MUS 304 Introduction to Ethnomusicology  
Syllabus Fall 2010

Class Time: Tuesday, Thursday 10:05–11:30  
Room: FA 170  
Instructor: Dr. James Burns  
Office: FA 116  
Office Hours: Mondays 1–3PM.  
Contact: Email: jburns@binghamton.edu ; Office Phone: 777-2595

Required Texts:  

Supplemental Readings: Pdf copies located on Blackboard in the Course Reserves folder.

Listening Examples: Mp3 files for examples outside of the Soundscapes CDs will be placed on Blackboard in the Listening Examples folder.

Course Objective:  
This course will provide a general introduction to the study of ethnomusicology. Using musical traditions from differing world cultures as practical examples, we will discuss the development, outlook, theory, and practice of contemporary ethnomusicology. Drawing on ideas and information from class lectures, listening examples, videos, reading assignments, as well as hands-on musical examples, you will learn to discuss and analyze music as a part of culture and as a piece of culture in various settings throughout the world. In this course we will be focusing on music cultures from Africa, India, Indonesia and North America. Towards the end of the course, you will be asked to apply the concept of a music culture to a local music tradition, which you will investigate and document into a major written assignment.

This course fulfills the GenEd composition (C) requirement, and therefore contains a substantial amount of written work which accounts for 70% of your final grade. Part of the course will consist of learning to conduct scholarly research, including the use of the library, electronic journals, the internet, MLA and Chicago style referencing, and inter-library borrowing. You will learn to locate and critically assess information from various sources and combine it with original data gleaned from recorded field interviews. We will also work to improve your writing skills throughout the semester, culminating in a 5000 word musical ethnography, which will be critiqued and revised with my assistance.

Course Guidelines:  
This course is for Music Major and Minors ONLY! Our class discussions, assignments, and exams will require the ability to read and transcribe music, basic piano skills, and the knowledge of a primary instrument or vocal tradition. Moreover, as this course is required for music students, is only offered in the Fall, and has a limited number of places, there is simply not enough room to accommodate students pursuing other degrees.
Although it does not comprise a percentage of your final grade, attendance is expected at all classes. Exams will be based upon listening examples and information given in lectures as well as the assigned readings. If you miss a session you will be at a significant disadvantage, and therefore you should endeavor to attend every class. I will not make up missed lectures during office hours— if you are absent you will have to arrange to copy the notes from a classmate. Furthermore, any assignments missed due to an unexcused absence will be counted as a zero.

The lectures are designed to take advantage of our relatively small class size by encouraging class discussion and participation. Some meetings will consist of class discussions, where everyone will be required to reflect and comment intelligently on the topic. In order to frame your comments you will be asked to answer question(s) over the readings that will be posted in the Assignments folder on Blackboard. Other meetings will consist of group music making, where everyone will be asked to prepare and practice instrumental and vocal pieces or exercises from transcriptions, also posted in the Assignments section on Blackboard. These ‘assignments’ will be graded and form part of the assessment for the course. Assignments and readings are due ON the date they are listed in the syllabus.

Please note the drop and add deadlines for classes. You can withdraw from the class with a W until October 29. However, if you want to drop without a ‘W’ on your transcript you must drop by Friday September 17. The add deadline is midnight on Friday September 17.

The dates for the exams, assignments, and fieldwork project are listed on the course outline. You will be expected to take the exams and turn in assignments at the scheduled times. There will be no make-up tests or late assignments accepted without prior notice, a documented illness, or a serious emergency. Students involved in University Athletics or other officially sponsored activities should bring letters from supporting coaches or faculty well in advance of the due date.

Assessment

Assessment will be based upon two exams, ten short written assignments (2 pages each), and a final fieldwork project (5000 words~15 pages). After your project has been submitted, it must be revised according to comments made by the instructor, before being submitted for a final grade.

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (2)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>92-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>78-79.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments (10)</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>90-91.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>72-77.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fieldwork Project</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>88-89.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>70-71.9</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>82-87.9</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>60-69.9</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80-81.9</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
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Grading Policy

Grades will be determined according to a system where the cumulative score for each category of assessment (exams, assignments, fieldwork project) accounts for a certain percentage of your final grade, shown in the table above. Letter grades will be based on the standard University scale, given above. Please Note: Out of fairness to all students, I do not amend grades—please do not ask me to raise your grade for any reason. Exams and coursework will be kept on file for 1 year, and then will be disposed of. If you have a question about your grade, please see me before this time.
Resources for Ethnomusicology:


Grove Music Online accessed through the Library Catalogue. Many articles on world music.

BU Fine Arts Library sections ML3497-3849 contain many books on World Music.

The journal Ethnomusicology, published by the Society of Ethnomusicology, is in the library in the fine arts reading area.

The journal The World of Music is also in the library in the fine arts reading area.

We have several world music CDs and videos in the library. If you go to the library catalog, click on advanced search, and then type a country or region into the search field and then under format (below) pull down either music or visual materials you will find a list of what we have for that place.

Important Dates:
Sept. 4–12 Labor Day and Rosh Hashanah (No class)
Sept. 17 Course Add/Drop Deadline
Oct. 21 MID TERM EXAM
Oct. 29 Course Withdraw Deadline
Nov. 24–29 Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 30 FIELDWORK PROJECTS DUE
Dec. 10 Last day of class
Dec. 14 FINAL EXAM
MUS 304  Introduction to Ethnomusicology

Course Outline

Readings from assigned texts are given in bold using the following abbreviations: WM for Worlds of Music, and S for Soundscapes. Supplementary readings are located by title in the Course Reserves folder on Blackboard.

Session  Date  Topic

UNIT ONE

1.  T Aug 31  Introduction, Course Overview
    ➢  Read WM Chapter 1
    ➢  Read S Introduction

2.  TH Sept 2  Discussion: The Study of Ethnomusicology
    ➢  Read S Chapter 1
    ➢  Supplementary Reading: “Ethnomusicology” by Helen Myers
        ∗  Assignment 1

3.  T Sept 14  Discussion: Documenting Music Cultures
    ➢  Read S Chapter 2
    ➢  Supplementary Reading: “The Interpretation of Cultures”
        (selection) by Clifford Geertz
        ∗  Assignment 2

Indian Classical Music

4.  TH Sept 16  South Indian Classical Music
    ➢  Read WM Chapter 6

5.  T Sept 21  Music and Identity
    ➢  Read S Chapter 10
        ∗  Assignment 3

6.  TH Sept 23  South Indian Music continued

7.  T Sept 28  Discussion: Music and Migration
    ➢  Read S Chapter 4
        ∗  Assignment 4
    ➢  Read WM Chapter 6 pp. 277-298

8.  TH Sept 30  North Indian Classical Music
    ➢  Supplementary Reading: “Hindustani Raga” by George
        Ruckert and Richard Widdess
    ➢  Supplementary Reading: “Hindustani Instrumental Music” by
        Steven Slawek
Indonesian Gamelan Music

9. T Oct 5  Indonesian Music
   ➢ Read WM Chapter 7
   ✫ Assignment 5

10. TH Oct 7  Music in Central Java

11. T Oct 12  Discussion: Music and Trance
   ➢ Read S Chapter 8
   ➢ Supplementary Reading: “Deep Listeners” (selection) by Judith Becker
   ✫ Assignment 6

12. TH Oct 14  Indonesian Musical Theatre
   ➢ Supplementary Reading: “Trance in Bali” (selection) by Jane Belo

13. T Oct 19  Fieldwork Projects/ Review
   ➢ Read S Chapter 3
   ➢ Read WM Chapter 10

14. TH Oct 21  EXAM I DUE

UNIT TWO Africa and Diaspora

15. T Oct 26  Ewe Dance-Drumming Workshop
   ✫ Assignment 7

16. TH Oct 28  Ewe Music
   ➢ Read WM Chapter 3 pp. 83-110
   ➢ Supplementary Reading: “The Organization of Music in Dzodze” by James Burns

17. T Nov 2  Discussion: Music and Dance
   ➢ Read S chapter 7
   ➢ Supplementary Reading: “Interrelations of Music and Dance” by Kwabena Nketia
   ✫ Assignment 8

18. TH Nov 4  Ewe Music Continued

19. T Nov 9  Using Online Resources
   ✫ Assignment 9

20. TH Nov 11  Shona Music
   ➢ Read WM Chapter 3 (section) pp. 123-133
   ➢ Supplementary Reading: “The Poetic Song Texts Accompanying the Mbira Dzavadzimu” by Paul Berliner

21. T Nov 16  Discussion: Music, Mobility, and the Global Marketplace
   ➢ Read S chapter 6

22. TH Nov 18  Mande Music
   ➢ Read WM Chapter 3 (section) pp. 110-118
   ➢ Supplementary Reading: “Supplementary Reading: “Jeliya” by Eric Charry
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| 23. | T Nov 23 | **Music of Black America**  
|     |        | - Read WM Chapter 4                                                      |
| 24. | T Nov 30 | **Discussion: The Creative Artist**  
|     |        | - Supplementary Reading: “Social Behavior: The Musician” by Alan Merriam |
|     |        | - Supplementary Reading: “Joseph Shabalala: Chronicles of an African Composer” by Christopher Ballantine |
|     |        | - Assignment 10                                                         |
| 25. | T Nov 30 | FIELDWORK PROJECTS DUE/ Class Presentations                             |
| 26. | TH Dec 2  | Class Presentations                                                     |
| 27. | T Dec 7   | Individual Revision Sessions                                            |
| 28. | TH Dec 9  | Individual Revision Sessions                                            |

**FINAL EXAM TUESDAY DECEMBER 14, 2010 from 11–1:00PM in room FA 170**

Note: This outline is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.