Instructor
Dr. Vivek Virānī
(pronouns: he/him/his)

Email
Vivek.Virani@unt.edu

Class Time
Tues, Thurs.
9:30am-10:50pm
Classes delivered online via Zoom platform

Office Hours
By appointment
(Tues, Thurs. preferred)

Course Overview
This course will explore the culture, performance practice, and history of several genres of music from South Asia, particularly India and Pakistan. The majority of the class will be dedicated to the "classical" genres of Hindustani and Carnatic music. The last third of the class will shift focus to religious, folk, and popular musics from different regions of the subcontinent. In addition to reading and listening to music, students will learn songs or compositions from most of the genres discussed in class. No musical experience is required to participate.

Course Materials
There is no textbook for this course. All reading and listening examples will be posted on Canvas. Students are responsible for regularly checking Canvas to ensure they are up to date with the material.

Evaluation
Your final grade will be based on the following criteria:

- Weekly Listening Logs: 25%
- Homework Assignments: 20%
- Quizzes: 15%
- Final Project: 20%
- Attendance and Participation: 20%
- Article Discussions: Graduate Students only (details on page 5)

COURSE INFORMATION

Attendance and Participation
Students are expected to attend class sessions synchronously, to come prepared and participate actively in all activities. Your presence in every class session is absolutely essential to your success in this course. Unexcused absences, consistent lateness, inattentiveness, or lack of participation may result in a
grade penalty. Any student who accrues 5 unexcused absences will be asked to withdraw from the course. In case of a foreseeable absence, students should notify the instructor as soon as possible to arrange a way to make up for content or activities missed during a class session.

COVID-19 Attendance Statement

Academic excellence is important, but your health and wellbeing always take the first priority. If you are experiencing physical or mental health difficulties directly or indirectly related to the global pandemic that may interfere with your success in this course, please communicate with the instructor as soon as possible. In most cases, the instructor will do whatever is possible to determine appropriate accommodations to help you succeed in the class.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.

Required Materials

Technology Requirements for Remote Instruction

Students are expected to have access to:

- A device capable of accessing Zoom and Canvas (desktop or laptop computer, tablet, etc.).
- A stable internet connection.
- A microphone and web camera (either discrete or integrated into the device used to access class meetings).
- Sufficient technological competence to use Zoom, Canvas, and Microsoft Office.

Further helpful information on how to succeed in a remote learning environment can be found at https://online.unt.edu/learn. If you have difficulty gaining access to any of the necessarily materials, please communicate with the instructor as soon as possible.

Required Readings

All required readings will be made available on Canvas. In addition, many helpful texts that students may find useful for their projects or for individual study have been made available through the library reserve. They may be accessed at the Music Library or online at https://iii.library.unt.edu/search/r
In-class Performance

We will spend a lot of our time in class making music together. EVERYONE will be expected to sing. On some occasions, you may also be expected to learn short pieces by ear. Instrumentalists will be allowed to bring instruments to class from Week 4 on. You will NOT be assessed on the basis of your musical abilities, nor will your grade be penalized for missing a note or making any other musical errors. But participation is a must for all students, regardless of major or musical experience.

Homework Assignments

This class will include a variety of homework assignments to encourage you to approach the material from different perspectives. Individual assignments are not intended to be overly time-consuming, but they will require an understanding of major concepts to complete adequately. Assignments may include:

*Weekly Listening Responses*: This will be the main form of homework for the class. Every week, you will be asked to listen actively to one or more musical excerpts. In some cases, you will be assigned specific examples, but in most cases you will be able to select from several examples from a given genre or style. You will be asked to write a response that may test your ability to identify or describe specific musical structures or ideas or that may be a subjective account of your listening experience.

*Written responses*: You may be asked to write a brief response to a prompt based on our reading and class discussions.

*Composition*: You may be asked to write or complete a short segment of a composition to demonstrate your understanding of the genres under study.

*Practice*: You may be asked to submit a recording of yourself singing or playing an excerpt from a piece we have worked on in class. Note: this class is designed for musicians and non-musicians of all levels of experience; accordingly, practice assignments will *not* be graded on the basis of musical proficiency.

Assignments should be submitted on time. Late submissions will be penalized 5% per day past the due date, and will not be accepted 1 week past the due date.

Listening Examples

The best way – indeed the only way – to develop understanding of unfamiliar genres of music is through hours and hours of listening, both active and passive. For each genre introduced in class, I will post several optional listening examples on Canvas. These will usually be full-length performances by master artists, and typically will be sourced from YouTube or another highly accessible platform.
In addition, there will be a few **required listening examples** for each genre. These will be short segments and will be accompanied by detailed listening notes informing you precisely what you should be listening for and what you should be able to identify should the example occur on a quiz or test (e.g. instrumentation, musical structure, performance techniques). You should become very familiar with these examples and use the knowledge you gain from them to guide your listening of optional examples.

**Quizzes**

Quizzes will be very short and will be given almost every week. They may include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or short answer questions. They will typically address terminology, major concepts, and listening examples from the previous week, but may ask about major concepts as far back as the beginning of the semester.

**Graduate Article Discussions**

Four times during the semester, graduate students will be assigned an article to read and discuss during a time TBD outside our regular class period. (If no suitable time can be found, we will hold the discussion through an online discussion forum). The planned times and articles are:

- **Week 7:** Lelyveld, David. 1994. “Upon the Subdominant: Administering Music on All-India Radio.”
- **Week 13:** Article TBD

**Class Schedule**

**Week 1**

**Topics:** Introduction to South Asian history and sound culture, svara and sargam


**Performance focus:** Learning and singing sargam syllables

**Week 2**

**Topics:** Introduction to Hindustani music, rāga and gharânā

**Readings:** Neuman, Daniel. 1990. “Being a Musician” from *The Life of Music In North India.*

**Performance focus:** Sargam gīt in Rāga Yaman
Week 3

Topics: Dhrupad history and musical structure, tāla and ṭhekā
Performance focus: ālāp and dhrupad in rāga Bhūpali
Guest Lecture-Demonstration: Pt. Uday Bhawalkar, Dhrupad artist from Pune, India.

Week 4

Topics: Hindustani Instruments and instrumental performance
Performance focus: instrumental gat and variations Rāga Bhīmpalāsī
Guest Lecture-Demonstration: Suhail Yusuf Khan, sārangī artist from Delhi, India, and Middletown, CT.

Week 5

Topics: Creativity within rāgā, variation and improvisation
Readings:
Performance focus: instrumental gat and variations in Rāga Bhairav

Week 6

Topics: khyāl vocal music, gharānā as stylistic lineage, alankār (ornamentation)
Readings:
- Selections from Khyāl Vocalism: Continuity within Change by Deepak Raja (2009)
- Selections from Down Melody Lane by G. N. Joshi (1984).
Performance focus: khyāl in Rāg Kedār

Week 7

Topics: thumrī, ghazal, defining genre through poetry and musical structure
Performance focus: Thumri in Rāga Kāfī
Guest Lecture-Demonstration: Ananyaa Gaur, semi-classical vocalist and artist-activist from Mumbai, India.

Week 8

Topics: Carnatic music in theory, pedagogy and performance
Readings:

**Guest Lecture-Demonstrations:** Poovalur Sriji, Carnatic percussionist and cross-cultural composer from Denton, TX.

Thanmayee Krishnamurthy, Carnatic vocalist from Denton, TX.

**WEEK 9**

**Topics:** Carnatic music’s colonial and modern cross-cultural encounters

**Readings:**


**Performance focus:**

**Guest Lecture-Demonstration:** Aditya Prakash, Carnatic and jazz fusion vocalist from Los Angeles, CA.

**WEEK 10**

**Topics:** Sacred heritage in South Asian music, saint-poets, devotional musics

**Readings:**


**Performance focus:** Shambhavi Dandekar, kathak artist from Sunnyvale, CA.

**Guest Lecture-Demonstration:** Sanskrit mantra chanting, Ram bhajan, Krishna kīrtan

**WEEK 11**

**Topics:** Sufism, qawwālī, Sufiānā kalām, Gurbānī sangīt

**Readings:**


**Performance focus:** Khusravī qawwālī in rāg Shuddh Kalyān, Bulleh Shah kalām

**WEEK 12**

**Topics:** Film and popular musics, Bollywood, regional film industries

**Readings:**


**WEEK 13**

**Major concepts:** Rajasthani hereditary performers, nationalizing “folk” music


**Performance focus:** Rajasthani bhajan, Rabindra git

**WEEK 14**

**Topics:** Indian Music and “The West”, South Asian diaspora,

**Readings:** TBD

**Guest Lecture-Demonstration:** Shruthi Vishwanath, devotional singer from Pune, India.

**WEEK 15**

**Topics:** Student presentations

**Note**

The current syllabus, and particularly its modes of content delivery and evaluation, reflect many changes and compromises made to accommodate the circumstances of the global pandemic. Furthermore, the previous year has revealed that situations may occur mid-semester that necessitate changes in content delivery or evaluation. Accordingly, the instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus - including evaluation criteria - should circumstances necessitate. However, no changes that may impact students’ grades will be made without an open discussion with the class and consideration of all students’ perspectives and needs.

**How to Succeed in this Class**

The two biggest tips I can offer are 1) attend class regularly and attentively, and 2) ask questions about anything you do not understand. Outside of the classroom, I expect you will require 5-6 hours of regular engagement with the class material, with more time spent on project or exam weeks. I recommend you spend this time as follows:

**Weekly reading:** 1-2 hours

**Listening responses and other assignments:** 1-2 hours

**Reviewing terminology:** 30 minutes to 1 hour. I highly recommend that you make this a regular practice (i.e., set aside a time for it once per week). If you allow multiple weeks to pass without
remembering or understanding key terms, it will be more difficult to learn them later and you will likely have increasing difficulty following class discussions.

*Listening and Practicing*: I recommend a minimum of 1-2 hours per week of *active* listening and as much time as you can spent on passive or background listening (e.g. while commuting or studying).

During the last third of the semester, you will likely need to add 1-2 hours a week for research and preparation related to your final project. If you feel this period of the semester may be particularly busy due to the demands of other classes, I recommend communicating with the instructor about whether you might determine a topic for your final project early to spread the work out more evenly through the semester.

**Course Schedule**

**Week 1 – January 12 & 14**
- **Major concepts**: Introduction to South Asia, South Asian music and sound culture, *rāga* (melodic framework), *sapta-svara* (musical notes), *sargam* (solfege)
- **Reading**:  
- **Performance focus**: Rāga Yaman, Sargam Īṭī

**Week 2 – January 19 & 21**
- **Major concepts**: Introduction to Hindustānī music, gharānā, ālāp, dhrupad genre
- **Reading**:  
- **Performance focus**: three-part ālāp in rāga Bhūpālī

**Week 3 – January 26 & 28**
- **Major concepts**: tāla, ṭhekā, bolbāṅt and layakārī variations/improvisation
- **Reading**: Selections from *Dhrupad* by Widdess and Sanyal (2005).
- **Performance focus**: Rāga Bhupālī, dhrupad composition in chautāl
- **Guest lecture-demonstration**: Pt. Uday Bhawalkar from Pune, India

**Week 4 – February 2 & 4**
- **Major concepts**: Hindustani instrumental music
- **Reading**:  
Performance focus:
Guest lecture-demonstration: Suhail Yusuf Khan, from Delhi, India, and Middletown, CT

WEEK 5 – FEBRUARY 9 & 11
Major concepts: creativity within rāga, palta and vistār (permutations and variations)
Reading:
Performance focus:

WEEK 6 – FEBRUARY 16 & 18
Major concepts: khyāl vocal music, gharānā as stylistic lineage, alankār
Reading:
Performance focus:

WEEK 7 – FEBRUARY 23 & 25
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:
Guest lecture-demonstration: Ananyaa Gaur from Mumbai, India

WEEK 8 – MARCH 2 & 4
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:
Guest lecture-demonstrations: Poovalur Sriji and Thanmayee Krishnamurthy from Denton, TX

WEEK 9 – MARCH 9 & 11
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:
Guest lecture-demonstration: Aditya Prakash from Los Angeles, CA

WEEK 10 – MARCH 16 & 18
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:
Guest lecture-demonstration: Shambhavi Dandekar from Sunnyvale, CA

WEEK 11 – MARCH 23 & 25
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:

WEEK 12 – MARCH 30 & APRIL 1
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:

WEEK 13 – APRIL 6 & 8
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:

WEEK 14 – APRIL 13 & 15
Major concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:
Guest lecture-demonstration: Shruthi Vishwanath from Pune, India

WEEK 15 – APRIL 20 & 22
Major Concepts:
Reading:
Performance focus:

Final Project
During the last week of class, you will submit a final project. To reflect the many intellectual backgrounds and goals of the students in the course, there are several options (listed below) for what your final project may involve. Not all options will be available to all students, but you might be granted permission (at the instructor’s discretion) to do a project that is not listed here. You will be provided with more information about the final project after the first month of the semester and will be welcome to turn the project in as early during the semester as you like.

Performance Analysis: A written paper presenting an analysis of a single performance or a comparison between two performances (e.g. the same rāga performed in two different genres). The paper should engage with both musical and cultural aspects of the performance. All students may select this option.
Essay on Cultural or Social Issue: A written paper presenting an argument related to a significant cultural or social issue in the South Asian musical genre of your choice. The argument must be well-supported through background research and engagement with social or cultural theory. All students may select this option.

Critical Performance: The student will present a short performance from one of the genres studied during the semester. They will also submit a short paper describing their preparation for the performance, i.e., how they prepared, why they made certain decisions, what examples they listened to and what they learned from them. In most cases, this will involve some improvisatory component. If a student chooses this project, they WILL be assessed based on the quality of their performance (i.e., points will be deducted for errors in intonation, rhythm, or genre-specific conventions). Only performance majors may select this option.

Musician biography: The student will write a brief biography of a master musician chosen from a list supplied by the instructor. The biography should comment not only on historical details of the subject’s life, but should engage substantially with class discussions and outside research to comment on why the subject is both culturally and musically significant. The paper should also include a brief qualitative analysis of at least one performance by the subject, in which the author explains how the performance demonstrates the subject’s characteristic style, technique, or sound. Only undergraduates may select this option.

Music video analysis: The student will write an analysis of a commercial music video from South Asian film or popular music. The paper should engage with both musical and visual elements of the video and should contextualize these within musical and cultural knowledge acquired through class discussions and outside research. The student should not merely describe what is happening in the video, but must also make an original argument about it in relation to broader musical or cultural concepts. Only undergraduates may select this option.

Composition: The student will compose an original piece drawing from musical structures and ideas they have learned during the semester. They are not required to adhere strictly to the conventions of a traditional South Asian music genre, but in their accompanying writeup, they must specify which elements were inspired by specific South Asian styles or ideas and how those ideas have been approached and transformed in the compositional process. Only composition majors (or performance majors with instructor permission) may select this option.

Policies and Resources
Statement of Religious Liberty

Some of the songs we will sing during this class have texts that implicitly or explicitly refer to deities or other religious concepts. Our performance of this music does not, of course, amount to a profession of any particular faith. In South Asia, it is common for singers of all faiths to perform texts from any religious tradition, and to take their own aesthetic or spiritual meanings from these pieces.

If however, your own religious beliefs – including beliefs in secular humanism or atheism – prohibit you from singing these words, please talk to me and we will work out an alternative.

Academic Integrity

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam. 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.

https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final_.pdf

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. Phone: (940) 565-4323

2020-2021 Semester Academic Schedule (with Add/Drop Dates)

https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide

Academic Calendar at a Glance, 2020-2021

https://www.unt.edu/catalogs/2020-21/calendar
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.

For more information on mental health issues, please visit: https://speakout.unt.edu.

The counselor for music students is:
Myriam Reynolds
Chestnut Hall, Suite 311
(940) 565-2741
Myriam.reynolds@unt.edu

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 12th class day, students must first submit a completed “Request to Drop” form to the Registrar’s Office. The last day for a student to drop a class in Spring, 2021 is April 2. Information about add/drop may be found at: https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide

Student Resources

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to: https://www.unt.edu/sites/default/files/resource_sheet.pdf