

# MUET 3030: Music & Cultures of the World

## Instructor

Dr. Vivek Virani  
(pronouns: he/him/his)

## Email

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## Class Time

Tuesday / Thursday  
**11:10am - 12:30pm**  
MUS 258

## Office Hours

Tues and Thurs.  
10-11am  
Or by Appointment

**MUS 108**  
or over Zoom

## Course Overview

This course presents a broad introduction to music cultures from different parts of the world, as well as a introduction to thinking about the role of music in social life. Issues explored will include music as a cultural symbol, an activity for social cohesion and/or resistance, and a part of identity formation.

## Course Objectives

- To increase awareness and understanding of music cultures.
- To broaden cross-cultural artistic appreciation and imagination.
- To think critically about aesthetic dimensions of culture.
- To develop critical listening skills.

## Evaluation

Your final grade will be based on the following criteria:

- Attendance: 100 points
- Lab Attendance and Discussions: 100 points
- Lab Writing Responses: 100 points
- Two Written Assignments: 100 points each
- Three Tests: 300 points

## Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend class sessions regularly, to come prepared and participate actively in all activities. Your presence in every class session is absolutely essential to your success in this course. Students begin the semester with 100 points for attendance. Each unexcused absence will result in a loss of 7 points.

Absences will generally be excused if a) the instructor is notified ahead of time and approves the absence, or b) in cases of illness or emergency. Excused absences are at the discretion of the instructor and may require documentation. If you are ill or have symptoms but feel well enough to attend class remotely, you may join class via Zoom if you notify the TAs no later than 9am the day of class.

Students who do not participate in class discussions, are unprepared for class (e.g., have not completed required readings), or are inattentive during class may be deducted some or all participation points for that day.

**A minimum of 60% attendance is required to pass this course.**

## Required Materials

### *Required Readings*

All required readings will be made available on Canvas. Students are responsible for completing each week's assigned reading before Tuesday's class.

## Written Assignments

During the semester, you will complete two at-home project, each comprising a journal assignment and a short essay (750-1000 words).

1. Daily Musical Experiences
2. Live Music Event

These assignments are worth 100 points each, and satisfy the Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility components (respectively) for this Core course.

## Late and Missing Submissions

- Assignment submissions received within 24 hours of the original deadline will be subject to a 5% grade penalty.
- Assignment submissions received within 2-7 hours of the original deadline will be subject to a 10% grade penalty.
- Assignment submissions received between 1-2 weeks after the original deadline will be subject to a 20% grade penalty.
- Assignment submissions received more than 2 weeks after the original deadline will receive 0 credit. However, they must still be submitted in order to receive a passing grade in the class.

**Students are required to submit every assignment to receive a passing grade in the course.**

## Lab Sections

All students are required to attend weekly Lab Sections with their designated TA. During lab sections, students will engage in deeper discussion of concepts from class lectures and assigned readings, review material, and complete written responses related to themes from

course readings. Students' averaged score from these responses represents 100 points of their total grade and satisfies the Communication Core requirement of this course.

**A minimum of 60% attendance in lab sections is required to pass this course.**

## Exams

Three exams will be given during the course. Exams involve multiple choice questions, short answers, listening identification and essay questions. Each exam will focus on five weeks of material, but may also test general concepts from earlier parts of the semester. Essay question responses will satisfy the Critical Thinking Core component of this course.

**Make-up exams will not be given.\***

\*Except in extreme emergency situations, with verifiable documentation.

## Course Outline

Week 1 | August 18 & 20

- Key Musical Concepts
- Introduction to Music-Cultures

Week 2 | August 25 & 27

- Voices of the Rainforest (Papua New Guinea)
- Native American Inter-Tribal Pow-Wow Music

Week 3 | September 1 & 3

- Ewe Drumming (West Africa)
- Mbira Music of the Shona (South Africa)

Week 4 | September 8 & 10

- Santeria, Son, and Salsa (Cuba)
- Music of the Andes – Guest Artist: Jaco Vellarde of Vision Andina

Week 5 | September 15 & 17

- Exam #1: Thursday September 17

Week 6 | September 22 & 24

- Sacred Music of South Asia
- Vedic Chanting, Bhajans (Hinduism)
- Sufiana, Qawwali, Sufi Rock (Pakistan)

Week 7 | September 29 & October 1

- Hindustani (North Indian Classical) Music
- North Indian Folk Music

Week 8 | October 6 & 8

- Carnatic (South Indian Classical) Music – Guest Artist Mysore Manjunath

Week 9 | October 13 & 15

- Arab Tarab Music
- Persian / Iranian Music – Guest Artist Ehsan Shafie

Week 10 | October 20 & 22

- Music of the Balkans
- Romani Music in Europe
- Bulgarian Vocal and Instrumental Music – Guest Artists

Week 11 | October 27 & 29

- Flamenco – Guest Artist Julia Alcántara
- Exam #2

Week 12 | November 3 & 5

- Music of Central Asia

Week 13 | November 10 & 12

- Music of China
- Guest Artist Dr. Yuxin Mei

Week 14 | November 17 & 19

- Music of Indonesia

Week 15 | December 1 & 3

- Final Exam Review

**FINAL EXAM | Thursday, December 10: 10:30am-12:30 pm**

**Note**

Topics and content planned in syllabus are subject to change in response to scheduling circumstances, student interests, and guest speaker availability.

## Policies and Resources

### Respectful Discourse and Diversity of Opinions

During class and lab sessions, respectful discourse is expected at all times. Academic discourse is most productive and vibrant when all participants feel empowered to explore ideas and think through new possibilities without fear of judgment or condemnation. Differences of opinion are bound to occur, and should be treated as opportunities for mutual growth and learning rather than intellectual competitions.

In this class, you will be exposed to many different cultures and artistic traditions, and see / hear musical performances from artists from many different cultural backgrounds. The inclusion of any music used in class examples does not constitute an endorsement by the instructor of any ideological or political message associated with the performers of that music.

### Academic Integrity

Students caught committing academic fraud, plagiarism, or other forms of cheating as detailed in the UNT Academic Integrity policy will receive a **failing grade for the course**. 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 the use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations. 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](#)

### *Note on Generative AI Usage*

Generative AI tools such as LLMs (e.g. ChatGPT, Copilot) have become widely used in many industries. Reliance on these tool for academic research is risky, as they rarely guarantee verifiable, traceable information. Furthermore, any use of these tools to generate text or ideas that are submitted as if they are the product of a student’s original thinking is a clear violation of Academic Integrity Policy.

Any uses of LLMs not specifically approved by the instructor will be considered cheating and (depending on the severity of the infraction) result in a grade of ‘0’ for the assignment or a failing grade for the course. If a student plans to use LLMs (such as Grammarly or ChatGPT) for grammatical or stylistic editing, they are required to submit A) their original text (as it was entered into the LLM) in addition to any LLM output, and B) an indication of changes/revisions they made to the LLM output before submitting their final version.

## **Technology-Free Classroom**

The time and space we are given to learn together is a privilege that we try to honor by being as present and attentive as possible. Toward that goal, the use of technological devices in class is limited. Students (and the instructor) may use laptops or tablets to refer to readings and notes only. In-class notes should be taken by hand. Phones and headphones are strictly not allowed in class. Exceptions will be made for emergencies or ODA-approved accommodations.

### *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: [disability.unt.edu](http://disability.unt.edu). Phone: (940) 565-4323

### *Counseling and Testing*

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor whose position includes 16 hours per week of dedicated service to students in the College of Music and the College of Visual Arts and Design. Please visit the Center's website for further information: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>.

### *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. After the 12<sup>th</sup> class day, students must first submit a completed "Request to Drop" form to the Registrar's Office. Information about add/drop may be found at:

### *Student Resources*

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

[HTTPS://WWW.UNT.EDU/SUCCESS/RESOURCES/](https://www.unt.edu/success/resources/)