

Sounds and Cinema

MUMH2050.401

12408

Online/Asynchronous

Instructor

Name: April L. Prince

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Office Location: MU319

Office Hours: MWF 9-10am & by appointment; I'll can also be online via zoom during my in-person office hours at this zoom link: <https://unt.zoom.us/j/9542649991>. Please confirm zoom in advance.

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Teaching Assistants

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Communication Expectations:

If you have a private question, please contact me via email, and I will respond within 24 hours on weekdays (usually sooner) and around 48 hours on weekends. I'm very quick with email, and that is my preferred method of contact. If you email a TA, please copy me on the email!

Welcome to UNT!

As members of the UNT community, we have all made a commitment to be part of an institution that respects and values the identities of the students and employees with whom we interact. UNT does not tolerate identity-based discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. UNT's full Non-Discrimination Policy can be found in the UNT Policies section of the syllabus.

Course Description

This course focuses on the appreciation and analysis of film music as a creative work of the human imagination. In so doing, this course develops critical and analytical approaches to the soundtrack, music's role in the soundtrack, and the relation of the soundtrack and imagetrack (especially relating to music) on small-scale and large-scale (narrative) levels. The course develops critical listening and viewing abilities, so that students can effectively communicate interpretive ideas of the music at hand.

This course also offers a particular kind of film-music history survey, one that focuses on the three points in the history of film sound: the introduction of sound, the introduction of stereo, and the introduction of digital sound. The course will explore the thesis that each of these technological advances alters the structural relationships that obtain among the three relatively autonomous components of the soundtrack—dialogue, music and effects. In so doing, this course seeks to explore critical, creative, and innovative ways to analyze film music as a unique work of art.

The course is designed so that students can be successful without a background in music history and theory or a background in film history or theory. Musical performance background (reading music notation) is also not a prerequisite. *The main requirement is a willingness to listen carefully and to articulate what is heard.*

Course Structure

This course takes place asynchronous and 100% online. There are 16 weeks of content that you will move through. Each module contains two weeks of content and assignments. I will open a new module every two weeks.

Each module contains a detailed reading outline that follows your textbook closely. I include a general summary of the text, include links to clips referenced, and additional images for reference. Please make sure you work through these reading outlines with your textbook in hand, as they are meant to supplement the textbook material.

Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course:

1. Through historical documents, contemporary scholarship, and particular film soundtracks, students will cultivate the critical thinking skills needed to introduce problems and questions; present, interpret, and analyze a variety of source material; consider the context of a variety of source material; develop arguments with a logical progression; and present conclusions and their implications. **(Core LO: Critical Thinking)**
2. Students will develop communication skills by writing and speaking about film music and its history with a clear statement of purpose, organization, developed content, and accuracy. **(Core LO: Communication)**
3. By exploring the role of the soundtrack and imagetrack in characterizing individuals and groups, students will learn social responsibility by acknowledging and assuming diverse cultural/intercultural perspectives; exploring aspects of civic responsibility; and reflecting personally on the ability to understand, recognize, and even challenge notions of cultural bias. **(Core LO: Social Responsibility)**

4. As team members, students will be asked to contribute, prepare, collaborate, foster constructive team climates, and respond to feedback constructively related to the music and sources studied in this course. **(Core LO: Teamwork)**

Materials

James Buhler, David Neumeyer, and Rob Deemer, *Hearing the Movies: Music and Sound in Film History*, 2nd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

You will need your textbook right away. Please make sure you get the 2nd edition! It is much different than the first! This text is also on reserve in the music library, which is located on the fourth floor of Willis Library!

Information Literacy

A portion of the assignments in this course (including reading assignments) are intended to have students engage with and access UNT Library resources. Such resources may include, but are not limited to, primary source databases, UNT special collections, and ebooks, with the goal of learning how to independently seek out, assess, and interpret primary and secondary source material available in the UNT Library databases.

Statement on Use of AI

Certain assignments in this course will permit or even encourage the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools such as ChatGPT. The default is that such use is disallowed unless otherwise stated. Any such use must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. It is each student's responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GAI output that is submitted; you bear the final responsibility. Violations of this policy will be considered academic misconduct. We draw your attention to the fact that different classes at UNT could implement different AI policies, and it is the student's responsibility to conform to expectations for each course.

Because of the pervasive use of AI across universities, you will be required to complete the UNT Microcredential courses that explain the histories and appropriate use of AI for academic work.

Course Technology & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- [Free Spotify account](#)
- [Microsoft Office Suite](#)
- [Canvas Technical Requirements](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements) (<https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading PDFs
- Interacting with online music platforms (Spotify/Youtube)

- Accessing UNT Library Databases

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm) (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual’s experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these [Engagement Guidelines](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) for more information.

Course Requirements

** You can find all assignment guidelines and details on Canvas. If there is ever a discrepancy between this table and Canvas, please follow the table outlined in Canvas!*

Assignment	Total Points for Category
Team Discussion Activities	200
<i>Bi-Weekly Team Discussion Activities – Assignment/ Content Reflections</i> 7 opportunities to earn full points Due Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 5 @ 40 points each 7 opportunities to earn full points! <i>* You can miss 2 discussions without penalty! Or, your 2 lowest grades will drop!</i> Posts & Responses due Sundays @ 11.59pm	
Quizzes	125
<i>Course Overview Quiz</i> Due Week 1 1 @ 25 points	25
<i>Module Checks</i> Due Weeks 1-14 @ 100 points	100
Individual Assignments	400
<i>Bi-Weekly Assignments-Applying & Synthesizing Materials</i> Due Weeks 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14 5 @ 75 points 6 opportunities to earn full points <i>* You can miss 1 assignment without penalty! Or, your lowest grade will drop!</i> Assignments due Sundays @ 11.59pm	375
<i>Teamwork Reflection on Bi-Weekly Discussions and Team Engagement</i> Due Week 15 1 @ 25 points	25
Scoring Projects	275
<i>Midterm Project</i> Due Week 8 Media File/Score @ 100 points Rationale and Terminology @ 25 points Project due Sunday @ 11.59pm	125
<i>Scoring Project</i> Due Week 16 Media File/Score @ 100 points Rationale and Terminology @ 50 points Project due Week 15/16 (During scheduled final exam)	150

Grading

The grade of “A” will be assigned for excellent academic work. A grade of “B” will be assigned for good work. A grade of “C” will be assigned for fair work. A grade of “D” will be assigned for work that minimally passes. A grade of “F” will be assigned for failing work.

(<http://registrar.unt.edu/grades/understand-your-grade-report>) Grades will be calculated according

to the following scale:

900-1000 A 800-899 B 700-799 C 600-699 D 0-599 F

Course Schedule

Canvas maintains a more detailed schedule that includes assigned readings and specific due dates, but the schedule below provides a general outline of topics and assignment dates for the semester.

If there is ever a discrepancy between this schedule and Canvas, please follow the due dates and topics in Canvas!

Week/Module	Topic & Reading	Assignments
Weeks 1-2 Module 1	Course Organization Music and the Sound Track: Basic Terms and Concepts Reading: <i>HtM</i> , Preface and General Introduction; Introduction to Part 1; Ch. 1	Bi-Weekly Assignment Bi-Weekly Discussion Module Checks Course Overview Quiz
Weeks 3-4 Module 2	Musicality of the Sound Track Music, Sound, Space, and Time Reading: <i>HtM</i> , Chs. 2 & 3	Bi-Weekly Assignments Bi-Weekly Discussion Module Checks Scoring Project: SoundTrap Tutorial Videos
Weeks 5-6 Module 3	From 1895-1929: Music and Sound in Early Film From 1926 to 1932: The Transition to Sound Film Reading: <i>HtM</i> , Introduction to Part 2; Chs. 4 & 5	Bi-Weekly Assignments Bi-Weekly Discussion Module Checks Scoring Project: SoundTrap Tutorial Videos
Weeks 7-8 Module 4	From 1932 to 1950: Music and Sound Track in the Classical Studio Era Reading: <i>HtM</i> , Chs. 7	Bi-Weekly Discussion Module Checks Midterm Scoring Project Due Midterm Scoring Project Previews (Extra Credit!)
Weeks 9-10 Module 5	From 1950 to 1975: The Stereo Sound Track and the Post-Classical Era Music and Film for in the Post-Classical Era Reading: <i>HtM</i> , Chs. 9 & 10	Bi-Weekly Assignments Bi-Weekly Discussion Module Checks
Weeks 11-12 Module 6	From 1975 to 2000: The New Hollywood, Dolby Stereo, and the Emergence of Sound Design Music and Film Form in the New Hollywood Reading: <i>HtM</i> , Introduction to Part 3; Chs. 11 & 12	Bi-Weekly Assignments Bi-Weekly Discussion Module Checks Final Scoring Project: ClipChamp Tutorial Videos
Weeks 13-14 Module 7	Music and Film Sound Since 2000 Music and Film Form Since 2000 Reading: <i>HtM</i> , Chs. 13 & 14	Bi-Weekly Assignments Bi-Weekly Discussion Module Checks Final Scoring Project: ClipChamp Tutorial Videos
Weeks 15-16 Module 8	Final Scoring Project	Final Scoring Project

		Final Scoring Project Previews (Extra Credit!)
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Course Policies

Information Literacy

A portion of the assignments in this course (including reading assignments) are intended to have students engage with and access UNT Library resources. Such resources may include, but are not limited to, primary source databases, UNT special collections, and ebooks, with the goal of learning how to independently seek out, assess, and interpret primary and secondary source material available in the UNT Library databases.

Statement on Use of AI: Prohibited Use

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like [insert tool(s) here, e.g., Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini] is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the [Student Academic Integrity policy](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>).

If you submit work where AI has generated incorrect knowledge (chapters/quotes from your textbook that are hallucinated; hallucinated events in a film; invented sounds/music that are clearly not in the film; invented time marks/shot lists) you will receive **no credit** for your work and there will be no recourse to revise and resubmit.

Assignment Policy

Students can find all assignment information, submission guidelines, and due dates in the Introduction Module in Canvas.

All assignments have a 24-hour grace period in the event of unforeseen personal or technical difficulties. This policy means that all students can submit work up to 24 hours after the due date **without** penalty.

Quiz Policy

Module Check Quizzes are designed to test students' reading and listening skills and mastery of unit materials. These quizzes are untimed and unlimited in attempts.

Instructor Feedback

Due to the class size, I will return feedback on all written assignments within two weeks of the due date. If I see that I will be unable to return your feedback within that timeframe, I will post an Announcement to let everyone know when it can be expected.

Late Work

All assignments have a 24-hour grace period in the event of unforeseen technical difficulties. That means students can submit work up to 24 hours after the due date without penalty.

Since students can miss **one** Weekly Assignment and **two** Weekly discussions without penalty, no late assignments are accepted after the 24-hour grace period. That said, if you need additional time on any assignment due to unforeseen circumstances, please reach out to Dr. Prince **before** the assignment is due.

Attendance Policy

This class has no attendance policy.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus can be modified. All modifications will be announced via Canvas and explained in writing.

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

See: [Academic Integrity](#)

Link: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>

Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

See: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Link: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

Access to Information – Eagle Connect

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.

See: [Eagle Connect](#)

Link: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

ODA Statement

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. You can now request your Letters of Accommodation ONLINE and ODA will mail your Letters of Accommodation to your instructors. You may wish to begin a private discussion with your professors regarding your specific needs in a course. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access.

See: [ODA](#)

Link: disability.unt.edu. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

Health and Safety Information

Students can access information about health and safety at: <https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>

Registration Information

See: [Registration Information](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>

Academic Calendar & Final Exam Schedule, Fall 2025

See: [Fall 2025 Registration Information](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

Undergraduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total hours registered. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended that you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

Link: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates.

See: [FERPA](#)

Link: <http://ferpa.unt.edu/>

Counseling and Testing

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information:

See: [Counseling and Testing](#)

Link: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>.

For more information on mental health resources, please visit:

See: [Mental Health Resources](#)

Link: <https://disparities.unt.edu/mental-health-resources>

Add/Drop Policy

Please be reminded that dropping classes or failing to complete and pass registered hours may make you ineligible for financial aid. In addition, if you drop below half-time enrollment you may be required to begin paying back your student loans. See Academic Calendar (listed above) for additional add/drop Information.

Drop Information: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Student Resources

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to:

See: [Student Resources](#)

Link: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>

Care Team

The Care Team is a collaborative interdisciplinary committee of university officials that meets regularly to provide a response to student, staff, and faculty whose behavior could be harmful to themselves or others.

See: [Care Team](#)

Link: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>