

Department: MUSIC

Course No.: 292W

Credits: 3

Title: Introduction to Music in World Culture

Contact: Glen Stanley

Content Area: CA4-Diversity and Multiculturalism

Diversity: CA4 International

WQ: W

Catalog Copy: 292W, Second semester. Three credits. Not open for credit to students who have passed MUSI 190. Prerequisite: MUSI 286 and consent of instructor; ENGL 105 or 110 or 111 or 250. Comparison of musical concepts, styles, and performance practice in the social context of various cultures.

Course Information:

a. Music, as we know it today, is no longer confined by conventional geo-political boundaries. Increasingly, individual and unique localities support a range of musics of different styles and histories. Nowhere are diverse musical traditions more prominently represented in public performance and maintained in private practice than right here in the United States . Centuries of immigration and a rapidly growing multi-ethnic population have resulted in multiple musical “soundscapes,” some of which have sustained and transformed traditions that no longer exist in their original homelands. Whole others have given rise to newer styles.

This course consists of two streams, one exploring the musical traditions both in the United States and elsewhere, the other designed to develop students' ability to research and write. Students will be introduced to musical traditions that have resulted from the transformations cited earlier. They will explore their transmission at home in North America and other geopolitical and ethno linguistic areas of the world. During the course of this semester, we will explore how these traditions are shaped by and how they give shape to the cultural settings in which they are performed. Since different musical styles have different structures and meanings, students will be introduced to new way of listening to these musics. Learning to listen means not just learning to hear characteristics of sound, but also learning to interpret these characteristics in a manner congruent with the sensibilities of those who transmit and perform the music.

b. The course is organized around familiar, cultural themes and scenes; in most instructional units, there will be a major case study from a musical tradition located in the United States—a tradition that has a historical or present-day connection somewhere outside of the United States. Each topic will be framed by a general discussion and illustrated by brief examples from traditions that complement and contrast with the major case study. This course is based primarily

on class discussion, with background lectures for each unit. All reading should be completed before class, and participation in class discussion is expected of everyone.

c. From a disciplinary standpoint, this course serves as an introduction to the study of music in its cultural context. It draws specifically on a set of principles basic to the field of study known as ethnomusicology, a discipline that draws on and interacts with several other fields, including historical musicology, anthropology, sociology, and the relatively young field of cultural studies. From an interdisciplinary standpoint, a principal aim of this course is to introduce students to ways of thinking, methods of research and documentation, and forms of writing. Our purpose is to explore music as a form of human expression and as a meaningful aspect of daily life.

d. Research and writing assignments:

Every student will conduct one full research project, presented first in a brief oral report and then in a 10-12-page paper. Topics and dates are picked in class. The first draft of the paper is due within two weeks of the oral report. Each student must then revise his/her paper (after consultation with the instructor). This revised version is due within two weeks of the time that papers are handed back.

e. Each student will write a one-page report on classic texts in the field of ethnomusicology reporting on methodology, the effects of music performances on musicians and audiences;

- Based on readings in assigned dictionaries and encyclopedias of world music, students will write a one-page paper answering the following questions: “What is Music?” and “What is World Music?” and include an analysis citing their strengths and weaknesses;
- Using Library of Congress Subject Headings, students will develop a list of subject headings for the country they have chosen to research. They will indicate the types of music found there and include a list of book titles found in encyclopedia articles. They will also turn in a bibliography with annotations for each book;
- After reading a series of assigned articles, students will compose and discuss the various philosophies and methodologies of transcription and transcribe an assigned example;
- Students will make a list of the most significant musical instruments (no more than ten) of the country they are studying, describing each through use of the Sachs-von Hornbostel system.
- All papers must be revised in response to written comments.

Meets Goals of Gen Ed.:1. **Students become articulate** through class discussion, oral reports and presentations, and written papers.

2. **Students acquire intellectual breadth and versatility** by developing a broader understanding of the cultural and social context for the expressive arts. Students come to understand that music, like all arts, cannot be transmitted or have meaning without associations between people.

3. **Acquiring critical judgment:** In addition to class discussion of readings and of oral reports, students will recognize that the world is full of variety that can be as different as men are from women, societies from societies, the cold of the north from the warmth of the tropics. Yet, all are

tied together by a common humanity that shares a capacity for creation, imagination, and expression.

4. **Students acquire moral sensitivity** through a discussion and interrogation of musical processes from social, economic, and cultural interactions. Such interactions traverse a wider terrain than is immediately occupied by music makers. Additionally, students acquire moral sensitivity by recognizing that relationships between groups of human beings are more than “sound” and historical fact.

5. **Acquiring awareness of their era and society:** The nature of cultural contact in the globalization process is to a large extent mediated. That is, music can be experienced by people all over the world without their ever having experienced the people who created or performed the music. In a broad sense, media that not only transmits the sound of the composer to the recording studio, the living room, to head phones, television, and MP3 players, but it also conditions the mode of existence of sound itself. In a very real way our musical life depends on various types of mediation. So it is entirely appropriate to ask, what do we experience in our “media-saturated” world? Is it different from what one experienced in pre-industrial society? How have media such as the recording and entertainment industry, technology, journalism, advertisement, shaped the space/place in today's world for the others and us?

6. **Students acquire consciousness of the diversity of human culture and experience** by understanding creative and expressive acts in their own context and on their own terms, thus avoiding the imposition of their own aesthetic or social standards.

7. **Students continue to acquire and use knowledge** by viewing current and future issues related to the expressive arts within a larger historical and social context.

CA4 Criteria: Music 292W examines music as a cultural tradition. Cultural traditions include customs and opinions, developed over generations, about proper and improper behavior. Music 292W asks the following questions: (1) How do we, how do they do things? (2) How do we, how do they interpret the world? (3) In a broad sense, how do we, how do they explain social and cultural similarities and differences through the creative and expressive arts?

1. The course emphasizes that there are varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values, and/or modes of creativity.

Without biological processes of aural perception, and without cultural agreement among at least some human beings on what is perceived, there can be neither music nor musical communication. This course places great importance on creative listening. Listening is a skill that is all too often ignored in discussions of music and musical ability, even though it is as fundamental to music as it is to language.

2. The course emphasizes that interpretative systems and/or social structures are cultural creations

The variety of interpretive systems for creative and expressive acts among many groups are

systematically modified over time. For example, contrasting the written theoretical system of notation, rhythm and dance of northern India with the aural/oral tactile pedagogical system of the Yoruba of Southwest Nigeria and Cuba , provides excellent examples of both continuity and change over time. And yet, each in its own venue is equally effective in its approach to making music in a social context.

W Criteria: Music 292W meets the “W” course criteria in the following ways:

1. The writing assignments enhance students' learning of the course content by requiring them to critically view relevant films and connect them to course readings. They must also research and write a longer analytical paper on an assigned or self-selected topic. The students write five one-page papers and one 10-12-page paper for a total of 16+ pages. The syllabus clearly states that students cannot pass the course without receiving a passing grade on the writing component.
2. Writing instruction is handled in class in two ways. First, students are given general instructions regarding how to structure their papers. Second, common problems are discussed when papers are handed back. For the longer papers, all students meet individually with the instructor to go over their first drafts.
3. Students must revise their research papers in reaction to the comments written on each paper. The longer papers must be revised within two weeks of their being handed back and after an individual consultation with the instructor.

Role of Grad Students: Four graduate assistants will conduct discussion sections; they will assist in the composition and scoring of quizzes and tests and in addressing student questions and concerns. Periodically, discussion sessions will be observed and critiqued, by the instructor of record. In addition to availing themselves of the training opportunities offered by units such as the Institute for Teaching and Learning, all graduate assistants will be required to attend all lectures by the instructor of record.