**Course Information**

Arms Music Center 212  
Monday, Wednesday 2:00-3:20

Assistant Professor Jeffers Engelhardt  
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Office hours: anytime by appointment

**Course Description and Requirements**

This course is about exploring, participating in, and documenting the musical communities and acoustic terrain of the Pioneer Valley. The first part of the course will focus on local histories and music scenes, ethnographic methods and technologies, and different techniques of representation. The second part of the course will involve intensive, sustained engagement with musicians and sounds in the Pioneer Valley. Course participants will give weekly updates about their fieldwork projects and are expected to become well-versed in the musics they are studying. There will be a significant amount of work and travel outside of class meetings. The course will culminate in contributions to a web-based documentary archive of Pioneer Valley soundscapes. We will also benefit from visits and interaction with local musicians.

This course requires serious commitment to a substantial amount of participatory fieldwork outside of class. There will be logistical challenges in terms of travel, making connections with communities, and creating opportunities to do good fieldwork. There will be technical challenges in making high quality documentation. And there will be ethical and personal challenges in doing ethnographic fieldwork. In addition to me, the Center for Community Engagement and Information Technology at Amherst will be tremendous resources for overcoming these challenges. John Kunhardt, Marcus DeMaio, and Alex Davis-Lawrence from Information Technology will all serve as technology liaisons.

The rewards of this course are substantial and perhaps unlike anything you have encountered at Amherst—getting to know people whom you would have never otherwise met, forming new musical relationships and friendships, coming to know and appreciate more about your sonic and social surround, investing yourself in creating something of use and lasting value for others in the community, gaining an expanded awareness of the sounds that surround you, deepening your understanding of musics that already mean a lot to you, or learning new technologies.
A basic premise of this course is that you will learn by doing, experimenting, being open to the unexpected, and seeking out people and sounds that promise to tell interesting, important stories. Through the in-class work you do, you will have ample opportunity to connect theory to practice, to draw on and compare your work to other kinds of soundscape documentation and ethnography, and to learn from the experiences of your peers. Most of you will work in teams, although some, in consultation with me, will work alone. For class meetings, you will write short thought pieces, be responsible for discussion leading, and take turns presenting on your fieldwork and documentation. You will also keep fieldwork blogs and contribute to the collaborative course blog and social bookmarking. You will also need to meet with me and with technical support people from Information Technology outside of class time. At the end of the semester, there will be a festive public presentation of your work for the Amherst College community as well as communities throughout the Pioneer Valley.

I will distribute guidelines and rubrics for all the work you will do in order to make my expectations and standards for evaluation completely clear. 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 or posted on the website 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.

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

Your grade will be determined as follows:

Thought pieces, roundtable and in-class participation, peer review and critique—25%
Research blog, fieldwork reports, consultation with me—25%
Final documentary project—50%

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


All readings and listenings that are not in texts required for purchase will be accessible as .pdfs and .mp3s on the course website.
COURSE WEBSITE

https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/courses/0910F/MUSI/MUSI-19-0910F

1. THE PIONEER VALLEY SOUNDSCAPE: CONCEPTS, HISTORIES, HORIZONS

Week 1: 09.08 & 09.09

For 09.09: read Schafer 3-42 and the historical materials I distribute


Week 2: 09.14 & 09.16

By 09.18 you need to form your partnership and meet with me

For 09.14: read Schafer 43-99 and do soundscape brainstorming
For 09.16: read Schafer 181-202 and prepare for roundtable

Week 3: 09.21 & 09.23

Soundscape thought piece due by 12:00 PM on 09.21

This week: intensive work homing in on your soundscape project and meetings with me

In class 09.21: Tim Eriksen
In class 09.23: Eric Danton

Week 4: 09.28

This week: intensive work homing in on your soundscape project and meetings with me

10.02 is the final deadline for having your soundscape project defined and underway

In class 09.28: Donna Hébert

2. DOING SOUNDSCAPE ETHNOGRAPHY: TECHNOLOGY AND PRACTICE

Week 4 (cont.): 09.30

Week 5: 10.05 & 10.07

Young@Heart/ethics thought piece due by 12:00 PM on 10.05

This week: fieldwork, research blogs, consultation with me

In class 10.05: John Kunhardt and Marcus DeMaio
In class 10.07: Marcus DeMaio (class in Seeley Mudd 002)

Week 6 (no class 10.12): 10.14

Preliminary reports due by 12:00 PM on 10.16

This week: fieldwork, research blogs, consultation with me

For 10.14: prepare preliminary reports for in-class presentation, discussion, and critique

3. Your Projects Take Shape: Sharing, Critiquing, Collaborating, Refining

Week 7: 10.19 & 10.21

This week: fieldwork, research blogs, consultation with me, in-class presentations of musics, sounds, and ethnographic materials, in-class discussion and critique

For 10.19: read Small Prelude, Chapter 3, Interlude 1, and Interlude 2
For 10.21: read Small Interlude 3, Chapter 12, and Chapter 13

Week 8: 10.26 & 10.28

Small thought piece due by 12:00 PM on 10.26

This week: fieldwork, research blogs, consultation with me, in-class presentations of musics, sounds, and ethnographic materials, in-class discussion and critique

Week 9: 11.02 & 11.04

This week: fieldwork, research blogs, consultation with me, in-class presentations of musics, sounds, and ethnographic materials, in-class discussion and critique

For 11.02: read Finnegan Chapters 1-3, one chapter from Chapters 4-10, one chapter from Chapters 11-14
For 11.04: read Finnegan Chapters 21-22 and one chapter from Chapters 15-20

Week 10: 11.09 & 11.11

Finnegan thought piece due by 12:00 PM on 11.09

This week: fieldwork, research blogs, consultation with me, in-class presentations of musics, sounds, and ethnographic materials, in-class discussion and critique
Week 11 (no class 11.18): 11.16

Detailed plan and preliminary mock-up of ethnographic materials and texts due by 12:00 PM on 11.16

This week: fieldwork, research blogs, consultation with me, in-class presentations of musics, sounds, and ethnographic materials, in-class discussion and critique

Also this week: consultations with technical support staff

Week 12: no classes

Over the break: work on preparing your ethnographic materials and texts for peer review and final submission to the documentary archive

Week 13: 11.30 & 12.02

Ethnographic materials and texts due for peer review by 12:00 PM on 11.30

Peer review of ethnographic materials and texts completed by 8:00 PM on 12.02

Also this week: consultations with technical support staff

4. Presenting the Pioneer Valley Soundscapes Documentary Archive

Week 14: 12.07 & 12.09

Final revisions of ethnographic materials and texts to be submitted to the documentary archive due by 12:00 PM on 12.07

Pioneer Valley Soundscapes documentary archive presentation on 12.10 at 4:30 PM in Priyane (open to the Amherst College community and communities from throughout the Pioneer Valley)

Week 15: 12.14

Reflection on and celebration of the Pioneer Valley Soundscapes documentary archive