

Syllabus

MUS 2420: Comparative Non-Western Cultures: Music

3.0 Credits

Wright State University

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Course Objectives:

This is an introductory survey of the music found within several diverse world cultures. You will become acquainted with the basic elements of music in each culture, develop listening skills that employ descriptive vocabulary, examine how music functions within each society, and gain new perspective on your own culture by comparing your experience with people from all over the Earth. This is an Integrated Writing (IW) course. This means that one of the central outcomes for this course is that you can communicate effectively in writing. The other IW Learning Outcomes are as follows:

Students will be expected to produce writing that

- Demonstrates their understanding of course content,
- Is appropriate for the audience and purpose of a particular writing task,
- Demonstrates the degree of mastery of disciplinary writing conventions appropriate to the course (including documentation conventions), and
- Shows competency in standard edited American English.

This class is part of the WSU Core Curriculum, therefore must meet certain University Learning Objectives. These are:

- a) communicate effectively, especially in writing
- b) apply methods of inquiry to the arts
- c) demonstrate global and multicultural competence

This class is designed to meet the criterion for element three and four. These learning outcomes are stated below:

<p>3. Global Traditions</p> <p><i>Historical analysis and global perspectives necessary to understand our diverse world</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Critically describe some of the political, social or economic systems; historical, cultural or spiritual traditions; and/or technological innovations around the worldb. Demonstrate an awareness of the diversity of people or traditions in our world in ways that promote effective engagement, both locally and globallyc. Use political, social, economic, historical, cultural, spiritual or technological knowledge to evaluate contemporary issues
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<p>4. Arts/Humanities</p> <p><i>Tools for analysis and appreciation of the arts, philosophy, and religious thought</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Critically analyze significant creative, literary, philosophical or religious works b. Understand and discuss the complex blend of imaginative vision, socio-cultural context, ethical values, and aesthetic judgment in creative, philosophical or religious works c. Recognize, evaluate and respond to creative, philosophical or religious works d. Develop appropriate and ethical applications of knowledge in the humanities or the arts
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Required Text:

Soundscapes: Exploring Music in a Changing World. 2nd ed., Kay Kaufman Shelemay
 Learning is also based on lectures, online resources, and streaming audio examples available on reserve from the WSU library.

Grading:

5 Quizzes X 10% each = 50%

Concert Report or Instrument Building Project and Presentation = 25%

Listening and Reflection Journal = 25%

Attendance Policy:

I expect students to attend all class sessions, but I do not monitor attendance. **However, given the intensity of each session, and the amount of material covered, it is not a good idea to miss any class meetings.** Please take the time to communicate with me about any issues you may have. If you must miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes or assignment information from your classmates, and you are still required to meet all course deadlines.

Class Policies:

- No late assignments are accepted. Unless specified, I do not accept assignments by email or email attachment.
- All quizzes may include multiple choice, short answer, and listening identification.
- **I do not tolerate plagiarism.** This includes both copying work from your classmates and from outside sources. If you turn in something that is not your own work, or you fail to cite the employed source, you will receive an F (failing grade) for that assignment.
- **No make up quizzes are given. Missing for illness must be documented.**

Success in this class:

- This class covers a wide range of topics. Quizzes cover everything covered in class and internet reading assignments. Take notes on everything, including video examples.
- Listening is a vital part of this experience. When preparing for each quiz, be sure to listen to the relevant audio examples. You may find that you need to listen to selections more than once.

Course Schedule:

Part I

Week 1	Course Introduction/Definitions/Common Vocabulary
Week 2	Chapter One, The Materials of Music
Week 3	Chapter Two, The Study of Local Musics
Week 4	Case Study, Music of Ghana, India, Diverse Music of Boston
Week 5	Chapter Three, Music's Meaning in Everyday Life

Part II

Week 6	Chapter Four, Music and Migration/ Chinese, Arab, African, Vietnamese
Week 7	Case Study: African Forced Migration/Vietnamese Migration
Week 8	Chapter Five, Music and Memory (Jazz Funeral, Jewish Pizmon, Arab)
Week 9	Music, Mobility, and the Global Marketplace (Hawaiian, Balinese, Silk Road)

Part III

Week 10	Chapter Seven, Music and Dance, Tango, Bhangra, Polka
Week 11	Chapter Eight, Music and Ritual, Tibet, Ethiopian, Diaspora, Liturgical Music
Week 12	Chapter Nine, Music and Politics, Shoshone, Native American Music
Week 13	Case Study: Reggae and The Shoeshone Powwow
Week 14	Chapter Ten, Music of Persia, Cajun and Zydeco Musics
Week 15	Case Study: The Music of a Persian Composer In class presentations due

Course Projects and Assignments

Final Project: You may select one of the options below. Please read the following directions carefully before you begin.

Concert Report

This project is in two parts. First, you will attend a concert and write a 4-5 page report based on the questions below. Second, during the last week of classes, you will summarize your report in a

five-minute presentation and share your experience with the class. The report is due at this time. **You are required to type your paper. Double spaced only, please- 4-5 pages of text (2000 words), not including title page.**

I will not give you a list of concerts that “count” for this assignment. I want you to find a concert that is outside of your everyday experience. The only types of concerts I will definitely *not accept* are “Classical” (e.g. a symphony, Broadway musical, or opera performance) and “mainstream” popular music acts (e.g. Metallica, Toby Keith, or any other large venue popular show.) Check the local papers, do some internet searching, and make note of any concerts I announce in class. If you look carefully, you will discover a wide range of music from many different cultures in southwest Ohio. I realize that some concerts require ticket fees- remember to use your student ID for discounts!

Concert Report Structure:

I. Proposal

Before you attend a concert, you must get my approval. Once you have selected a concert, send me a brief proposal by email and tell me about the event- *who, what, when, where, and why you think it would be a good experience for you.* Yes, all music is “world music,” so please think about the best way to make your case.

IF YOU DO NOT SUBMIT A PROPOSAL, YOU WILL FAIL THIS PORTION OF THE COURSE.

II. Content

I will base your grade on content, use of music vocabulary, and thoroughness. Be sure to answer every question in as much detail as possible. Your answers must be in complete sentences. Provide as much information as you possibly can- take pictures (if allowed), interview other audience members, go backstage and talk to the musicians, etc.

BE SURE TO ATTACH THE PROGRAM AND TICKET STUB! If there is no program and/or ticket for your concert, provide some other form of evidence- pictures, newspaper articles, etc. If you do not provide any evidence, I may not accept your assignment.

III. Format

An effective report is more than just a list of questions and answers. Weave your information together into a narrative describing the entire experience. Avoid the passive voice, write in the first person, and insert your own personality.

IV. Questions:

1. What instruments were used in the concert? Under what classifications (chordophones etc) do they fall? If you can not find the name of the instrument, describe it using the vocabulary you have gained in the class.
2. What types (genres) of music were performed? Does the music fall under any categories discussed in class or in the text? Please describe the music you heard.
3. Was there any singing or dancing? How important was this to the music? Who were the performers? Did they wear any special costumes?
4. Where there any “composers” listed or mentioned? Was the music improvised at any point? How do you know?
5. How did the musicians interact with each other? How did they acknowledge or interact with the audience? Did this help or hinder your enjoyment of the music?
6. What feeling or mood did each movement or section of the performance seem to have?
7. What was/were the most important elements for getting the music across to you? (melody, texture, rhythm, tempo, etc.)
8. What was unique about the concert? What did you like/not like?

One final thought- this assignment is about analysis and thoughtful observation, not about criticism. Avoid writing in the tone of a newspaper or magazine music critic. I want to know what you saw/heard/felt, not what you think a group of performers do well or could do better!

INSTRUMENT BUILDING PROJECT

The basic requirement is simple: build a musical instrument that works.

You may select a musical instrument project from the internet, or you may select an instrument from any genre we have studied, or any instrument that piques your curiosity. If you select this project, you must take the following steps:

1. Write a brief proposal of your project and email it to me. Tell me what instrument you are building, and your outline or plan for completion.

IF YOU DO NOT SUBMIT A PROPOSAL, YOU WILL FAIL THIS PORTION OF THE COURSE.

2. Once your proposal is approved, obtain your raw materials and get to work!
3. You are required to do an in-class presentation with your instrument. These will take place during the last week of class.

4. Please prepare a two-page typed summary of your experience for this presentation and turn this in with your instrument. You should outline your *entire* experience- where did you get the raw materials, how did you go about building the instrument, what are some of the problems you encountered, are you confident that your instrument actually works, where is this instrument actually used, etc.

Listening and Reflection Journal

This portion of the course is designed to help you organize, reflect, and respond to the ideas we are going to cover. This is an opportunity for you to articulate your personal and intellectual reaction to the music and cultures you encounter in each class session. I will give you questions at least once a week. Questions will often be directly related to small group activities, class discussions, and listening assignments. I will provide you with feedback and the opportunity to revise your work. The objectives of your journal can be summed up in the following points as articulated in the universities IW learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate your understanding of course content,
- Is appropriate for the audience and purpose of a particular writing task,
- Demonstrates the degree of mastery of disciplinary writing conventions appropriate to the course and,
- Shows competency in standard edited American English.

Organization:

- Do not attempt to write the entire document at the last minute!
- Each entry must be at least one FULL page long (about 2-3 paragraphs.)
- The final draft must be typed, single-spaced is acceptable. If you are submitting any unusual or alternative entries, please make sure they are legible or organized for ease of reading.
- The complete journal is due at the end of the term. No exceptions.

Grading:

Each journal is assigned a letter grade, A-F.

- There are 10 total entries
- Each entry is worth 10 points
- Any missing entries will result in an automatic deduction of 10 full points
- I will not accept hand-written text entries
- Quality, clarity, and thoroughness are important.
- **Content and Style are entirely up to you. Some suggestions for alternative approaches include writing poetry, short stories, or artwork. Try to balance your entries to include several approaches.**

- If you have any questions, please email me for clarification. You may send sample entries for comments or questions at any time.
- Please avoid excessive use of profanity or colloquial expressions (e.g. “know what I’m saying?”).
- Please avoid the excessive use of negative or disparaging remarks about the course content. What you think and feel is important, but the overall point is for you to articulate your ideas in an organized and thoughtful manner.