MUET 4500 / 5500
INTRODUCTION TO ETHNOMUSICOLOGY
FALL 2017

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course introduces students to the history, theory, and practice of ethnomusicology. It includes both seminal texts from the discipline and current literature on emerging issues and topics. Students will be exposed to multiple perspectives from ethnomusicology and its related disciplines, including musicology, anthropology, folklore, critical theory, and cultural studies.

The primary objective of this course is to provide students with a richer understanding of the various roles, meanings, and functions of music in human life. Furthermore, students should leave the class with a diverse analytical toolkit for their own music-related research endeavors.

Required Reading and Responses

Weekly readings will be posted on BlackBoard. In addition, students are expected to obtain the following book, from which several chapters will be assigned as course readings:


Every week, students will submit a brief (2-3 paragraph) but insightful response based on the week’s reading(s) by 8pm on Monday evening.

Assignments and Evaluation

Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due by 11:59PM on the Thursday of the specified week.

1. Small Writing Assignments – 15%
   a. “Deep Listening” Writing exercise (Week 2) – 5%
   b. “My Musical Life” Interview (Week 4) – 10%

2. Ethnographic Research Project – 45%
   a. Site Proposal – 2.5% (Week 7)
   b. Fieldwork Report – 10% (Week 9)
   c. Abstract & Outline – 2.5% (Week 13)
   d. Presentation – 10% (Weeks 12-15)
   e. Final Paper – 20% (Week 15)
      i. Undergraduate: 7-10 pages double-spaced
ii. Graduate: 13-16 pages double-spaced

3. Weekly Reading Responses – 15%
   a. Weekly Responses (Due by 8pm every Monday)
   b. Discussion responses posted between 8-12pm on the due date will receive half credit

4. Student-led Article Presentation / Discussion – 10%
   a. Students will lead presentations and in-class discussions based on current topics in ethnomusicology
   b. Presentations will take place on Thursdays, Weeks 5-12

5. Attendance and Participation – 15%
   a. Each unexcused absence beyond the first will result in 5% deduction from the student’s overall grade
   b. After 5 unexcused absences, students will be advised to withdraw from course
   c. Absences are determined “excused” or “unexcused” at my discretion; they automatically considered unexcused if I am not notified BEFORE CLASS. (Unexcused absence due to sudden illness may be overturned if doctor’s note is provided)
   d. Participation points may be deducted for habitual lateness or inattentiveness

6. Critical Ethnography Review (Graduate Students Only, Due Week 12)
   a. All graduate students must read an ethnographic monograph (approved by the professor) and write a critical review
   b. The Society of Ethnomusicology’s Merriam prize-winning monographs are all good options for this assignment, and can be found at: http://www.ethnomusicology.org/general/custom.asp?page=Prizes_Merriam

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1
August 29 & 30
Introduction – Defining Music and Ethnomusicology
Reading: Bruno Nettl (2005 [1983]) “The Art of Combining Tones”

Week 2
September 5 & 7
What Does it Mean to Study Music?
“Musicking”; The role of the ethnomusicologist; Components of “music culture”; soundscapes
Readings: Christopher Small (1998) Chapters from Musicking

Week 3
September 12 & 14
Early Ethnomusicology
18th-19th ethnography; studies of “primitive” and “folk” musics; Comparative Musicology; Bartok and cultural nationalism

**Week 4**
September 19 & 21

**Post-War American Ethnomusicology**
Lomax, Merriam, Hood; Anthropology of music, bi-musicality, “Cantometrics,” Musical functionalism

**Week 5**
September 26 & 28

**How Musical is Man?**
“People making music”; musicality; music cognition
Reading: Blacking (1970) “Humanly Organized Sound”

**Week 6**
October 3 & 5

**Field Research**
Choosing a site; documentation; participant-observation
Reading: Jackson (1987) chapters from *Fieldwork*

**Week 7**
October 10 & 12

**Semiotics of Music**
Music as symbol; music and meaning; Peircean semiotics
Reading: Turino (2008) Chapter 1 AND case study (TBD)

**Week 8**
October 17 & 19

**Writing Music and Culture**
Ethnographic writing; Interpretive writing, “Thick Description”
Reading: Geertz (1973) “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight”

**Week 9**
October 24 & 26

**Music as Social Life**
Participatory & Presentational music; Musical Cohorts
Reading: Turino (2008), Chapter 2

**Week 10**
Oct. 31 & Nov. 2

**Self, Identity, and Culture**
Musical socialization; music and self-integration; music and identity construction
Reading: Turino (2008), Chapter 4

**Week 11**
November 7 & 9

**Postmodern Critique of Ethnography**
Subjectivity; reflexivity; feminist ethnography
Reading: Clifford (1986) “Partial Truths”

**Week 12**
November 14 & 16

**Writing Workshop & Student Final Presentations**
### Week 13

November 21 & 23

Tues: Writing Workshop (TBD)

Thurs: ***THANKSGIVING***

### Week 14-15

November 28 & 30

December 5 & 7

- Student Final Presentations
- FINAL PAPER DUE THURSDAY DECEMBER 7

### UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

#### 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, 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.

[http://facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity](http://facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity)

#### Writing Lab

Strong writing skills are an important asset in academic and professional life in every field. During class, we will work to improve student writing skills through instructor feedback and group workshops. However, many students will benefit from intensive focus on writing skills that we will not have time to provide during class. I encourage all students who wish to further develop their writing skills to work with the UNT Writing Lab.

[http://writinglab.unt.edu/](http://writinglab.unt.edu/)

#### Office of Disability Accommodation

College life poses different challenges for students with disabilities. If you’ve been diagnosed with a learning difference such as dyslexia, or if you need a physical accommodation, the
Office of Disability Accommodation will make sure you receive the support you need to succeed at UNT. You can apply for services or find out if you qualify for services online by visiting the office in Sage Hall, Suite 167, or calling 940-565-4323.

http://disability.unt.edu/

Student Counseling and Testing Services

It is important to us for students to excel academically, but it is far more important that you maintain your physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Students face many demands and responsibilities from their academic and personal lives and sometimes the stresses or anxieties can be overwhelming if not dealt with. As your instructor, I am happy to be a part of your support network, and am always open to talk if you have issues you would like to discuss. Additionally, UNT provides its students many resources for mental and emotional health.

http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-testing-services