COURSE INFORMATION

Arms Music Center 212
Tuesday-Thursday 10:00-11:20

Assistant Professor Jeffers Engelhardt
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

While music is commonly thought of as a human universal, questions concerning the universality of human rights and the relativity of cultural forms are becoming more urgent because of global interaction and conflict. Music gives voice to human dignity and makes claims about social justice. Music is a register of power and domination, as is its silencing. The specific cultural contexts that give music its meaning may not translate into global arenas, thus highlighting the dilemmas of universality. In this course, we will examine musical censorship in Indonesia, music and the indigenous rights of the Naxi in China and the Suyá in Brazil, the use of music as an instrument of torture by the United States military, music and HIV/AIDS activism in Uganda, popular music and minority language protection in the Russian Federation, music and the study of trauma, disabilities, and human ecology, and music in the lives of Tibetan refugees, for instance. The course will feature visiting performers and will pay particular attention to the discretely musical aspects of human and cultural rights. Our work will be oriented towards activism beyond the classroom.

This semester, we will engage with literature from ethnomusicology, anthropology, and other social sciences. You will become comfortable hearing musics and thinking about musical practices in terms of how sounds and the realities they create are related to rights discourses and claims. Finally, you will become fluent in speaking and writing about music and rights in a critical, original manner.

Because music, ideas about music, and claims about human and cultural rights are constantly emerging and contested, classroom debate and discussion are vital to this course. In other words, music, human rights, and cultural rights are about sound in fundamental ways, and the sound of exploration, debate, and discussion will be a central aspect of each class.

All weekly readings and listenings that are not in texts required for purchase will be accessible as pdfs and mp3s on the course website.
**Course Requirements and Expectations**

Needless to say, preparation for, attendance at, and active participation in every class meeting is essential. No unexcused absences are permitted. Graded in-class work cannot be made up, no exceptions. In order for an absence to be excused due to illness or an exceptional and unavoidable personal conflict, you must be in touch with me well beforehand. An email sent after an absence is polite, but it does not excuse that absence. All assignments must be submitted to me as an email attachment in .doc or .pdf format by their due date. I do not accept hard copies. Finally, I welcome and encourage you to speak with me at any time about any aspect of the course. Remember: the more you give to this course, the more I can give to you individually and as a group; the more you speak and listen critically and creatively, the more you will learn.

Your work in this course will be challenging, rewarding, and varied. I will hand out guidelines and rubrics for all the work you will do in order to make my expectations and standards for evaluation completely clear. At the end of each unit, you will write a short (750 word) essay addressing questions I pose that draws meaningfully and critically on the readings, listenings, and work we’ve done. At the end of the semester, there will be a final essay of more substantial length (2500 words) that will draw together the work we’ve done throughout the course. With the exception of your final essay, you may revise and rewrite any work you do in this course in order to realize more fully given guidelines and rubrics. Growth through self-criticism and discussion with me are central to this process and to this course.

As part of our unit on music, violence, and war we will be collaborating with Prof. Kallick’s class on a project called “The Experience of War,” which will include a performance of Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem* on March 8.

Our work in this course will be done according to Amherst College’s Statement of Intellectual Responsibility:

<https://cms.amherst.edu/academiclife/dean_faculty/policiesprocedures/sir>

Here are due dates to keep in mind:

**Essay #1:** Monday, February 11 at 8:00 PM  
**Essay #2:** Monday, February 18 at 8:00 PM  
**Essay #3:** Monday, February 25 at 8:00 PM  
**Essay #4:** Monday, March 24 at 8:00 PM  
**Essay #5:** Monday, April 7 at 8:00 PM  
**Essay #6:** Monday, April 28 at 8:00 PM  
**Essay #7:** Monday, May 12 at 8:00 PM  
**Final Essay:** Friday, May 16 at 12:00 PM

Other dates to keep in mind:

**Sunday, February 24, 4:00-6:00:** Introduction to Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem* and discussion of “The Experience of War” project with Prof. Kallick’s class

**Contributions for “The Experience of War” website due Sunday, March 2 at 4:00**

**Saturday, March 8:** Presentation of “The Experience of War” project at Amherst Today and performance of Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem* (8:00)
Your grade will be determined as follows:

Participation in class and “The Experience of War” project—20%
Short essays—55%
Final essay—25%

**COURSE TEXTS** (available at Amherst Books)


**COURSE WEBSITE**

https://cms.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/courses/0708S/MUSI/MUSI-07-0708S

**OTHER WEBSITES**

Music and Cultural Rights: <http://www.musicandculturalrights.org/>  
VOXLOX Documentary Sound Art: <http://www.voxlox.net/>  
Centre for Political Song: <http://www.gcal.ac.uk/politicalsong/>  
Berkshire Hills Music Academy: <http://www.berkshirehills.org/>  
Amnesty International: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/>  
Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/>  
Center for Economic and Social Rights: <http://cesr.org/culture>
1. **MUSIC, RIGHTS, AND THE DILEMMAS OF UNIVERSALITY AND RELATIVISM**

**WEEK 1**

*Required reading over the first two weeks*


*Required reading for Thursday*


*Additional reading*


*Listening*

Unit 1 mp3s

**WEEK 2**

*Required reading for Tuesday*


Required reading for Thursday


Additional reading


Listening

Unit 1 mp3s

Essay #1 due Monday, February 11 at 8:00 pm

2. UNESCO, ITS IDEOLOGIES, AND ITS IMPACT IN THE BALTICS

WEEK 3

Required reading for Tuesday

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)


The Protection and Promotion of Musical Diversity (UNESCO and the International Music Council, 2006)

UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001)


Required reading for Thursday

Additional reading


Our Creative Diversity (World Commission for Culture and Development, 1995)


United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)

Listening

Unit 2 mp3s

Films

Laulupidu Marimaal/Mari Song Festival (Aleksei Aleksejev, 2005)

Eesti XXIV Üldlaulupidu “Alati teel” (ETV, 2005)

Essay #2 due Monday, February 18 at 8:00 pm

3. SILENCE AND CENSORSHIP

Week 4

Required reading for Tuesday


Required reading for Thursday


Additional reading


Listening

Unit 3 mp3s

Film

*Shut Up & Sing* (Barbara Kopple and Cecilia Peck, 2007)

Essay #3 due Monday, February 25 at 8:00 pm
4. Music, Violence, and War

Sunday, February 24, 4:00-6:00: Introduction to Benjamin Britten’s War Requiem and discussion of “The Experience of War” project with Prof. Kallick’s class

Week 5

Required reading for Tuesday


Suzanne G. Cusick, “‘You are in a place that is out of the world...’: Music in the Detention Camps of the ‘Global War on Terror,’” Journal of the Society for American Music 2/1 (2008): 1-26


“Sesame Street Breaks Iraqi POWs,” BBC News Online (20 May 2003) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/3042907.stm>


Listening

Unit 4 mp3s

Contributions for “The Experience of War” website due Sunday, March 2 at 4:00

Week 6

Required reading for Tuesday


**Required reading for Thursday**


**Additional reading**


**Listening**

Unit 4 mp3s

**Films**

*Voices of Iraq* (The People of Iraq, 2004)

*Soundtrack to War* (George Gittoes, 2004)

**Saturday, March 8: Presentation of “Experience of War” project at Amherst Today and performance of Benjamin Britten’s *War Requiem* (8:00)**

**Week 7**

**Required reading for Tuesday**


Listening

Unit 4 mp3s

Films


*A Kabul Music Diary* (John Baily, 2002)

*Breaking the Silence* (Michael Broughton, 2002)

*The Rock Star and the Mullahs* (Salman Ahmad, 2007)

**WEEK 8: BREAK!**

**Essay #4 due Monday, March 24 at 8:00 pm**

**5. HIV/AIDS, HEALING, AND MUSIC IN AFRICA**

**WEEK 9**

Required reading for Tuesday and Thursday


Additional reading


Listening

Unit 5 mp3s

**WEEK 10**

Required reading for Tuesday and Thursday


Additional reading


**Listening**

Unit 5 mp3s

**Film**

*War/Dance* (Sean Fine and Andrea Nix Fine, 2007)

**Essay #5 due Monday, April 7 at 8:00 pm**

**6. ABILITY AND DISABILITY**

**WEEK 11**

*Required reading for Tuesday*


*Additional reading*


**Listening**

Unit 6 mp3s

**In class on April 10: performance and discussion with musicians from the Berkshire Hills Music Academy**

**WEEK 12**

*Required reading for Tuesday*


*Required reading for Thursday*

Additional reading


Listening

Unit 6 mp3s

**WEEK 13**

**Required reading for Tuesday**

Evelyn Glennie, “Disability Essay,”
<http://www.evelyn.co.uk/live/disability_essay.htm>

Evelyn Glennie, “The Hearing Essay,”
<http://www.evelyn.co.uk/live/hearing_essay.htm>


Additional reading


Listening

Unit 6 mp3s

**Film**


**Essay #6 due Monday, April 28 at 8:00 pm**

**7. MUSIC, RIGHTS ACTIVISM, AND DEVELOPMENT**

**WEEK 14**

**Required reading for Tuesday**

In class on May 1: Presentation and discussion with Susan McLucas of Healthy Tomorrow/Stop Excision

Listening

Unit 7 mp3s

WEEK 15

Required reading for Tuesday

Jeffers Engelhardt, “Jonah Ndirangu’s Story and Songs: Towards a Musical Ethnography of Microfinance Participation”


Additional reading


Listening

Unit 7 mp3s

Film

The Flute Player (Jocelyn Glatzer, 2003)

Essay #7 due Monday, May 12 at 8:00 pm

Final essay due Friday, May 16 at 12:00 pm