

Note for Fall 2022 this class will change presentation mode a little because classes have been recorded. These recordings will be integrated into the learning experience with more time for playlist presentations in live sessions.

University of Pennsylvania

SYLLABUS

Music 51: Contemporary Music of Africa

Spring 2021 (Online)

Mondays, 5:00pm-7:00pm

January 26 – May 1, 2021

Instructor

Professor Carol Muller

camuller@sas.upenn.edu

Technical Support online-learning@sas.upenn.edu

Mental Health Support : We all are aware that COVID 19 is presenting unique challenges and that college is both exciting and a significant challenge. And you probably already know where to go if you are struggling emotionally, but we want to underscore that if you are experiencing difficulty particularly as it pertains to this class, please be in touch with Professor Muller. Email and they will make a time to talk with you either on zoom, or by phone. Do not let things get out of hand. Just ask for help.

Course Description

This class is an introduction to music of contemporary Africa, focusing on specific case studies in North, Central, West, East, Southern Africa, the Sahel and the islands (located in several oceans). In this course, we will examine musicians and musical styles and the ways that they influence or embody African history, geography, culture, religion, and politics. We will also consider ways in which African styles are tied to other places in the world through the influence of traveling musicians, recordings, political movements, and religious practices. In this course, we will take a multi-faceted, multi-media approach to the study of African music, through reading articles and interviews, listening to musical recordings, viewing video documentaries and musical performances, and exploring interactive maps of each region. The goal is for students to get a broad understanding of various African musical traditions, as well as to acquire the skills to do further research on other genres and styles that interest them.

Course Goals

What students should be able to do after the class:

- Recognize the eight major regions of Africa and its diversity of language, music, culture, and lifestyles (we have had to delete the Sahel this semester but still have the Islands and diaspora)
- Have knowledge of several major African popular music styles and musicians
- Be able to put new developments they encounter into a regional and more historical context
- Be able to think more clearly and specifically about African social history and contemporary developments in Africa

Course Responsibilities

- Attend all online course meetings, with no multi-tasking
- Complete required assignments for each course meeting (listening, reading, quizzes, forums)
- Have an open, curious mind to learn more about Africa and its music.

Note on Expectations

It is preferable that you to attend the virtual class sessions once a week, on Mondays from 5-7pm EST. Plan to spend 5 hours of time outside each class period for reading, viewing, listening and writing activities. This is an intensive undergraduate course with much to do, so please plan your time wisely! Classes are recorded and archived here on Canvas.

I will screen a documentary before each class, running about an hour, you can log in to watch it then, or watch on your own, or on alternate Sunday nights through zoom.

Office Hours, just email Dr. Muller, she will arrange a time to meet. Or wait at end of class and let her know you need to talk.

Assignments: How do we reach the course's goals?

Assignments for this course are specifically designed to help you meet the course goals, to require you to engage with the material of the course, and to keep you on schedule.

Your grade for the course, then, depends on how well you complete these assignments. Below are five components to your final grade and the weight of each:

(1) Quizzes – (10%)

You will take a self-grading matching quiz at the end of each class, and the results will be recorded in the Canvas grade book. These quizzes are based on information from the lectures, the general lecture notes and the assigned readings/listening examples. Quizzes should be taken soon after the class period they cover and are due before the start of the next class. These quizzes ensure that you have a basic familiarity with the important terms and concepts for each unit. There will be a total of 10 quizzes, each worth 2% of your final grade.

(2) Discussion Forums– (30%--10x3%)

After every class you will write a discussion forum response to an essay or an audio file on the subject covered in class. The first topic is from an interview conducted with South African musician Pops Mohamed, but all the others come from the afropop.org website. Your responses are expected to be thoughtful and substantial (1-2 full paragraphs), which either respond directly to the forum prompt or take your thinking in a different direction. (Make sure it is a smart and related direction.) Discussion posts

are due at 5pm on the day before (Sunday) the next class (Monday) so Prof Muller can read and comment on them in the live class. You will write a total of 10 graded forum entries, each worth 3%.

(3) Class Presentation and Peer Review Response: Playlist Project – (20% ie., 15%+5%)

You will read required, recommended articles, listen to audio examples and find your own, map out an article on google maps, and present to the class online with a short PPT once in the semester. You will also write a peer review for one of your classmate's presentations in the semester.

A description of what is required for both presentation and peer review will be made available on Canvas.

(4) Two Midterm Exams – (40%)

Two two-hour midterm exams will be given in the middle and end of the semester, during the regularly scheduled class period. To prevent academic dishonesty, **no exams may be taken outside the scheduled exam period unless you are living in a vastly different time zone and have pre arranged with Dr. Muller a more suitable time.**

Deadlines and Guidelines

One Class Presentation; One Peer Review Response

Sign up in the Discussion Forum by **Wednesday February 3 2021 at 11:59 PM** for the in-class presentation you will lead, and for the one you will peer review. Presenting as a leader is 15% of your grade, and the peer review is 5% of your grade. All presentations and peer review responses will follow the same format and requirements.

Discussion Forum Posts

These posts will be discussed in the next class, so make sure all are completed by 5pm on the Sunday day before the next class (Monday).

Quizzes must be completed in the same time frame, after one class and before the next, Sundays at 5 pm.

The **Midterm Exams** include matching, true/false, fill in the blank, and two short essays. The essays will allow you to write about one of the genres you presented, the other will be a choice of topics. Do well in your presentation so you really know the materials for the essay. The essays will count 40% of the final exam score, so it is in your interest to do an excellent job with presentations. Discussion Forum responses also help you to think through issues and substantiate your argument with evidence/examples, so are good training for the essay portion of the exams. This semester exams are done during class time, though they are open book. They run two hours, but often are completed in less time.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forum Posts

A: excellent/very good

- 2 substantial paragraphs
- substantial, detailed, intelligent response to forum prompts
- accurate use of musical and contextual terms from the lesson
- knowledgeable reference to contextual aspects
- insightful analogies/references to students' own experience
- good spelling and grammar

B: good/adequate

- less than 2 substantial paragraphs OR long and wordy
- good response to forum prompts
- general description of sonic aspects or relevant questions
- mostly accurate use of musical terms and contextual aspects
- good analogies
- generally good spelling and grammar

C: substandard

- 1 or less than 1 substantial paragraph OR long and wordy
- no engagement with sonic aspects or relevant questions
- inaccurate characterization of musical or contextual aspects
- unconnected or irrelevant analogies
- poor spelling and/or grammar

D: poor

- less than 1 substantial paragraph OR long and wordy
- no engagement with sonic aspects or questions
- grossly inaccurate characterization of musical or contextual aspects
- unconnected/irrelevant analogies
- egregious spelling and/or grammar

A rubric for the in-class presentations, as well as guidelines for producing them, will be made available on Canvas. A similar rubric and guidelines will be made available for the peer review.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	C+	78-79.99
A-	90-92.99	C	73-77.99
B+	87-89.99	C-	70-72.99
B	83-86.99	D	65-69.99
B-	80-82.99	F	65 and below

Class Expectations

You are expected to be present and on time for every class unless you are in a completely different time zone and have made arrangements with Dr. Muller.

Before Class: To prepare for each class: read the attached articles, watch assigned videos, listen to the assigned audio clips. You are to watch the assigned documentary each week as well. Some of these are screened on alternate Sunday nights on zoom by Dr. Muller. It might be most efficient to watch on Sundays at 8 pm and join discussion after.

In Class: Please arrive in the virtual classroom 5-10 minutes early to meet and greet the teaching fellow and your classmates. Listen to the lecture and post your questions and comments in the chat forum.

After Class: Take the online quiz and complete the discussion forum assignment, which typically involves viewing, reading, or listening. For one class: prepare a presentation; after one class, peer review a classmate's presentation.

Required Readings/Afropop Listening

All required readings for this course are in PDF files located in folders on the course website, or there are links to an ebook in the library, or there are links to an Afropop program you need to listen to. In all instances take notes. Some of the afropop.org programs are linked to discussion forums, others are there in place of pre-class readings.

Academic Integrity

You are required to abide by the principles set forth by the Penn Code of Academic Integrity. It is your responsibility to read, understand, and abide by the Code, found at http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and, if found to be substantiated, will result in a failing grade for this course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

The course schedule below is organized into three time periods: before, during (live class session online), and after.

The first class begins on **Monday, January 25, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.** Dr. Muller will screen the weekly documentary on the class recording starting at 4 pm, giving you a second opportunity to watch the documentary. Please make sure you are logged in on time for documentary/class.

*** Please note ***

Class 1: Wednesday January 23, 2019

Introduction to the Study of Music in Africa, Music of the Bushmen

BEFORE CLASS:

- Introduce yourself, in **Discussion Forum: Class Introduction**
- Reading recommended: Mbembe and Agawu for first part
- Reading recommended: Platvoet, Ju/'Hoan Curing Dance, especially section on Curing Dance for second part

DURING CLASS:

- Introduction: short breakouts
- Lecture, Intro to Study of African Music plus focus on Kalahari Bushmen
- In-Class viewing: *The Gods Must Be Crazy*, Num Tchai video clips
- Discuss: Musical Examples

AFTER CLASS:

- SIGN UP FOR PRESENTATIONS AND PEER REVIEWS in ASSIGNMENTS
- Take **Quiz 1 due Sunday Jan 31, 2021 at 5 pm**
- Respond to **Discussion Forum Unit 1**, Pops Mohamed prompt, by **Sunday January 31, 2021 at 5pm**

Class 2: Monday Feb 1, 2021

South African Music: Migrant music--Mbube, Maskanda and Gumboot Dance, Electronic Music and House

SIGN UP FOR PRESENTATION AND PEER REVIEW by WED Feb 3 in ASSIGNMENTS

BEFORE:

- Reading from Penn library
site: <http://proxy.library.upenn.edu:2060/lib/upenn/detail.action?docID=10236341> Links to an external site.

Note: You need to authenticate with Pennkey username and password to access the table of contents, find the page numbers for each chapter and click on what you need to read.

- Muller, 2008, Chapter 1: p. 5-22
- Muller 2008, Chapter 7: Labor Migration: Isicathamiya, 99-111
- Muller 2008, Chapter 9: Labor Migration: Gumboot Dance, 129-151
- Musical Examples: See on Canvas (field recordings of maskanda, gumboot dance, and isicathamiya)

DURING:

- Forum Feedback
- Lecture: Intro to Southern Africa as Region and discussion of South African migrant music
- Prof Muller discussion of playlist examples.

AFTER:

- Take **Online Quiz 2 by Sunday February 7, 2021 at 5 pm**
- Post in **Discussion Forum Unit 2** by Sunday February 7, 2021 at 5pm:

Class 3: Monday February 8, 2021

CLASS PLAYLIST PRESENTATIONS BEGIN with ZIMBABWE

Southern African Music and Politics: Transformations of Zimbabwean Mbira Music: Tradition, Popular, Art Music

BEFORE

- Reading, read article one according to your interest, the remainder are for those doing playlist presentations
 - Berliner, [Poeticsongtexts MbiraDzavadzimu Berliner 1976.pdf](#) [_Download Poeticsongtexts MbiraDzavadzimu Berliner 1976.pdf](#)
 - Chitando and Mateveke, [Challenging Patriarchy and Exercising Women s Agency in Zimbabwean Music Analysing the Careers of Chiwoniso Maraire and Olivia Charamba.pdf](#) [_Download Challenging Patriarchy and Exercising Women s Agency in Zimbabwean Music Analysing the Careers of Chiwoniso Maraire and Olivia Charamba.pdf](#)
 - Hancock-Barnett, [MbiramusicofZimbabwe Colonialresettlement and culturalresistance.pdf](#) [_Download MbiramusicofZimbabwe Colonialresettlement and culturalresistance.pdf](#)
 - Taylor, Kevin Volans and the Politics of Music (see Module for reading)

DURING:

- Discussion forum Feedback
- Lecture: Zimbabwean history then focus on mbira transformations
- Class Presentations (2)

AFTER:

- Take **Online Quiz 3 by Sunday February 14, 2021 at 5 pm**
- Post in **Discussion Forum Unit 3** by Sunday February 14, 2021 at 5pm: Zimbabwean Materials

Class 4: Monday February 15, 2021

Music of Central Africa: Pygmy Music and Central African Rumba/Soukous

BEFORE:

Reading

CENTRAL AFRICAN PYGMIES, Read Arom and White, others for presentations

- *Rough Guide: "Pygmy Music,"* 304 – 312
- Arom and Furniss, Interactive Experimental Method for the Determination of musical scales in oral cultures.

CONGO/ZAIRE Rumba/Soukous

REQUIRED

- Bob White, Congolese Rumba and Other Cosmopolitanisms

RECOMMENDED

- Rough Guide article: Congo Gold
- Liner Notes: Congolese Soukous (RG recording)
- Super Soukous reading
- Musical Examples: Listen as online

DURING:

- Discussion Forum Feedback
- Lecture: Intro to Central Africa, student playlist presentations, on pygmy music and Soukous, plus discussion forum feedback.
- Presentations (2)

AFTER:

- Take **Online Quiz 4 by Sunday Feb 21, at 5 pm**
- Post on **Discussion Forum Unit 5 by Sunday February 21, 2021 at 5pm**

Class 5: Monday February 22, 2021

Music and the Nation in East Africa: Taarab, Hip Hop, and Gospel in Tanzania and Kenya

BEFORE:

- Reading Read Eisenberg and Kidula for class., Others for presenters (more in Modules)
 - *Rough Guide*: "Tanzania/Kenya Taarab," 408-417
 - Jean Kidula, "Polishing the Luster of the Stars: Music Professionalism Made Workable in Kenya," *Ethnomusicology* (2000).
 - Eisenberg, Andrew [hip-hop-and-cultural-citizenship-on-kenyas-swahili-coast.pdf](#) [_Download hip-hop-and-cultural-citizenship-on-kenyas-swahili-coast.pdf](#)
 - EAST AND WEST AFRICAN HIP HOP [African hip hop as a rhizomic art form articulating urban youth identity and resistance with reference to Kenyan genge and Ghanaian hiplife.pdf](#) [_Download African hip hop as a rhizomic art form](#)

articulating urban youth identity and resistance with reference to Kenyan genge and Ghanaian hiplife.pdf

DURING:

- Discussion Forum Feedback
- Lecture
- Student Presentations (at least 2)

AFTER:

- Take **Online Quiz 5** by Sunday Feb 28, 5 pm.
- **Discussion Forum** complete by Sunday Feb 28 at 5 PM

Class 6: Monday March 1, 2021. North Africa: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia (Rai, Gnawa, Andalusian Music)

ALGERIA

Rough Guide: Algeria

Tony Langlois: Music and Politics of North Africa

Hanna Noor Al Deen: Rai Tide Rising

- Musical Examples: Listen to Canvas examples
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DURING:

- Discussion Forum feedback
- Lecture: Intro to Music of North Africa with documentary: Inside the Middle East: Andalusia's Islamic Legacy (24 mins), Academic Video Online <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.proxy.library.upenn.edu/watch/andalusia-s-islamic-legacy>
[Links to an external site.](#)
- Student Presentations: Andalusia and Rai

AFTER:

- Take **Online Quiz 6** by Sunday March 7th at 5pm
- Post on **Discussion Forum Six** by Sunday March 7, 2021 at 5pm

Class 7: Sunday March 8, 2021

Music in North Africa 2: Egyptian Popular music

BEFORE:

Reading: **EGYPT**

- Rough Guide: Egypt Street Music, Egypt Classical Music
- Danielson: New Nightingales of the Nile

Viewing: Documentary A Voice Like Egypt

DURING:

- Discussion Forum Feedback
- Lecture
- Student Presentations

AFTER:

- Discussion Forum due by Sunday March 14 at 5 pm
- Quiz due Sunday March 14 at 5 pm

Class 8: Monday March 15, 2021 Midterm Exam

Open Book Exam done during class time (2 hours)

Class 9: Monday March 22, 2021

Music of West Africa: Griots/Griottes

- BEFORE:
- **Reading: read either Hale or Powerful Voices**
- Recommended: Rough Guide: Mali, Rough Guide: Senegal and The Gambia
- Hale, "Griottes: Female Voices from West Africa"
- Powerful Voices of WOMen in Song, Intro

DURING:

- Discussion Forum Feedback
- Lecture with Africa I Remember, documentary on Tunde Jegede, Kora and Violin performer
- Student Presentations

AFTER:

- Take **Online Quiz 9** by Sunday April 4, 2021 at 5pm
- Post on **Discussion Forum Nine** by Sunday April 4, 2021 at 5pm

Class 10: Monday March 29, 2021

West Africa Fela, Afrobeat and Fela on Broadway

BEFORE

- Reading, Performance Practice in Afrobeat, and one article on Fela.
- Viewing: Finding Fela

DURING

- Discussion Forum Feedback
- Lecture,
- Student presentations

AFTER

- Quiz complete by **Sunday April 11, 2021 at 5 pm**
- Discussion Forum by **Sunday April 11, 2021 at 5 pm** Class 11, Monday March 5, 2021 The Islands Madagascar and Cape Verde

Class 11: Monday April 5, 2021 The Islands: Madagascar and Cape Verde

Music of the Islands, Indian and Atlantic—Cape Verde and Madagascar

BEFORE

- Reading: **General: Rough Guide: Indian Ocean Islands** (required if not presenting)

Madagascar

Rough Guide Madagascar

Popular Music and Malagasy Cultural Identities (Rasolofondraosolo and Meinhof)

Cape Verde

Rough Guide: Cape Verde

Dias: Popular Music in Cape Verde: Resistance or Conciliation?

DURING

Discussion Forum Feedback

Lecture

Student Presentations

AFTER

Online Quiz complete by Sunday April 25 at 5 pm

Discussion forum post by Sunday April 25 at 5 pm

Class 12: Monday April 12, 2021 Engagement Day, take the day off!!!

Class 13: Monday April 19, 2021 The Contemporary African Diaspora

BEFORE See the Module for all materials, reading, viewing, quizzes and discussion

DURING

AFTER

Class 14: Monday April 26, 2021 Second Midterm EXAM 5:00-7:00 PM (EDT)

Open book but must be taken online in these hours.

SUBMIT final PLAYLIST projects, written narrative plus PPT presentation/and/or recording by Wednesday May 5, 2021 and you are DONE.

If you are worried about a low grade, you may also submit EXTRA CREDIT concert review. Talk to Dr. Muller about this.

PLAYLIST PROJECTS

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is for you to explore the music of a particular community, style, repertory, or genre by creating a well-researched, annotated playlist of music. **You are to tell a story through the music you select, so these are not random tracks.** And this is not a “click and play” project, but rather something that you are to undertake scholarly research into as you decide what particular angle you want to take in presenting the music tracks that you do. Your models for undertaking the projects are other scholarly recordings made available to you through Smithsonian Global Sound or you can also find these kinds of materials in CD compilations of world music in the Ormandy Listening Center, fourth floor, Van Pelt library. You will produce a playlist of about 30 minutes of music, with “liner notes” that

(a) explain why you chose the music you did—how you came to the music, perhaps you have a personal connection to it (family heritage; study abroad, Broadway production)

- (b) outline what issues are raised by the music selected
- (c) describe the music in its cultural context (use maps, illustrations, photographs)
- (d) explain how this music has been transformed and the reasons for the transformation
- (e) provide biographical information on musicians
- (f) describe and illustrate musical instruments
- (f) list all your primary and secondary sources
- (g) list additional resources for further study—documentary films, video clips, commercial films that have used the music in soundtracks—which consumers may consult if they wish to know more.

You obviously cannot present the entire playlist in a live presentation, but you can select 10-15 sec samples which tell a particular part of your story.

Steps in the Process

1. Form your group by proposing a project topic/musical culture in the class forum list
2. Decide with your group the specific music you will engage with, and flesh out possible themes you might explore around that music: localization of global form; youth culture and empowerment; women's voices, the travels of the musical bow; creating art music out of African traditional sounds.
3. Find two or three **scholarlyworks** on the subject: at least two **journal articles**, a **book** about the topic, and perhaps some **popular press** on important recordings, musicians, adaptations of the music to new contexts. There may be **interviews** with musicians, record producers and so forth. There may also be a particularly useful **website** on the music. It will be helpful to also look for **reviews of recordings** to see what kinds of issues are raised about recorded music specifically. In the past reviews have been contained in the backs of scholarly journals—< i>Ethnomusicology, Worlds of Music, African Music, Yearbook for Traditional Music and so forth. These can mostly be located through JSTOR and other online resources in the Penn Library website (www.library.upenn.edu) but are also available in book form in Van Pelt. These are different from more commercially produced reviews in newspapers and online locations. Your help with this came from Liza Vicks, Music Librarian, who visited our class and will further assist you with this process.
4. READ THE MATERIALS, and write summaries that you will use in creating your liner notes.
5. Seek out recordings of the music you are going to use; you might find youtube and other kinds of video clips as additional resources, but your focus here is on audio recordings. You will need to keep notes on the sources of your recordings—and if you used an online archive, the dates you retrieved the recording, and the site of retrieval. If you are using other cd compilations you need to find at least three different sources i.e., you cannot just use the same tracks from a single source as someone else has done. Remember it is very easy for me to google materials and find your sources.

Putting the Project Together

Here is a list of issues/pieces of information **for inclusion in your final playlist project**. Remember that not every playlist will respond to every item listed below. You will respond to this list according to the kind of music you have included in the playlist—is it music from a single place or people or a genre that is evident in many places? Is it in a single language, which isn't English? Did you cull your tracks from several sources or just one or two? What kinds of scholarly resources were available to you and so forth.

The **Goal of the Project** is to present a coherently organized set of tracks of music/sound unified by a single concept, place, repertoire or issue.

- Reflexivity
 - Here you reflect briefly on reasons for selecting the music you did, what is your relationship to this music, why did you choose this and not something else? The response may have something to do with your cultural heritage, memories of childhood, what your parents play at home, if you have traveled abroad.
- Genre/Context
 - You give information about the type of music you have selected, where it is performed/hear, when, why, by whom, in what contexts it is permitted or not, where and how it was recorded—live (field of concert) or studio (often the commercial purpose). If the music was recorded live has the music been reproduced in a studio since then? What adjustments may have been made to the sound itself (remember questions of authenticity—is this the real thing or a produced sound or some blend of the two)
- Language,
 - is language used in the music, how what kind? Can you provide the
 - covered in the words?
- Instrumentation
 - Describe instruments—if conventional musical instruments. What about other kinds of sound sources, like sampling, electronic keyboards etc.
- **How should we listen to the music?**
- Musician Biography
 - Brief description of background, careers, history of ensemble

Additional Materials

Include pictures, maps, instrument or musician illustrations

Remember to cite all sources for all materials used, including maps, illustrations, photos.

List of Scholarly Sources—these must be cited not just as the web address but the name of the article, journal, year of publication etc.

Books, journal articles (author, title, date and place of publication)

Websites, date of information retrieval

You may add some **additional resources** where interested listeners could find further information, especially if you found some wonderful materials you couldn't include in the project.

Remember to use **footnotes or endnotes** to insert additional information that might reflect your expanded reading and listening but that doesn't fit into the playlist requirements.

Structure of Project

General Information with illustrations

Then Tracklist, annotated here if it makes sense, with words and translations, perhaps performer names and instruments

Resources Used

Class Presentation

Create a PPT around your Playlist, present either a live presentation or you can write a script and record yourself with audio clips in AUDACITY which you can download free. This is your call. You could use a slide show on PPT to accompany the audio project. If you have another creative idea for presentation of materials in the live online class, talk to Nina or Carol about it. Or email us. We are open to creativity and innovation.

EXTRA CREDIT

You may attend a live performance of African or African diasporic music this semester, write a 2-3 page description/review of the performance, and submit it to the assignment called Extra Credit Performance Review by **May 5, 2021**. By completing this assignment, you may earn up to 4% points to be added to your final course grade. *No extra credit will be given after the final exam.*