



June 1, 2026

Welcome to the Twenty-fourth UNI Jazz Combo Camp!

Since its inception in 2001, the camp has served over 1000 participants from all over the state, as well as a few from surrounding states, and even a music educator! This year we have around 50 students registered, each of whom will be placed into one of seven combos.

This is a very intensive week of study of jazz music. You will be in classes, rehearsals, concerts and jam sessions 10 hours a day for the next four days, with some time off for eating and sleeping. We ask a lot of you during that time, and hope that you take full advantage of the fine faculty we have assembled. The most important thing you bring to camp is your interest in learning more about this art form.

This year's faculty includes Dr. Anthony Williams (trombone), Luke Sanders (guitar), Dr. Michael Conrad (piano), Dr. Scott Hagarty (trumpet), Dr. Will Yager (bass), Josh Hakanson (drums) and myself (saxophone). I am sure you will find that they are all world-class both as players and as educators. Your counselors are all music students as well, so feel free to ask them questions.

A few words about the jam sessions—historically, jam sessions served as a kind of “laboratory” where players would meet in an informal atmosphere to try out new ideas as well as to measure their level of skill against those around them. Some incredible learning has come out of these informal musical exchanges, as players get to hear each other stretch out. We encourage all students to take advantage of this opportunity to learn from players close to your own age. Remember that we were all beginners once, and we all continue to be students of the music!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Merz".

Chris Merz, Director
UNI Combo Camp