

MUS 606a/410: Ecomusicology (3:3)
Spring 2011, Dr. Aaron S. Allen

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Class Meetings: M&W 5-6:15pm, Music Building 207

Prerequisites: MUS 602 or permission of instructor.

Catalog Description: Using ethnographic, historical, literary, and scientific methods, this course considers historical and contemporary music from Western and non-Western traditions that relate human sound and the natural environment.

Course Objectives & Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to . . .

- 1) . . . identify concepts that connect music and nature;
- 2) . . . describe (and/or analyze) musics and/or sounds that reflect nature;
- 3) . . . analyze texts relating music and nature;
- 4) . . . explain aspects of relationships between music and nature;
- 5) . . . communicate effectively, orally and in writing, about such relationships; and
- 6) . . . employ research skills to continue to explore such relationships.

Teaching methods and assignments for achieving learning outcomes:

Each 75-minute course session will emphasize discussion of readings, but some will include brief lectures by the instructor and presentations by students. In lectures and presentations, recorded music and related visual and textual material will be employed regularly.

The final project is a written paper and oral presentation that will synthesize some approach to music and nature; in so doing, students must 1) employ library research to present a textual and/or musical analysis of some musical work or tradition that relates to nature and 2) be able to explain that analysis to the class in an oral presentation.

Regular response papers (which are the spring board for discussions) will assess the students' knowledge of the assigned reading and listening materials through the identification and description of both the relevant concepts and music studied.

In addition to achieving the above SLOs, students will also achieve the following outcomes in the General Education Core curriculum:

LG1. Foundational Skills: Think critically, communicate effectively, and develop appropriate fundamental skills in [...] information literac[y].

Students will discuss reading and listening assignments (forming opinions about them, sharing them with the class, and respectfully listening to other, potentially different, opinions). They will also do research for an independent written/oral project.

LG2. The Physical and Natural World: [...] Understand fundamental principles of science and recognize its relevance in the world.

Students will engage with texts that describe the natural world and its acoustic properties, as well as the methods humans use to reproduce, imitate, and incorporate them into music.

LG3. Knowledge of Human Cultures: Describe, interpret, and evaluate the ideas, events, and expressive traditions that have shaped collective and individual human experience through inquiry and analysis in the diverse disciplines of the humanities, religions, languages, histories, and the arts.

Students will explore music-nature relations in the thought and art of selected Western and non-Western cultures distant in both time and space.

LG4. Knowledge of Social and Human Behavior: Describe and explain findings derived from the application of fundamental principles of empirical scientific inquiry to illuminate and analyze social and human conditions.

Students will examine the relationship of science and art through musical works that incorporate empirical inquiry into aesthetic experiences.

LG5. Personal, Civic, and Professional Development: Develop a capacity for active citizenship, ethics, social responsibility, personal growth, and skills for lifelong learning in a global society. In so doing, students will engage in free and open inquiry that fosters mutual respect across multiple cultures and perspectives.

Students will participate in civil discussions of both the objective and subjective features of art and science, of music and nature. Furthermore, students will reflect on the role of music humanity grapples with its place in nature.

Evaluation and grading:

The distribution of grades is as follows:

Attendance and Participation: 30%

Response Papers: 20%

Final Project: 50% (20% oral, 30% written)

In addition to in-class discussion and informal presentations, there are two graded assignments:

1. A final project, which includes oral and written components of an original research project. You should develop your project topic consultation with me. The written paper should be ca. 10-20 pages of original research conveyed in clear and well-crafted prose, and the oral presentation should be a 15-minute extemporized (not read) summary of your argument and major findings. You will earn two letter grades, one for the paper and one for the oral presentation. More information will follow.

2. Response papers are short reactions to the readings. Each should be no more than one double-spaced page, front and back, or circa 500 words. You should write one response paper for each class session on a selected reading. In some cases, everyone will write on the same assigned reading, and in other cases you will choose (or I will assign you) a selection from a larger reading or group of readings; some may be posted on our course Blackboard site for collective reflection. You will earn completion grades for these assignments, each worth 1% of your grade (20 total for 20%). No response papers may be made up, and none will be accepted late.

Grades are based on the following criteria:

A Student demonstrates a superior competency in completing course requirements and/or a superior comprehension of assigned material. Assignments are ready at each class meeting or given deadline for completion.

B Student demonstrates an above-average competency in completing course requirements and/or above-average comprehension of assigned material. Assignments are satisfactory.

C Student demonstrates an ability to adequately meet requirements of the course requirements and/or an adequate comprehension of assigned material. Assignments are not satisfactory.

F Student fails to meet acceptable standards for earning a passing grade for the course. Assignments are not done and performance is poor.

Required texts/readings/references:

Readings and recordings will be available on reserve in the Music Library and/or via Blackboard. Additional materials will be placed on reserve in the Music Library and/or on Blackboard.

You will need access to: a computer with word processing software and a Firefox web browser with the Zotero extension installed; your UNCG email account; and blackboard.uncg.edu where I will post regular announcements and other important materials.

For all written work, you should reference chapters 15-17 of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Paper, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) [ISBN 0-226-82337-7]. This book is on reserve in the Music Library, although you may choose to purchase your own copy. You may also want to consult the *CEMT Guide* (<http://music.uncg.edu/CEMT/>).

Class Protocols

Preparation and Attendance

Regular attendance and appropriate preparation are crucial to learning the basic material and skills of this course. As adults, I expect you to arrive at each class meeting on time and fully prepared. I will take attendance at the start of each class (and sometimes at the end as well). If you need to miss a class or leave early, then that decision is yours — I do not “excuse” any absences, in advance or after the fact. If you must be absent, you are responsible for getting any newly or previously assigned materials and for any necessary “catch up” activities. Assignments are always due at the start of class (thus, on a date due, a late arrival to class would constitute a late submission, which I reserve the right to refuse due to its lateness). An absence does not excuse you from an on-time submission. You may submit work late only if you have my approval 24 hours in advance of the due date. No assignments or in-class exercises may be made up. If you have unusual circumstances that warrant a modification of this policy, speak with me privately. To be clear: It is your decision to attend my class. Assignments are due and discussed in class. No make-ups.

Citizenship

A classroom is a learning community. Ultimately, everyone’s learning depends on each member of the class doing his or her part. Therefore, everyone in the class is expected to exhibit good citizenship. The following behaviors are rude and disruptive, and they affect the learning of both the individual doing them and the class as a whole: coming to class late; leaving early; coming to class unprepared; speaking out of turn; and using class time to e-mail or text message friends, surf the web, or address individual problems. Cell phones must be turned off and put away; laptop use is permitted in class, provided you are using your computer for course-specific work— e.g., note-taking, research exercises, etc. — but I reserve the right to ask you to leave if you are abusing your laptop privileges. Please speak politely and respectfully to all members of the class, and listen when others are talking. I may remove disruptive students from the class. Audio or video recording is forbidden without my consent.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is fundamental to the university enterprise and is therefore expected at all times. Plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of dishonesty will reap appropriate consequences, ranging from no credit on an assignment to expulsion from the university. Plagiarism — the “passing off [the words or ideas of another] as one’s own” (*Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed.) — is a serious issue that affects the entire university community and can have long-term consequences for violators. Some common forms of plagiarism are: failure to cite (clearly and specifically) the source of information; failure to use quotation marks for direct quotes; creating a paper through “cut and paste” techniques; buying a paper; and unauthorized collaboration on any assignment. By placing your name on any assignment for this course, you are agreeing to abide by the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy (academicintegrity.uncg.edu/). If you are not sure whether or not something you are doing is a violation of the academic integrity policy, then just ask me!

Students with Different Abilities

UNCG seeks to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must register with the Office of Disability Services located in 215 Elliott University Center: (336) 334-5440.

For More Help

See me! Or... For help locating sources and materials, talk with your friendly neighborhood librarian. For help organizing or proofreading your papers and to answer your questions about writing, visit the Writing Center, MHRA 3211; 334-3125; www.uncg.edu/eng/writingcenter/. For computer questions, go to the SuperLab in Jackson Library, its.uncg.edu/Student_Help/ or call 6-TECH.

Course Calendar

Week 1: Introductions

- M 1/10 "Ecomusicology." *The Grove Dictionary of American Music and Musicians*. New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2011.
- W 1/12 Glotfelty, Cheryll. "Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis." In *The Ecocriticism Reader*, edited by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm, xv-xxxvii. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996.

Week 2: Ecocriticism

- M 1/17 NO CLASS (MLK Holiday)
- W 1/19 Garrard, Greg. *Ecocriticism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2004.

Week 3: Soundscapes & Acoustic Ecology

- M 1/24 Schafer, R. Murray. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. Rochester, Vt.: Destiny Books, 1993.
- Wrightson, Kendall. "An Introduction to Acoustic Ecology." *Soundscape: The Journal of Acoustic Ecology* 1, no. 1 (2000): 10-13.
- W 1/26 Järviluoma, Helmi, et al. eds. *Acoustic Environments in Change & Five Village Soundscapes*. Joensuu: Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu, 2009.
- Krause, Bernard L. "The Habitat Niche Hypothesis: A Hidden Symphony of Animal Sounds." *Literary Review* 36, no. 1 (Fall 1992): 40-45.

Week 4: Zoomusicology

- M 1/31 Martinelli, Dario. "Introduction (To the Issue and to Zoomusicology)." *TRANS*, no. 12 (2008). <http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/trans12/art08.htm>.
- W 2/2 Doolittle, Emily. "Crickets in the Concert Hall: A History of Animals in Western Music." *TRANS* 12 (July 2008). <http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/trans12/art09.htm>.

Week 5: Biomusic

- M 2/7 Gray, Patricia M., et al. "The Music of Nature and the Nature of Music." *Science* 291, no. 5501 (January 5, 2001): 52-54.
- W 2/9 Fitch, W. Tecumseh. "The Biology and Evolution of Music: A Comparative Perspective." *Cognition* 100, no. 1 (May 2006): 173-215.

Week 6: Place

- M 2/14 Von Glahn, Denise. *The Sounds of Place: Music and the American Cultural Landscape*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2003.
- W 2/16 Toliver, Brooks. "Eco-ing in the Canyon: Ferde Grofé's Grand Canyon Suite and the Transformation of Wilderness." *JAMS* 57, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 325-367.

Week 7: Ethnography

- M 2/21 Feld, Steven. *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression*. 2nd ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.
- W 2/23 Guy, Nancy. "Flowing Down Taiwan's Tamsui River: Towards an Ecomusicology of the Environmental Imagination." *Ethnomusicology* 53, no. 2 (2009): 218-248.

Week 8: History

- M 2/28 Leach, Elizabeth Eva. *Sung Birds: Music, Nature, and Poetry in the Later Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.
- W 3/2 Allen, Aaron S. "Symphonic Pastorals: Ecomusicological Interpretations from the Idyllic to the Broken Pastoral." *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*, forthcoming 2011.

Week 9: Spring Break

M 3/7 NO CLASS

W 3/9 NO CLASS

Week 10: Popular Musics

M 3/14 Pedelty, Mark. "Woody Guthrie and the Columbia River: Propaganda, Art, and Irony." *Popular Music and Society* 31, no. 3 (2008): 329-355.

W 3/16 Ingram, David. "'My Dirty Stream': Pete Seeger, American Folk Music, and Environmental Protest," *Popular Music and Society* 31, no. 1 (February 2008): 21-36.

Week 11: Music Theory

M 3/21 Clark, Suzannah, and Alexander Rehding, eds. *Music Theory and Natural Order from the Renaissance to the Early Twentieth Century*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

W 3/23 Clark and Rehding, continued.

Week 12: Sustainability

M 3/28 Titon, Jeff Todd. "Economy, Ecology, and Music: An Introduction." *World of Music* 51, no. 1 (2009): 5-15.

———. "Music and Sustainability: An Ecological Viewpoint," *World of Music* 51, no. 1 (2009): 119 - 137.

W 3/30 Allen, Aaron S. "'Fatto di Fiemme': Stradivari's Violins and the Musical Trees of the Paneveggio." In *Arboreal Values: Trees and Forests in Europe, North America, and the Caribbean, 1660-1830*, edited by Laura Auricchio, Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, and Giulia Pacini. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, forthcoming 2011.

Week 13: Catch Up

M 4/4 Topic TBD

W 4/6 Topic TBD

Week 14: Individual Consultations

M 4/11 & W 4/13 No class, schedule individual meeting with me to discuss your paper

Weeks 15 & 16: Presentations

M 4/18, W 4/20 & M 4/25 Student Presentations

F 4/29 3:30-6:30pm ("exam" day) Student Presentations (if necessary)