii-iii-V7/ii-ii-V7-I (i.e., “Woody’n You”)
      (3) Cycle of 5ths with tritone subs, i.e. the bridge of “Eternal Triangle”
   c) Common modulatory progressions including but not limited to:
      (1) I- ii-V7-I-V7/IV-IV (modulation to the subdominant)
      (2) I-ii-V7-I-iiø/vi-V7/vi-vi (modulation to relative minor)
      (3) Similar modulation to the dominant (V)
      (4) Similar modulation to ii, as in “Bye Bye Blackbird”

3. Melodic Dictation
   Students will be asked to complete a short melodic/rhythmic dictation based on a common harmonic progression in a swing style. The progression and some skeletal elements of rhythm and melody will be given. The best preparation for this is regular transcription of melodies and solos from the jazz tradition.