

Music As Communication

MUMH 1610.400 (7139)

Online

Instructor Contact

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Office Location: Bain 109

Office Hours: MF 2.00–3.00 in person
U 9.00–10.00 on Teams
And by Appt.

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.

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 provides the fundamental skills needed to communicate about music in a scholarly way while also exploring how music is relevant to us today. Throughout the semester, students will develop the skills to think critically about music and its historical context, describe music from a variety of perspectives, and evaluate a wide variety of source materials such as musical scores, audio recordings, contemporaneous reviews, textbooks, and other primary and secondary sources. Ultimately *Music as Communication* will develop the necessary skills for proficient discussions of music in its social and historical contexts through an atmosphere that encourages teamwork and curiosity.

Course Structure

MUMH 1610 is divided into six units, which are broken up into weekly course materials and assignments. Canvas holds the learning objectives and detailed schedule for each week.

Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Objectives:

1. Through historical documents, contemporary scholarship, and a broad spectrum of musical examples, students will cultivate the critical thinking skills needed to introduce problems and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 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 music 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

All course materials will be made available via Canvas as PDFs or links to UNT's library databases.

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.

Course Technology & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Free iClicker account
- Microsoft Office Suite
- Canvas Technical 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)
- Using an in-class response system (iClicker)

- 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.

UNT Help Desk: (<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>)

Grading Procedures

Assignment	Points Needed for 100%
Syllabus Quiz/Introduce Yourself	50 points
Short Writing Assignments	175 points 8x25, lowest score dropped
Discussion Boards	210 points 8x30, lowest score dropped
Unit Quizzes	350 points 7x50 ~125 in-class activities
Final Project	215 points 150 points for final submission 65 points for checkpoints.

Syllabus Quiz/Introducing Yourself

There are two assignments at the beginning of the semester that are one-time assignments to help ensure you are comfortable with various aspects of the class. Each is worth 25 points, and they are as follows:

1. Syllabus Quiz: There is a Canvas quiz that goes over the syllabus. Please read the entire syllabus (if you've made it this far, great!). The quiz is to reward you for reading. It is due one week after the semester starts. You may take it as many times as you want to get 100%.
2. Meet the Instructor/Introduce Yourself (Discussion Board): I would like you to introduce yourself in a discussion board post. Feel free to make it a video or to type. This is useful for me when I go back and look through information about you when you email or have questions, and it helps me get to know you.

Short Writing Assignments

Each unit, I will post a prompt and ask you to write a critical response that should be at least 150 words in length, but not more than 300 words. The response may be one or two paragraphs. Prompts may include listening to a musical example and responding, responding to a quote or short passage of reading, discussing materials from the past week, and other ideas to elicit critical thinking. The goal for these assignments is to encourage students to communicate a deep understanding through clear, concise, and well written responses. Each response is worth 25 points for content, and you need 175 points in this category to get 100%. I will drop your lowest score (there are 8, and you need 7). Short writing assignments will be due on Mondays, with the exception of Mondays that are holidays, such as Labor Day or MLK Day, when it will be due the Tuesday after. Short writings will only be accepted 24 hours after the due date.

In addition to the main points, there are 40 extra credit points (5 per assignment) from the grammar tips each week. One thing that remains important in society (for better or worse) is the ability to communicate in writing using formal English. I do not want grammar to cost you points in the class, but I do want to reward you for following the suggested guidelines each week and working to improve your writing. It's not the main focus of the course, but communication is half the title. This is the bulk of extra credit applied in the course.

There are 8 total writing responses in this course, which means that (in total) these writings account for 17.5% of your final grade and offer 4% of your final grade as an extra credit opportunity.

Discussion Boards

Throughout the semester, you will be working in large cohorts of about 30-50 students. Your discussions and group brainstorming will take place in these groups. This group will be set around the end of the first week of the semester and will continue until the semester ends. Once per unit, you and your group members will complete a discussion board over a topic relevant to that week. Each board is worth 30 points. You will earn 20 points for your initial response and 5 points for each of the two required responses to group members. The initial post for discussion boards will always be due Friday and the response to two classmates will always be due Monday with the exception of Mondays that are holidays, such as Labor Day or MLK Day, when it will be due the Tuesday after.

The introduce yourself discussion and the final project planning discussion do not count in this category. Also, the lowest discussion score will be dropped.

Unit Quizzes

At the end of each of the first seven units, a unit quiz worth 50 points will be available on Canvas. Each unit quiz is worth 50 points, for a total of 350 points. Unit quizzes are open book/note, but they are timed. The timer is designed so that you should have plenty of time to finish if you do not have to look up and read everything at that time. There is an 8-day window for turning in each quiz, and a 24-hour grace period. After that time, the quiz cannot be submitted. The unit quizzes have a listening component, which addresses material covered in that unit as well as topics discussed in the unit.

Final Project:

For your final project, you and your team members are part of a new music DJ collective and are tasked with creating a powerful, socially conscious new remix. The goal of this final project is to use music to “communicate” about an issue or idea. Your final project has three main components: a composition, a one-page overview of your samples and composition, and album artwork. The last two components (explanation and artwork) should be submitted in one document.

Other Opportunities to Earn Points:

While all previously stated opportunities to earn points are guaranteed, there may be a few opportunities to earn extra points in the class. One such opportunity includes having 75% of the class complete the SPOT evaluation at the end of the semester. This happens about 1 in 3 semesters. If additional opportunities for points arise, I will let you know. Should any opportunities for points arise, they will be available to the whole class. I do not offer students opportunities to earn points that are not available to others.

Letter Grades

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

Unit 1: Music as Communication

DATE	TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 1	Syllabus Musical Terms Skim Textbook Semiotics Signs: Icons, Indices, Symbols How to Listen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion Board: Introduce Yourself. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Typically this course will have an initial discussion board post due Friday at 11:59 and responses due by Monday at 11:59 pm. o This post does not require responses, so the initial (and only) post is due Friday of Week 1 at 11:59 pm. 2. The Course Overview Quiz is due on Monday of Week 2 at 11:59 pm. 3. Short Writing 1 is due on Monday of Week 2, at 11:59 pm.
WEEK 2	Participatory Music Presentational Music Group Charter	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion Board 1 is due this week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The initial post is due Friday of Week 2 at 11:59 pm. o Two responses are due by Tuesday of Week 3 at 11:59 pm. 2. Unit Quiz 1 opens Monday of Week 2 and is due on Tuesday of Week 3.

Unit 2: Music, Identity, and Ownership

	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 3	Habits of Self, Identity, and Culture	1. Short Writing 2 is due by Monday of Week 4 at 11:59 pm.
	Early Christian Music: Chant and Organum	
WEEK 4	American Hymnody and Art Music Shape Note Singing Ives and an American Sound	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion Board 2: Borrowing vs. Theft <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your initial post is due by Friday of Week 4 at 11:59 pm. 2. Responses to two peers are due by Monday of Week 5 at 11:59 pm. 2. Unit Quiz 2 is available on Monday of Week 4 and due by Tuesday of Week 5 at 11:59 pm.
	Music and Property	

Unit 3: Music and Drama

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 5	Opera and Controversy	1. Short Writing 3 is due by Monday of Week 6 by 11:59 pm.
	Opera and Wozzeck	
WEEK 6	The Musical and Politics	1. Discussion Board 3: Drama with a Message
	The Musical and Mental Health	1. Your initial post is due by Friday of Week 6 by 11:59 pm 2. Responses to two peers are due by Monday of Week 7 by 11:59 pm 2. Unit Quiz 3 is due opens Monday of Week 6 and is due by Tuesday of Week 7 by 11:59 pm

Unit 4: Music and Film

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 7	Film Music Terminology	1. Short Writing 7 is due by Monday of Week 8 by 11:59 pm.
	Film Music: Sound, Space, and Time	
WEEK 8	A Brief History of Film Music	1. Discussion Board 4 Rescoring a scene
	Braaam	1. Your initial post is due by Friday of Week 8 by 11:59 pm. 2. Responses to two peers are due by Monday of Week 9 by 11:59 pm. 2. Unit Quiz 4 opens Monday of Week 8 and is due by Tuesday of Week 9 by 11:59 pm.

Unit 5: Music and Video Games

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 9	Video Game Settings	1. Short Writing 5 is due by Monday of Week 10 at 11:59 pm.
WEEK 10	Video Game Characters	1. Discussion Board 5 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Your initial post is due by Friday of Week 10 by 11:59 pm. Responses to two peers are due by Monday of Week 11 by 11:59 pm. 2. Unit 5 Quiz opens Monday of Week 8 and is due by Tuesday of Week 9 by 11:59 pm.

Unit 5: Music and Technology

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS
WEEK 11	Music Distribution Final Project Launch	1. Final Project Discussion Board <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Initial post is due by Friday of Week 11 at 11:59 pm. Peer reviews will be assigned Sunday at noon for everyone who has done the initial post. You do not need responses on the board (though you can if you would like)! Peer reviews and evaluations are due by Friday of Week 12 at 11:59 pm 2. Short Writing 6 is due by Monday of Week 12 by 11:59 pm.
WEEK 12	High Fidelity and Studio Art Music	1. Unit 6: SoundTrap Discussion Board: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Your initial post is due by Friday of Week 12 at 11:59 pm Your audio example and thoughts are due by Monday of Week 13 at 11:59 pm 2. Unit Quiz 6 opens Monday of Week 12 and is due by Tuesday of Week 13 by 11:59 pm.

Unit 7: Music: Power, Politics, and Protest

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 13	Music and Censorship in Soviet Russia	1. Short Writing 7 is due by Monday of Week 14 at 11:59 pm
	Music and Jingoism: Nazi Germany	
WEEK 14	Protest Music	1. Unit 7 Discussion Board: Live from Here <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your initial post was due by Friday of Week 14 at 11:59 pm 2. Your audio example and thoughts are due by Monday of Week 15 at 11:59 pm
	Present Project Pitches Short Pitch Due	2. Unit Quiz 7 opened Monday of Week 14 and is due by Tuesday of Week 15 by 11:59 pm. 3. SPOT evaluations are now open and due by Thursday of Week 15 by 5:00 pm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This isn't due this week, but it's an extra credit opportunity for the class. Please fill one out!
WEEK 15	Final Projects	1. Discussion Board 8 - Final Project Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your initial post is due by Tuesday of Week 15 at 11:59 pm 2. Your two responses are due by Thursday of Week 15 at 11:59 pm.
	Wrapping Up	2. Short Writing 8 is due by Thursday of Week 15 by 11:59 pm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note: I drop the lowest Short Writing and Discussion. The last week is a lot, so if you've done everything before now, these are optional. If you haven't done everything (or would like to do something better), and you are looking for a way to raise your grade, these assignments are here for you! 3. The Final Project is due on Monday of Week 16 by 11:59 pm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Final Project Audio requires one group submission 2. One-Page Overview of Composition and Album Art Work requires one group submission.
FINALS	Final Projects and Group Eval Due	By midnight.

Course Policies and Accommodations Statement

Assignment Policy

Students can find all assignment information, submission guidelines, and due dates in the Introduction Module in Canvas, with the exception of the final project. There are two modules at the end of the course: the first addresses the final project and all steps, and the second contains student examples (who approved their use on condition of anonymity).

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

In general, I will accept anything for up to 24 hours without a penalty, after which I will not accept it. There are two caveats.

First, I will give an extension of two days to any assignment that is an individual assignment, without limit. The only caveat is that you must ask before the assignment is due. No reasons are needed, and I will work with you on a plan to get the assignment in. The key here is timely communication. Once the assignment is late, the best-case scenario for normal events is the loss of the missing points for the days you were late before contacting me, and no extension should be expected after the assignment is due. This does not apply to team assignments or in-class work.

With that said, there are unusual circumstances in all of our lives. When in doubt, reach out to me. Please do not email TAs – they just end up emailing me, and everything takes longer and involves more emails.

Statement on Accommodations

I will always work with you on accommodations, and will honor ODA accommodations. If you find any of my assignments or policies do not properly honor your accommodations, please reach out to me and I will work with ODA to ensure that we address and accommodate your needs.

Syllabus Change Policy

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

UNT Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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 for Students

See: [Registration Information](#)

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

Academic Calendar, Spring 2025

See: [Spring 2025 Academic Calendar](#)

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

Final Exam Schedule, Spring 2025

See above

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.

Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses.

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>

Graduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Music scholarships require a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. 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 you schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college, an advisor in UNT-International or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course.

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>