

Anthropology 2276F-650: The Anthropology of Music

Summer 2019

COURSE OUTLINE

Distance Studies



Instructor: Dr. Karyn Olsen

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Office hours: In person or online by appointment only

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Teaching Assistants: Please refer to the course site in OWL.

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Calendar Course Description

In this course, we will take an anthropological approach to exploring music as an aspect of culture in both present and ancient societies and focuses on how music is used to negotiate individual and collective identities in multiple world contexts. The methods and issues relating to the ethnographic study of music behaviours are important components of the course.

Prerequisite(s): Any Arts & Humanities or Social Science 0.5 or 1.0 Essay course.

Antirequisite(s): None.

Course Syllabus

This course brings together material from cultural studies of music, archaeology, and biological anthropology to inform a broad understanding of the music culture. In addition to studying music's biological origins and archaeological evidence for music practices in the past, we examine contemporary music culture in terms of national policies, trans-national movements, social and political struggles, religious and ethnic expression, gender and sexuality, and modern healthcare.

My hope is that upon completion of this course you will 1) understand the terminology, concepts and methodologies associated with the anthropological study of music culture; 2) apply critical and analytic thinking skills to different representations of social identity; and 3) develop research and communication skills through class discussions/activities and assignments.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Synthesize ideas and concepts about music culture from across fields of study in anthropology.
2. Identify and discuss the relationship between music and social identity in a variety of cultural contexts (past and present) using examples from course material, independent research/reading, and personal experience.
3. Describe the methods used to collect data in modern ethnographic contexts and apply an understanding of those methods to reflections and analyses.
4. Develop research questions, find answers in the anthropological (and other academic) literature, synthesize and evaluate that research.
5. Identify areas for growth related to academic skills, set goals, and evaluate progress towards those goals.

Course Materials

Condry, I. (2006). *Hip-Hop Japan: Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.

You will be able to purchase Condry's ethnography at Western's Bookstore or find it online in both paper and electronic formats. A copy will also be put on 2 hour reserve at Weldon library.

This course will also rely on selected journal articles as part of weekly assigned readings. The complete reading list and schedule will be available in OWL by the first day of class. Also see table at the end of this document.

Evaluation

Online Participation - 10%

There will be regular discussion activities related to weekly content. You will have opportunities to reflect on the course readings/videos, read the thoughts/opinions of your peers, contribute your own questions, ideas, or experiences, and present evidence from independent research. At three points in the term, you will submit a reflection (~150 words/reflection) that will help you to self-evaluate your participation in the class and set and revise goals for your academic growth.

Due Dates: Goal-setting (3%; May 13); Mid-Point (3%; Jun 21); Final (4%; Jul 26)

Note: Late reflections will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late for up to a total of 5 days (including weekends) following the due date. Late reflections will not be accepted after 5 days.

Interview Assignment – 15%

For this assignment, you will interview someone you know that is from a different generation than yourself (parent, grandparent, co-worker, friend) about the role of music in their life. We will brainstorm possible questions together as a class. You will submit a summary of the answers you received, a comparison to your own answers, and your overall thoughts on the process/results (~500 words).

Due Date: May 24

Note: Unless you receive accommodation for illness through Academic Counselling, late Interview Assignments will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late for up to a total of 5 days (including weekends) following the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted after 5 days.

Observation Assignment - 20%

In this assignment, you will choose to watch one documentary (from a couple of options) that focuses on music and culture/identity. You will reflect on how observations are recorded and interpreted. You will then collect observations about a “music culture” on campus (or in London, or in the community in which you currently reside). The goal is to apply an anthropological lens or perspective to a particular activity or social event that you engage or interact with regularly in your everyday environment. You will describe your key field observations and interpretations (~750 words).

Due Date: Jun 14

Note: Unless you receive accommodation for illness through Academic Counselling, late Observation Assignments will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late for up to a total of 5 days (including weekends) following the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted after 5 days.

Research Assignment - 25%

This assignment allows you to pursue an area of personal interest related to music and culture/identity. First, you will devise a research question to guide your research into the academic literature on the topic. Your task is to compile an annotated bibliography of five sources related to your chosen topic. An annotated bibliography includes:

- The complete reference/citation information for the identified sources (similar to a bibliography or works cited page).
- A brief descriptive and evaluative paragraph (known as the annotation) for each source. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the source's relevance, accuracy, and quality. Each annotation should be ~150 words (~750 words total).
- For this assignment, 4/5 sources must be academic (book chapters or peer-reviewed journal articles). The fifth source can be a non-academic (e.g., online articles, videos, podcasts, etc.)

The final step involves a critical analysis that asks you to consider and your previous knowledge and assumptions about the topic and articulate what you have learned. The analysis is not just an opinion piece. The goal is to make connections to course content and/or current events in a way that demonstrates your academic understanding of the topic. You have three options for the analysis component of the Research Assignment:

1. Written reflection. Write a response that addresses the goals outlined above (~500 words).
OR
2. Video reflection. Record yourself responding to the goals as outlined above. (~3-5 minutes).
OR
3. Song writing and/or musical performance. Consider composing the lyrics to a song that addresses the goals outlined above. You also have the option of recording and uploading a performance of the song, rather than only submitting the text.

Due Date: July 5

Note: Unless you receive accommodation for illness through Academic Counselling, late Research Assignment will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late for up to a total of 5 days (including weekends) following the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted after 5 days.

Final Exam – 30%

Exams will be written in person on Western University campus (Student ID required) or at the nearest Exam Centre. The final may include multiple choice questions, short answers, and mini-essay questions. The exam is cumulative, including a strong focus on the assigned course ethnography. A final exam review session will be held at the end of the semester using the Collaborate tool in OWL.

The final exam will take place during the designated exam period for this course. Use of electronic devices will not be allowed during the final exam.

Note: If you do not attend an examination at the time set in the timetable, you will not be allowed to write the missed examination. You may petition for permission to write a Special Examination by submitting written documentation in support of your request to the Academic Counselling Office where it will be determined if accommodation is warranted.

Course Specific Statements and Policies

Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

In order to pass this essay course, students must submit all three written assignments and receive a passing grade on two of the three written assignments.

Course Rationale and Instructor/Student Responsibilities

To help you develop an anthropological appreciation of social identity, my goal is to provide you with opportunities to relate course material to your personal experiences and existing knowledge. This way you will be more likely to remember the concepts and apply them in new contexts. It is also very important to me that time is set aside for you to 'interact' with course material (e.g., through class discussion, online activities, and independent reflections.) I believe this will result in a deeper, longer-lasting understanding of the material.

My Responsibilities as the Professor: 1) Provide an organized, user friendly online learning environment, 2) Strive for a positive, supportive, and engaging class environment, and 3) Be open to student contributions and questions.

Your Responsibilities as a Student: 1) Read and reflect upon the assigned readings each week, 2) Participate respectfully in activities/discussions, 3) Stay on top of weekly tasks, 4) Ask questions and provide feedback as needed.

Statement on Seeking Special Accommodations

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

Statement on Plagiarism

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

Statement on Engaging in the Online Learning Environment

This course relies on the OWL site to connect you with the syllabus, assignment outlines, content, and other course material. Here, you will engage with me and your peers as we progress through the course. Please keep track of weekly tasks and contribute respectfully to online activities.

Statement on Email

You may contact me by email, but it may take up to 24 hours for a response. Please ensure that your emails are worded professionally and include an appropriate salutation (e.g., "Dear Professor" or "Hi Dr. Olsen"). If I cannot provide an immediate response, or if the matter is something I cannot address quickly, I will ask you to meet with me using skype or in-person on campus.

Statement on Student Success

If you need support with your academic writing skills, please visit the [Writing Support Centre](#) in person or online. The Centre aims to (1) enhance your writing and communication skills and build your confidence, (2) equip you with tools, resources and knowledge to effectively communicate through writing, (3) increase your critical analysis abilities to effectively communicate scholarly ideas, (4) convey university level writing expectations, and (5) provide you with the skills you need to navigate academic transitions.

The staff at [Learning Skills Services](#) support your development as an excellent student by answering your questions and providing advice on how to succeed in your studies at Western. They can help you to develop new skills or strengthen existing academic skills. You can make an individual appointment with a learning skills counsellor, attend learning skills presentations, drop by the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Centre, or receive helpful information via e-mail. Information on important learning skills topics is also available online.

Visit the [Wellness Education Centre](#) if you need support in navigating any kind of mental health issue (e.g., anxiety, stress, etc.) WEC provides free assistance in connecting you with wellness services and resources on and off campus. Students who are in emotional/mental distress can also refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. [These policies are outlined, with links to the full policies on the Anthropology website.](#)

Weekly Schedule

DATE	FOCUS/TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES
Week 1 May 6 - 12	Course Introduction	
Week 2 May 13 - 19	Biological and Cultural Origins of Music	Participation Goal-Setting Reflection (3%) May 13
Week 3 May 20 - 26	Nationalism	Interview Assignment (15%) May 24
Week 4 May 27 - Jun 2	Trans-nationalism	
Week 5 Jun 3 - 9	Religion	
Week 6 Jun 10 - 16	Social Resistance/ Movements	Observation Assignment (20%) Jun 14
Week 7 Jun 17 - 23	Gender and Sexuality	Participation Mid-Point Reflection (3%) Jun 21
Week 8 Jun 24 - 30	Health and Illness	
Week 9 Jul 1 - 7	Ethnography Week 1	Research Assignment (25%) Jul 5
Week 10 Jul 8 - 14	Ethnography Week 2	
Week 11 Jul 15 - 21	Ethnography Week 3	
Week 12 Jul 22 - 28	Exam Prep and Review	Participation Final Reflection (4%) Jun 26
Exam Period (Jul 29 - Aug 1)		Final Exam (30%)

Assigned Readings

Week	Reading description
Week 01	Guest, K. J. (2018) Fieldwork and ethnography. In: <i>Essentials of Cultural Anthropology: A Toolkit for a Global Age</i> . (pp. 61–89) New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
Week 02	Trehub, S. E., Becker, J., and Morley, I. (2015). Cross-cultural perspectives on music and musicality . <i>Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society Series B</i> , 370, 1–9.
Week 03	Henderson, S. (2008). Canadian content regulations and the formation of a national scene. <i>Popular Music</i> , 27(2), 307-315.
Week 04	Ramnarine, T. K. (1996). "Indian" music in the diaspora: case studies of "chutney" in Trinidad and in London . <i>British Journal of Ethnomusicology</i> , 5(1), 133–153.
Week 05	Gilmour, M. J. (2009). Outrageous religion: sex, defiance, and obsession with the sacred. In: <i>Gods and Guitars: Seeking the Sacred in Post-1960s Popular Music</i> . (pp. 95–128) Waco: Baylor University Press.
Week 06	Morant, Kesha M. (2011). Language in action: Funk music as the critical voice of a post–civil rights movement counterculture. <i>Journal of Black Studies</i> , 42(1), 71–82.
Week 07	Maalsen, S. and McLean, J. (2018) Record collections as musical archives: Gender, record collecting, and whose music is heard. <i>Journal of Material Culture</i> , 23(1), 39–57.
Week 08	Batt-Rawden, K. and Tellnes, G. (2011) How music may promote healthy behaviour. <i>Scandinavian Journal of Public Health</i> , 39, 113–120.
Week 09	Hip Hop Japan (Introduction, Chapters 1, & 2)
Week 10	Hip Hop Japan (Chapters 3, 4, & 5)
Week 11	Hip Hop Japan (Chapters 6, 7, & Conclusion)
Week 12	<i>No Readings</i>