

MUH 5505: INTRODUCTION TO ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

Section: REG1

Course Syllabus

Academic Term

Fall 2025

Class Period

Wednesdays – Period 9-11, 4:05pm-7:05pm

Location

MUB 0144

Instructor

Dr. Tim Murray

Office: MUB 344

Email: timothymurray@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 6:00 P.M.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This graduate seminar explores ethnomusicological research and its relationship to the disciplines of folklore, anthropology, linguistics, and historical musicology. The objective is to introduce students to field research, representational analysis of sound and social life, interpretative techniques, and the use of oral, written, and media sources. The class is organized around a series of topics including field research; transcription; sound as a symbolic system; commodification and consumption; music and globalization; music and identity formation, music and gender; and media, technology, and popular music. For each topic a list of required and optional readings is given (see **Course Calendar**) from which I will make specific assignments. Each student is expected to write weekly commentaries on the readings and come to class prepared to discuss the readings/topic at hand. Class discussions will be organized and led by the instructor and by students on selected topics.

COURSE COMPONENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

- weekly reading assignments (ongoing throughout the semester)
- weekly written commentaries on reading assignments (ongoing throughout the semester)
- seminar-style class discussions (ongoing throughout the semester)
- Student led discussions of individual chapters/articles (ongoing throughout the semester)
- Local ethnographic fieldwork project (weeks 4, 5, 6) culminating in a short oral presentation (week 8). This will include a narrative-style ethnographic /vignette based on fieldwork field notes and/or interviews data.
- Oral presentation of final project on Dec 3. This should be a 7-9 page conference style paper presentation. Students will be given 20-minutes for their paper/musical examples and 10 minutes for questions and discussion)

- One book/literature review (5 pages) on a single-authored musical ethnography published in the last 10 years of your choice (Book must be chosen and approved by Oct. 22 and is due Nov 5).
- final paper of around 15 pages (abstract of no more than 250 words to be submitted in advance on Nov 13) (final papers due Dec 11)

Written Work, Homework, And Fieldwork/Ethnography Project

- Reading observations: For each course topic we cover, each student is required to write a summary/commentary covering the entire set of readings for that week. These are to be uploaded to the Canvas course website by 12:00 A.M. the night before class.
- One book review on an approved topic
- One term paper
- Short fieldwork/ethnography project (may be a stand-alone project or related to your term paper). The components are as follows:
 - Development of a cogent research question
 - Administering five semi structured interview
 - An in-class presentation of the individual projects
 - One ethnographic vignette to be developed from fieldnote observations and interviews.
- Additionally, there will be a few short homework assignments during the course of the semester.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Weekly Observation/Response Papers

- For each course topic we cover, students are required to submit a written summary/commentary of around 500 words *for each set of weekly readings* the evening before the topic is discussed to the course canvas page. There are many reasons for requiring these, not the least of which will be to generate in class discussion. Not only will they generate useful, original annotated bibliographic information for later use (HINT, HINT, HINT...), but also serve as useful study guides for master's level oral and PhD level comprehensive exams.
- These should include:
 - A narrative outline of each reading's main points, primary arguments, and conclusions. These should contain three thought questions for in class discussion. (**PRO TIP:** Structure your response papers with an outline first and then save that outline separately for use in class. *It is far easier and faster to draw on a bullet list of key points during class discussions than it is to hunt for their exact location in a text, during class discussion.* Also, this should go without saying, but *do not wait until the hour before class to compose your responses.*
 - Five thought questions generated by the readings.
 - Critical reactions to the author's thesis or supporting evidence. Did you agree or disagree with the article's premise? Did you take issue with the author's argument? Why?

- Anything you think the author overlooked or failed to consider.
- Any conceptual material that connects with your own research interests.
- Anything that confused you.
- Any connections the reading stimulated between the subject at hand and concepts dealt with in another class
- Late response papers will not be accepted

UF Academic Policies & Resources: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance

Please show up to class on time. Class sessions will be conducted as seminars so your participation is essential. In the event of absence due to a medical or other types of emergency please inform the instructor as soon as possible. Because this class meets only one time per week, *one absence is equivalent to missing an entire week of MWF class periods.*

Use of Electronics

Please do not multitask, become distracted or otherwise engaged by your phone or other electronic devices during class. Do not check messages on your phone or laptop. Ever.

Academic Honesty

Welcome to the singularity and the dawn of a new technological, A.I. driven era. Please keep in mind that by completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: *"I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for the University."* The instructor of this course fully endorses this statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> during the last two or three weeks of the semester.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- Timothy Cooley, 1997. "Casting Shadows in the Field: An Introduction." In *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, edited by G. Barz and T. Cooley, 3-19. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Turino, Thomas. 2008. *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Emerson Robert M Rachel I Fretz and Linda L Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* Second ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Post, Jennifer C, ed. 2006. *Ethnomusicology: A Contemporary Reader*. New York: Routledge. **(Available online through the UF Library)**
- Post, Jennifer C, ed. 2018. *Ethnomusicology: A Contemporary Reader, Volume 2*. New York: Routledge. **(Available online through the UF Library)**
- Rice Timothy. 2014. *Ethnomusicology: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press. **(Available online through the UF Library)**
- Bruno Nettl, 2010, Nettl's Elephant: On the History of Ethnomusicology, introduction, chapters 1-2 and 11. **(Available online through the UF Library)**
- Bernard, Russell. 2011. *Research Methods in Anthropology, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. **(Available online through the UF Library)**

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Journal articles and chapters from books will be assigned in order to expand the materials found in the texts—it is the student's responsibility for finding and downloading or printing each week's additional readings for in-class and out-of-class-use. Most of these readings can be accessed online through CANVAS\E-LEARNING. Hard copies may also be available reserve in the Architecture and Fine Arts Library. In most cases, assigned readings in the form of journal articles and book chapters may be found in online through the UF Libraries (link to Music Library Guide: <https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/c.php?g=147582&p=969589>). In some cases, readings will be posted to the course Canvas webpage.

COURSE GRADING

Grades will be based on the quality of your class participation, written work, homework assignments, and oral presentations with the following percentages assigned:

- Book Review 10%
- Written Weekly Commentaries 15%
- Research Paper 30%
- Oral Presentation 10%
- Student led class discussions/class Participation 15%
- Fieldwork Project/Homework Assignments 20%

GRADING SCALE

Grading Scale:

94-100 = A

91-93 = A-

88-90 = B+

85-87 = B

82-84 = B-

79-81 = C+

76-78 = C

73-75 = C-

70-72 = D+

66-69 = D

67-68 = D-

65↓ = E

Information on current UF grading policies and grade points may be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

PRELIMINARY DUE DATES

- In class student summary/proposal for field work projects: September 10:
- Book review: October 28 (Book must be chosen and approved by October 22)
- Final paper In-Class Presentation: November 22
- Term paper due December: 3 by 5:00 P.M.

Student Privacy

- There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regard to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see the Notification to Students of FERPA Rights.

Campus Resources

- Using UF Libraries
 - Basics of UF Library use may be found at: <https://uflib.ufl.edu/using-the-libraries/>
 - Find Help or Research Assistance [https://uflib. ufl.edu/find/ask/](https://uflib.ufl.edu/find/ask/)
- Subject Specialist Librarians: UF maintains full-time librarians for nearly every single major at UF. All subject specialist librarians are available for one-on-one consultations and each maintains an online library guide with information on accessing UF's collections (<https://uflib.ufl.edu/specialists/>). Possible areas interest to students of musicology and ethnomusicology include: Anthropology, African American Studies, Latin American studies, Arabic Studies, Asian Studies, Arts in Medicine, Jewish Studies, Digital Humanities, Folklore, and Gender Studies.

Health and Wellness

- If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>) to refer or report a concern, and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center

- Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website (<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis and non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center

- Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website (<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>)

University Police Department

- Visit the UF Police Department website (<https://police.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

E-learning technical support

- <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>
- 352-392-4357 (select option 2)
- or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu

Writing Studio <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio>

- One on one help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

UF International Center Ethnography Lab

- **<https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/ufs-international-ethnography-lab>**
- Location: 3323 Turlington Hall
- Public Hours: MWF 1:00 – 4:00PM & TR 2:00 – 5:00PM (lab members can use the space at any time) COURSE CALENDAR (Subject to Changes)
- Contact: Dr. Rebecca Hanson, at r.hanson@ufl.edu.

Course Calendar and Schedule

Each week, reading assignments will be chosen from the lists given below each topic (this is subject to change). Most of these items can be accessed online through the CANVAS E-LEARNING website for the course. Other materials are available through JSTOR, Oxford Music Online, the texts for the course, or the Fine Arts Library.

WEEK 1 (AUGUST 27): ORIENTATION, SYLLABUS, AND PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION (EMAIL CLASS LISTSERV THROUGH ONE UF WEEK BEFORE)

- Bruno Nettl, 2010, Nettl's Elephant: On the History of Ethnomusicology, introduction, chapters 1-2 and 11. **Available online through the UF Library.**
- Timothy Rice. 2014. *Ethnomusicology: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press. **Available online through the UF Library.**
 - Chapter 1, "Defining Ethnomusicology"
 - Chapter 2: "A Bit of History"

WEEK 2 (SEPTEMBER 3): DEFINING QUESTIONS IN ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

- Post Texts 1 & 2 Introductions. (pp. 1-13 and 1-14)
- Turino Chapters 1-3. (pp. 1-93)

- Crook Field Research Project Guide. Includes description of basic fieldwork terminology and procedures for upcoming ethnographic project

WEEK 3 (SEPTEMBER 10): THE INTERSECTION OF MUSICOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

- Hood, Mantle. 1963. "Music, the Unknown." In *Musicology*, edited by F. Harrison, M. Hood, and C. Palisca, 217-326. Inglewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall. (read "Within the Context," pp. 261-289).
- _____. 1971. *The Ethnomusicologist*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press. (read pp. 24-49: "Musical Literacy").
- Merriam, Alan. 1964. *The Anthropology of Music*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press. (read first 3 chapters, pp. 1-60).

WEEK 4 (SEPTEMBER 17): FIELD RESEARCH PROJECT WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION TO FIELD RESEARCH

- Timothy Rice. 2014. *Ethnomusicology: A Very Short Introduction*. Chapter 3: "Conducting Research." New York: Oxford University Press
- Paul Berliner, 1978. *The Soul of Mbira*. Berkeley: University of California Press (read pp. 1-7).
- Liz Prybylski, 2020, "Introduction to Hybrid Ethnography," in Hybrid Ethnography: Online, Offline, and In Between.
- Timothy Cooley, 1997. "Casting Shadows in the Field: An Introduction." In *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, edited by G. Barz and T. Cooley, 3-19. New York: Oxford University Press.

WEEK 5 (SEPTEMBER 24): FIELD RESEARCH PROJECT WEEK 2 – PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION AND DATA COLLECTION

Required Reading

- Bernard 2011 Participant Observation. Pp. 256-290
- Emerson Text Chapters 1-4.
- Stone-MacDonald, Angela, and Ruth M. Stone. "The Feedback Interview and Video Recording in African Research Settings." *Africa Today* 59, no. 4 (2013): 3–22.

Supplemental:

- Bernard, Russell. 2011. Interviewing I: Unstructured and Semistructured, pp. 156-186. In *Research Methods in Anthropology, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*.

WEEK 6 (OCTOBER 1): FIELD RESEARCH PROJECT WEEK 3 – DISCOVERING MEANING, PROCESSING FIELDNOTES, & ETHNOGRAPHIC WRITING

- Greg Barz. Chapter 13 in *Shadows in the Field*, pp. 206-270

- Emerson Text Chapters 5-8
- Collings, Peter. *Becoming Inummariik: Men's Lives in an Inuit Community. Chapter 1: Time for a Snack. Available online through the UF Library.*

Supplemental:

- Seeger, Anthony. 1979. "What Can We Learn When They Sing? Vocal Genres of the Suyá Indians of Central Brazil." *Ethnomusicology* 23(3): 373-394. *Course Reserves*
- Bernard: Grounded Theory, pp. 429-443. In *Research Methods in Anthropology, Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*.

WEEK 7 (OCTOBER 8): TRANSCRIBING MUSIC (OCTOBER 16)

Required Reading

- Seeger, Charles. 1958. "Prescriptive and Descriptive Music-Writing." *Musical Quarterly*
- Jairazbhoy, Nazir A. 1979. "The Objective and Subjective View in Music Transcription." *EM* 21(2):263-274.
- Browner, Tara. 2000. "Making and Singing Pow-Wow Songs: Texts, Form, and the Significance of Culture-Based Analysis." *Ethnomusicology* 44(2):214-233.
- Clayton, Martin. 2018. "Time, Gesture, and Attention in a *Kyal* Performance." (**Post 2: 249-266**).

WEEK 8 (OCTOBER 15): FIELD RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

- In-class report on field work projects. These should include a discussion of the following:
 - A description of the musical subject
 - First impressions of the musical culture you investigated
 - Three possible research questions defined by your fieldwork experience
 - Ways in which you gained access to this musical community and developed rapport with people within it.
 - A 10-question interview developed from initial social interactions with interlocutors aimed at possible further field research.
 - A description of how you coded your interviews and field notes. What themes stood out within the text of your data and how did they help structure your thinking about what questions to ask? Did you use in-vivo codes?
 - An ethnographic vignette based on the ethnographic field notes/interview data you collected representing an instructive moment that occurred during your fieldwork. This should connect in some way to your proposed research problem.

Required Written Work

Turn in:

- All fieldnotes
- 10 question interview
- Developed ethnographic narrative/vignette due developed from fieldnotes (4 pages)

WEEK 9 (OCTOBER 22): PLACE AND EMBODIMENT

- **Soundscape:** Schafer, R. Murray. 1994 [1977]. "Introduction." In *Our Sonic Environment and the Soundscape: The Tuning of the World*, by R. Murray Schafer, 3-12. Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books. (Canvas/Elearning)
- **Globalization/Glocalization:** Polak, Rainer. 2000. "A Musical Instrument Travels Around the World: Jenbe Playing in Bamako, West Africa, and Beyond." *The World of Music* 42(3): 7-46. (Post 1: 161-186)
- **Scenes:** Straw, Will. 1991. "Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change: Communities and Scenes in Popular Music." *Cultural Studies* 5(3): 368-388. (Canvas/Elearning)
- **Embodiment of Place:** McDowell, Linda. "In and Out of Place: Bodies and embodiment." In *Gender Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

***Note: Students should have their book review ethnography chosen and approved by me by this date.**

WEEK 10 (OCTOBER 29): MUSIC AND IDENTITY FORMATION

Required Reading:

- Solomon, Thomas. 2000. "Dueling Landscapes: Singing Places and Identities in Highland Bolivia." *Ethnomusicology* 44 (2): 257-280. (JSTOR/Canvas/Elearning)
- Timothy Rice, 2010, "Reflections on Music and Identity in Ethnomusicology," Музикологија (Musicology).
- Erlmann, Veit. 2004. "Communities of Style: Musical Figures of Black Diasporic Identity." In *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*, edited by T. Turino and J. Lea, 81-91. Warren Michigan: Harmonie Park Press.
- **Turino Text chapters 4-6** (review Chapters 1-3)

WEEK 11 (NOVEMBER 5): MUSICAL SEMIOTICS

- Feld, Steven. 1981. "'Flow Like a Waterfall': The Metaphors of Kaluli Musical Theory." *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 13:22-47.
- Turino, Thomas. "Peircean Thought as Core Theory for A Phenomenological Ethnomusicology." *EM* 58(2): 185-221.
- Meintjes Louise. 1990. "Paul Simon's Graceland South Africa and the Mediation of Musical Meaning." *Ethnomusicology* 34 (1) Winter 1990 Pages 37-73.
- Perman, Tony. "Musical Meaning and Indexicality in the Analysis of Ceremonial Mbira Music." *Semiotica* 2020, no. 236 (2020): 55–83.

Required Written Work

- Book Review Due

WEEK 12 (NOVEMBER 12): THE STUDY OF JAZZ AND POPULAR MUSICS IN ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

- Brackett, David. 1999. "James Brown's 'Superbad' and the Double-Voiced Utterance." In *Reading Pop: Approaches to Textual Analysis in Popular Music*, edited by R. Middleton, 122-140. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Théberge, Paul. 2001. "'Plugged in': Technology and Popular Music." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, edited by S. Frith, W. Straw, and J. Street, 3-25. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Monson, Ingrid. 1995. Journal of the American Musicological Society, Vol. 48, No. 3, Music Anthropologies and Music Histories (Autumn, 1995, pp. 396-422
- Monson, Ingrid. 1999. "Riffs, Repetition and Theories of Globalization. Ethnomusicology 43, No. 1 Winter, pp. 31-65.

WEEK 13 (NOVEMBER 19): MUSIC, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

Required Reading

- Sherry Ortner, 1996, Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture, introduction.
- Meintjes, Louise, 2004, "Shoot the Sergeant, Shatter the Mountain: The Production of Masculinity in Zulu Ngoma Song and Dance in Post-Apartheid South Africa." Ethnomusicology Forum, Nov., 2004, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Nov., 2004), pp. 173-201
- Sarah Hankins, 2014, "Queer Relationships with Music and an Experiential Hermeneutics for Musical Meaning," Women & Music
- Peter McMurray, 2020, "On Serendipity, or, Toward a Sensual Ethnography," in *Queering the Field: Sounding Out Ethnomusicology*.

WEEK 14: (DECEMBER 26) UF CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 15: (DECEMBER 3): FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS