**Music As Communication**

**MUMH 1610.001**

**Tuesday/Thursday 9:30-10:50**

**Room: Matthews 311**

Instructor: Emma Wimberg

[EmmaWimberg@my.unt.edu](mailto:EmmaWimberg@my.unt.edu)

Office: Bain Hall 313

Office Hours: Thursday 11am-12noon or by appointment

Teaching Assistant: Tess Reagan

[theresareagan@my.unt.edu](mailto:theresareagan@my.unt.edu)

**\*Special Note: This classroom is a peanut/tree-nut free zone due to an inhalation allergy. Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated!**

**Course Description:**

*“Music the great communicator”*

*-*Red Hot Chili Peppers, “Can’t Stop”

Long referenced as a “Universal Language,” a claim we will dissect throughout the semester, music has continuously played an integral role concerning intrapersonal communication within groups of people. In this course, we will explore the many different ways in which music is used to communicate, and what those messages contain. This will include critical exploration of how effective this communication is, how these musics function within different societal makeups, what the potentials and limitations of music as a communicator might be, why music is termed a “universal language,” and if we agree with this title. To explore these ideas, we will look at a wide range of music, including but not limited to, popular music, “Classical” music, and music cultures of the world as well as our own. In thinking critically about these questions and topics, the answers at which we each arrive will often differ. It is through exploring these different approaches and opinions that we will be able to determine if, how, and why music acts as the great communicator.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students will:

* Analyze the role music plays in individual, societal, and spiritual expression
* Evaluate current perceptions and interpretations of music’s role within society, as well as engage with academic scholarship concerning the abilities of and limitations for music communicating cross-culturally
* Create their own musical composition comprised of different works and sound bites, along with accompanying cover art, to communicate on a certain topic to their peers

This is a Core class and satisfies the four main Learning Objectives for the Core

**Course Material:**

Index Cards

There is no required text for this class – All readings will be uploaded to the class Canvas page either as PDF or as links under their corresponding module.

• We will also be incorporating iClicker usage into our classroom. THERE IS NO PURCHASE FOR THIS. However, it is required that you bring a device (laptop, tablet, phone) with internet access. If needed, laptops are available for free checkout on the first floor of Willis Library at the Spark Desk. If you have difficulty acquiring a device for usage, please let me know!

This class requires in-class writing, meaning it is essential for you to bring a writing utensil of some kind (pencil, pen, etc.) to class with you every day

**Assignments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Points Possible** | **Percent of Grade** | **Dates/Days Due** |
| Exit Tickets | 150 | 15% | Daily |
| Reading Quizzes | 150 | 15% | In Class on:  August 26th  September 2nd  September 23rd  September 30th  October 14th  October 28th  November 4th |
| Identity Playlist Project | 150 | 15% | In-Class Midterm:  September 16th |
| Universal Language Writing | 100 | 10% | Due Online:  November 11th by 11:59pm |
| Group Music Days | 3 Group Days x  50 points each  =150 | 15% | In Class:  September 11th  October 9th  November 6th  Written portion due one week after |
| Final Project: (300 points) |  |  |  |
| Project Prep | 75 | 7.5% | October 14th by 11:59pm |
| Remix Composition | 75 | 7.5% | Thursday December 11th by NOON |
| Album Artwork | 75 | 7.5% | Thursday December 11th by NOON |
| Explanation | 75 | 7.5% | Thursday December 11th by NOON |
| **Total** | 1,000 |  |  |

**Extra Credit Opportunities**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Points Possible** | **Dates/Days** |
| SPOT Evaluation | 20 points | TBA |
| Response to 2 other group final projects | 15 points  (7.5 points each) | Saturday December 13th by NOON |

**Assessment**

A = 900-1,000 points

B = 800-899

C = 700-799

D = 600-699

F = 500-599

**Exit Tickets – 150 points**

During every regular class meeting, excluding Group Music days and Major Assignment days, at some point a prompt will be given to you to write a few short sentences about. You will respond to this prompt on an index card **along with your name and student ID number**. This index card will be turned in at the end of class as you leave.

**If you are substantially late to class, you will miss that day’s Exit Ticket prompt.**

**If you leave class early, you will miss the turn in bucket for the day’s Exit Ticket prompt.**

**Exit Tickets CANNOT be made up.**

Exit Tickets are each worth 10 points. There will be a total of 19 days during which you can earn Exit Ticket points to reach the maximum of 150 points.

**Reading Quizzes – 150 points**

Throughout the semester, there will be certain weeks with assigned readings posted in Canvas. It is essential that this reading is completed **before** coming to class for the week. On the Tuesday meeting of the week, there will be an in-class quiz to complete for **both** assigned readings for that week. **Reading Quizzes CANNOT be made up except under extenuating circumstances communicated via the Dean of Students.**

There will be a total of 7 Reading Quizzes throughout the semester, and your lowest reading quiz grade will automatically be dropped during the semester.

**Identity Playlist Project**

Our first unit focuses on how music can be used to express a few areas of one’s own identity in a personal and telling way. For this project, you will compile a short playlist of music (10 song/pieces/works) that communicates **your** identity. Think about a list of music that communicates different aspects of who you are, not just a list of your favorite songs. This list should be thoughtful, and demonstrate multiple aspects of who you are. During class, you will write an essay that discusses how and why each song was chosen to reflect part of your identity. **This Midterm can only be made up under extenuating circumstances communicated via the Dean of Students.**

**Universal Language Project**

Our third unit focuses on how musical communication is received by intended, or unintended, audiences. This will be a short essay completed outside of class, reflecting on your own experiences after interacting with the concept of music’s long held status as a Universal Language. **This essay may be submitted late, with 10 points deducted each calendar date after the stated due date.**

**Group Music Days**

The last day of each unit will be a Group Music Day in which you will be in charge of bringing your own music to class that connects to the topics discussed during that unit. In class, you will complete a handwritten reflection based on discussion with your group. This written reflection will be due 1 week after your in-class discussion. **Failure to attend Group Music Day will be an automatic deduction of 25 points for that day’s assignment, however copies can be picked up the class following a Group Music Day. These assignments may be submitted late, with 10 points deducted each calendar date after the stated due date.**

**Timely Return of Student Work**

Reading quizzes will be graded within two weeks of submission. All other assignments will be graded within three weeks of the date they are due.

Emails will be returned within 2 business days (barring a personal emergency on my part). This means that I will normally reply to you within the usual 8am-5pm “work day” Monday-Friday. Feel free to send emails outside of these hours, but know that I will likely not immediately respond. If you have a pressing question or issue that needs to be returned ASAP, please flag the email as such so I can ensure a quick response. If you do not get a reply from me within 2 business days, you may re-send the email to make sure I received it.

**Community Guidelines**

In this class we will be listening to and engaging with music from a variety of worldviews, values, experiences, and perspectives. This will include religious music, political music, and other works that are, at times, intentionally provocative both in content and language. The aim of the use of this music in class is not to change minds or opinions, or to offend, but rather to understand the effect of this music upon audiences and how this music interacts with and shapes societal dialogues. Additionally, some of the music we cover will touch on potentially triggering topics of violence as music aims to communicate feelings surrounding the experience of these kinds of events. If at any time you feel uncomfortable with the content, please let me know and feel free to excuse yourself!

Finally, mistreatment of peers will **not** be tolerated in this classroom. We are a group of individuals with varied life experiences and views, all seeking to grow in our understanding of music, society, and one another. While open discussion is a large part of this class, as we relate to one another how we experience different aspects of music’s communication in our own lives, that discussion will remain respectful at all times, especially when opposing opinions are at play. Different opinions are what make us unique, and why all music does not sound the same in the first place, and we will engage respectfully with the differences present among each other and the music we discuss in class.

Course Calendar

Unit 1: What does Music Communicate? (Music and the Self)

Unit 2: How does Music Communicate? (Music Technology)

Unit 3: Why/to Whom does Music Communicate? (Music and Beyond)

Unit 4: Creating Music Communication (Final Project)

Assignment Due Date Master List

\*Dates subject to change, always check Canvas for the most accurate assignment due dates

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date In-Class | Assignment | Due Date |
| Tuesday 8.26 | Reading Quiz Week 2 | During Class |
| Tuesday 9.2 | Reading Quiz Week 3 | During Class |
| Thursday 9.11 | Group Music Day Unit 1 | Thursday 9.18 by end of class |
| **Tuesday 9.16** | **Identity Playlist Project Midterm:**  **(you may bring in a 3inch by 5inch notecard with songs & thesis statements)** | **During Class** |
| Tuesday 9.23 | Reading Quiz Week 6 | During Class |
| Tuesday 9.30 | Reading Quiz Week 7 | During Class |
| Tuesday 10.7 | Final Project Prep Remix | Tuesday 10.14 by 11:59pm |
| Thursday 10.9 | Group Music Day Unit 2 | Thursday 10.16 by end of class |
| Tuesday 10.14 | Reading Quiz Week 9 | During Class |
| Thursday 10.23 | Universal Language Writing | Tuesday 11.11 by 11:59pm |
| Tuesday 10.28 | Reading Quiz Week 11 | During Class |
| Tuesday 11.4 | Reading Quiz Week 12 | During Class |
| Thursday 11.6 | Group Music Day Unit 3 | Thursday 11.13 by end of class |
| **Last 3 weeks of class:**  **11.11-12.4** | **Final Group Project: Album Artwork, Remix, and Essay** | **Thursday, 12.11 by NOON** |

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, Fall 2025 See: Fall 2025 Registration Information Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>

Final Exam Schedule, Fall 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>