

SRS 200-05

Music as Activism

Course Basics

Meets:

TMC 120 Emerson Auditorium
TMC 203 Seminar Room
Tuesday and Thursday
10:55am-12:40pm

Instructor:

Jennifer Milioto Matsue
(Mocha)
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Office Hours:

Office location TMC 201
Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm (on-line)
and Thursday 3:00-5:00pm (in-person)

Prerequisites

A desire to invoke the arts to enact positive social change!!



Course Overview

From Green Day's iconic *American Idiot* (2004) to the strumming of Middle Eastern lutes in Afghani refugee camps—music is an integral means of expressing individual and collective identity, critiquing injustice and enacting change. This course explores what forms such activism may take and how music and the arts may increase awareness of real social and environmental problems and potentially help resolve conflicts. Both through theoretical arguments and concrete case studies, we will see that music—and the individuals who make it—play a central role in shaping social interaction and inspiring social activism, from advocating for autistic children in the United States (Bakan 2015), to motivating anti-nuclear demonstrations in post-Fukushima Japan (Manabe 2015).



Enduring Understandings

Engaging with cultures of the world instills respect for diversity, demands equity for all peoples, and creates empathy for the needs of global citizens.

Syllabus Design

Adapted and inspired by the inclusive syllabus design of [Dr. Tona Hangen](#), professor of History at Worcester State University, the *Inclusive Syllabus Survey Tool* by [Dr. Kathy Takayama](#), Senior Science Education Fellow at Howard Hughes Medical Institute, as well as the [Accessible Syllabus](#) project at Tulane.

Course Format

Students must complete assignments as indicated in the schedule and be prepared to discuss them in class. Indeed, lively discussion is absolutely essential in this course, therefore please take adequate notes on your reading, listening, and films to allow you to contribute. We may not discuss everything we read, listen to, or watch. Rather, we will use class time to expand on the materials you cover on your own. If you have any questions about how to improve your discussion techniques, and in turn your class participation grade, please see me during the term. Please also remember that your class participation grade is entirely separate from your grades on other assignments.

Learning Objectives

Students will develop their own critical reading and argumentative writing skills through a series of assignments covering a variety of research and composition styles, including a song analysis; a community-based project proposal; and a creative expression project. Throughout the course, we will also work through the research and writing techniques presented in *Craft of Research* (2016). Students will further explore their own musical interests and a particular activist approach (discovered through the first three assignments) in a final research project (consisting of an oral proposal; an outline with annotated bibliography; a presentation; and a final paper). Students thus will expand their knowledge of research methodology while also exploring the power of music to move people.

Classroom Behavior

Students are expected to practice proper classroom etiquette. **Cellphones are prohibited during class time, guest lectures, films and concerts.** Computers may be used to take notes (and to google things when the class has questions!), but should not distract you or your fellow classmates (no YouTube, Facebook, etc. and let's keep the display on a lower setting. If students in back are disturbed by screens in the front, we can switch seats around to best accommodate all learning styles).

Practical Details

Diversity + Inclusion



The readings, class lecture, and my comments in class will suggest a particular point of view. This perspective is my own and does not have to be yours! I encourage you to disagree with the ideas in the readings and lectures as well as the perspectives of your colleagues in the course. Please express yourself! I want to learn from you.

A significant part of a college education is learning about the complexity of various issues. Therefore, it is important that we listen and respect one another but we do not have to agree. A richer discussion will occur when a variety of perspectives are presented in class for discussion.

Honor Code

Union College recognizes the need to create an environment of mutual trust as part of its educational mission. Responsible participation in an academic community requires respect for and acknowledgement of the thoughts and work of others, whether expressed in the present or in some distant time and place. Matriculation at the College is taken to signify implicit agreement with the Academic Honor Code, available at <http://muse.union.edu/honorcode/>. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that submitted work is his or her own and does not involve any form of academic misconduct. Students are expected to ask their course instructors for clarification regarding, but not limited to, collaboration, citations, and plagiarism. Ignorance is not an excuse for breaching academic integrity. Students are also required to affix the full Honor Code Affirmation, or the following shortened version, on each item of coursework submitted for grading, including daily assignments and compositions: 'I affirm that I have carried out my academic endeavors with full academic honesty.'

[Signed, Jan

Disability Accommodations



Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Accommodative Services to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. For information on documentation requirements or to start the process, students may contact Accommodative Services in Reamer Campus Center 303, call 518-388-8785, or e-mail **S. Shinebarger** at shinebas@union.edu.

Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with me to make appropriate arrangements. All discussions will remain confidential.

Course Materials & Technologies

Booth, Wayne, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams. 2016. *The Craft of Research*, Fourth Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Required reading and audio-visual materials will be placed on Nexus or distributed in class. I encourage you to share relevant news, articles, songs and films with the class. Additional materials may be placed on Nexus, reserve, or distributed in class.

If any deadlines or other information on Nexus or in the syllabus seems odd, please notify me immediately and I will clarify. All assignment guidelines should state Fall 2021 at the top so there is no confusion with past versions.

In this course, you'll use the following technologies:



Nexus: <https://nexus.union.edu>



Maker Web/Maker Spaces

<https://muse.union.edu/makerweb/>



Student Tech Help

The USTAR TechTeam provides students with a centralized resource for computer support. While virus protection is USTAR's primary focus, they provide basic technical support for all ITS supported software, remedy basic networking problems, and assist with some hardware issues.

USTAR technicians are available five days a week, Sunday through Thursday from 6PM to 10PM and Monday through Thursday from 12:50PM to 1:50PM (common hour) in the Schaffer Library at the far end (away from the front door) of the circulation desk.

Class Attendance & Assignments

Attendance

Regular attendance and participation are both absolutely necessary to successfully complete this course. **Greater than 4 absences** (equivalent to two weeks of class or 20% of the term) **will result in failure of the course.**

Deadlines and Extensions



Each of the course activities is designed to help you build particular skills and gain knowledge while working together in an active learning community. In order to excel in this class, you are expected to complete assignments by the dates and times as indicated.

However, in the real world, things happen (an interview off campus, a required class field trip, multiple major assignments due the same day, etc.). With the exception of the Final Project, you can have two extensions for such legitimate reasons, but must inform me ahead of time. Any other late work will be penalized by a deduction of .25 per each day late.

All assignments must be completed to pass the course.

Choices

You will see a lot of choices in the assignments for this course. These are designed for your benefit—to allow you the opportunity to explore themes and styles that inspire you and bring your own ideas to the class. Offering choices also requires you to pay attention to the materials in the course and exercise your ability to take action without fear. The increased engagement demanded of choice will ultimately sustain you in the creative process now and build confidence for the future.

Group Work

Sometimes assignments require you to work in a group (to be assigned by the Instructor). Group work poses particular challenges and the potential for great growth as you work as a team, problem solve, and feed on each other's creativity. While group work can be intimidating at times, learning to work with (and respect!) diverse personalities and learning styles will help you in your future education and careers. Working as a team is a part of life that needs to be nurtured and valued.

Assessed Products and Performances

Breakdown

Your performance in this course will be assessed on five types of products:



1. Class Participation (20pts)
2. Song Analysis (10pts)
3. Community-based Research Proposal (10pts)
4. Creative Expression (10pts)
5. Final Project (50pts)
 1. Proposal (5pts)
 2. Outline/Annotations (5pts)
 3. Presentation (10pts)
 4. Final Paper (30pts)

Detailed guidelines will be provided for each assignment.



Drafts and Revisions

- If you have concerns about your writing, you are encouraged to submit drafts for suggestions ahead of assignment deadlines.
- You do have the option, however, to rewrite some of the assignments (to be determined; see individual assignment guidelines).
- All rewrites must be turned in no later than one week after I have returned the original batch of graded assignments to the class. This means that if for some reason you have turned in the assignment late, the rewrite is still due when everyone else's rewrite is due.
- Please send rewrites as an attachment to e-mail.
- The rewrite grade will be averaged with the original grade to determine the final grade for that assignment.
- Rewrites are NOT automatically graded higher than the original version.
- Rewrite means "to write again," not just to correct a few grammatical errors that I have pointed out. It is an opportunity to rethink and improve your work, and the assignment should display that effort.

Writing Center

The [Union College Writing Center](#) will host appointments online through video conferencing in lieu of face-to-face consultation for the duration of the Winter 2021 term. To book a conference and for instructions on how to access a video conference, please visit <https://union.mywconline.com/>. Questions? Email writingprograms@union.edu



Special Considerations due to COVID-19

Respect COVID-19

Please think of others and follow all the safety protocols that Union has put in place. We want to protect you and keep learning on campus this fall. BUT THIS IS UP TO YOU! If you contract COVID-19 you may contribute to the campus closing down and could spread the disease with dire consequences. If you do not feel well, let me know immediately and please stay home. We can do this together!

Access to materials during COVID-19

If you are quarantined or isolated for COVID-19-related reasons, I will be notified by the Dean of Students Office that you will not be able to attend classes during the specified time frame and that you may require additional flexibility with regard to your participation in this course. Your responsibility will be to contact me as soon as you are able so that we can discuss your needs. I will make arrangements to provide you with material missed from classes.

Counseling Resources

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health challenges at Union College, please contact the Counseling Center. Please call 518-388-6161 or email hotalinm@union.edu or daym@union.edu to schedule an appointment. All counseling services are free and confidential. Please visit the Counseling Center website at <https://www.union.edu/counseling-center> for updated resources on dealing with Covid-19. Additionally, please follow Wicker Wellness Center on Instagram, where postings will focus on how to address isolation, academics, and stress.

In a crisis situation, or after hours, contact Campus Safety at 518-388-6911. The National Suicide Prevention hotline also offers a 24-hour hotline at [800-273-8255](https://www.suicidepreventionhotline.org).

Tentative Schedule

Music is not the only answer, it won't magically solve major problems in the world, but it can make meaningful contributions because it is 1) a general collective experience, 2) it can help build sympathy for a cause, 3) it can create a direct visceral response, 4) cognitive science has shown us how it can affect us emotionally, and 5) it functions as entertainment, so sometimes people listen without recognizing there is a deeper message. Music, and the arts, are indispensable. Great empathy lies with aesthetic expression, so when lose our arts, lose our humanity. (Jennifer Fraser, Syllabus for "Ethnomusicology as Activism," Oberlin College, 2015)

Week 1

Tues 9/14 - Introduction to the Course

Thurs 9/16 - What can we do when the world falls apart?/Review Song Analysis/Meet your Class Dean

Reading: Nichols, Tracey. n.d. "Music and Social Justice," Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. <https://iep.utm.edu/music-sj/>

Rice, Timothy. 2014. "Ethnomusicology in Times of Trouble." Yearbook for Traditional Music 46:191-209.

Research and Writing: Research, Researchers, and Readers in Craft of Research (Preface; Chapters 1 and 2)

Week 2

Tues 9/21 - Why Music Matters

Reading: Turino, Thomas. 2008. "Introduction: Why Music Matters," Music as Social Life, 1-22. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Thurs 9/23 - **Draft of Song Analysis due on Nexus before class**/Library visit with Robyn Reed; Meet at the Reference Desk

Research and Writing: Asking Questions, Finding Answers in Craft of Research (Chapters 3 and 4)

Week 3

Tues 9/28 – **Individual Meetings to discuss Song Analysis**

Thurs 9/30 – **Final version of Song Analysis due on Nexus before class/**
Review Community-based Project Proposal/Film Viewing TBD

Research and Writing: Asking Questions, Finding Answers in Craft of Research (Chapters 5 and 6)

Week 4

Tues 10/5 – Music, Politics and Social Movements

Reading: Street, John. 2012. "Introduction: Making Connections," Music and Politics, 1-8. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Rosenthal, Rob and Richard Flacks. 2016. "You Can't Scare Me, I'm sticking to the Union," Playing for Change: Music and Musicians in the Service of Social Movements, 3-36. New York: Routledge.

Thurs 10/7 – **Community-based Project Proposal due on Nexus before class/**
Review Creative Expression/In-class film viewing We Shall Overcome

Reading: Lynskey, Dorian. 2011. "Zilphia Horton, Frank Hamilton, Guy Carawan, and Pete Seeger/ "We Shall Overcome"/ 1947-1962," 33 Revolutions per Minute: A History of Protest Songs, from Billie Holliday to Green Day, 33-50. New York: HarperCollins.

Research and Writing: Making an Argument in Craft of Research (Chapters 7 and 8)

Week 5

Tues 10/12 – Is music always a good thing?

Reading: Turino, Thomas. 2008. "Music and Political Movements," Music as Social Life, 189-224. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tues 10/12 – Film viewing: Eat That Question: Frank Zappa in His Own Words (2016)
7pm Emerson Auditorium

Thurs 10/14 - **Creative Expression due on Nexus before class/Review Final Project/Bring Creative Expressions to share in class**

Research and Writing: Making an Argument in Craft of Research (Chapters 9 and 10)

Week 6

Tues 10/19 - Is music always a good thing?/Sign up for Final Project Proposal meetings

Reading: Rosenthal, Rob and Richard Flacks. 2011. "How Musicking Harms Movements," *Playing for Change: Music and Musicians in the Service of Social Movements*, 181-196. New York: Routledge.

Thurs 10/21 - Music, War and Trauma//In-class film viewing Amir

Reading: Daughtry, J. Martin. 2015. "A Time of Troubles for Iraqi Music," *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq*, 258-270. New York: Oxford University Press.

Research and Writing: Making an Argument and Writing your Argument in Craft of Research (Chapters 11 and 12)

Week 7

Tues 10/26- **Individual Meetings to discuss Final Project Proposals**

Thurs 10/28 -Ecomusicology

Reading: Dirksen, Rebecca. 2019. "Haiti's Drums and Trees: Facing Loss of the Sacred." *Ethnomusicology* 63(1): 43-77.

Pedelty, Mark. 2016. "Introduction: Why Enviromentalist Music?" (1-24) and "Conclusion: Common Themes and Connections" (235-262), *A Song to Save the Salish Sea*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Research and Writing: Writing your Argument in Craft of Research (Chapters 13 and 14)

Week 8

Tues 11/2 - Taiko and Embodied Activism/Taiko Workshop

Reading: Ahlgren, Angela. 2018. "Butch Bodies, Big Drums: Queering North American Taiko," *Drumming Asian America*, 111-135. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thurs 11/4 - Applied Ethnomusicology Autism/HIV and AIDS

Reading: Bakan, Michael B. 2015. "Being Applied in the Ethnomusicology of Autism." In *The Oxford Handbook of Applied Ethnomusicology*, edited by Svanibor Pettan and Jeff Todd Titon, 278-316. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Van Buren, Kathleen J. 2010. "Applied Ethnomusicology and HIV and AIDS: Responsibility, Ability and Action." *Ethnomusicology* 54(2): 202-223.

Thurs 11/4 Japanese Drumming Concert 7pm Emerson Auditorium

Research and Writing: Writing your Argument in Craft of Research (Chapter 15 and 16)

Week 9

Tues 11/9 - Arts Activism in Action

Reading: Srivastava and Shah. 2021. "Narrative Dance Medicine: Improving Learner Awareness of Cultural Communication." Manuscript.

Thurs 11/11 - **Annotated Bibliography and Outline due on Nexus before class/**
Wrap-up Discussion/Prepare for Final Presentations

Research and Writing: Writing your Argument and Final Thoughts in Craft of Research (Chapter 17, Some Last Considerations, and the Ethics of Research)

Week 10

Tues 11/16 - **Final Presentations**

Thurs 11/19 - **Final Presentations**

Week 11

Optional final drafts of your Final Paper due by Noon on 11/21 (Nexus)

Final versions of your Final Paper due by Noon on 11/24 (Nexus)

