

**Department of Music and Performing Arts Professions
Program in Music Education
The Steinhardt School of Education, New York University**

MPAME-GE.2032: Music Education in Cultural Context

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Course Description

This course examines music's social-ideological nature with special attention to: (a) the ways in which culture influences music education, music preferences, music cognition, and musical values; and (b) the ways in which musical practices influence culture and social relations. Topics include: music education as multicultural education; music and gender; music and power; music as commodity; the educational implications of musical-cultural relativity; music education as an agent of social reproduction and transformation; music education as socialization process; music education as “text.”

Objectives

On completion of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

- reflect critically on personal and social beliefs about music and music education;
- explain the social and cultural structures embedded in music(s);
- summarize central ideas in key sources selected from relevant fields;
- explain the implications of this course for music teaching and learning;
- develop curricular proposals for applying themes from this course.

Evaluation

Reflection Papers or Reports (6 x 5%)	30%
Micro-teaching Session	20%
Final Project	30%
Weekly Participation	20%

Required Text

DeNora, Tia. (2000). Music In Everyday Life. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reflection Papers or Oral Reports (5% each)

Papers or Reports will be graded on the student's understanding of and engagement with the questions/problems posed, and the ability to construct clear, compelling, and substantiated arguments/descriptions/analyses.

Micro-teaching Session (20%)

Prepare a 15 minute lesson based on *one* piece of music of your choice.

Contextualizing the lesson: State clearly the grade level for which the lesson is prepared, and describe the class's prior knowledge of and experience with the music, concepts, culture, etc., that you present. Describe briefly how you might follow up this lesson. In other words, where would this lesson fit in the grand scheme of your curriculum, and the music education of your students?

Think about: using a variety of learning modes (listening, singing, dancing, moving, drawing, improvising, discussing, writing, debating, etc.); the step-by-step sequencing of the lesson – what needs to be introduced before other concepts can be discussed, etc.; integrating the theoretical/philosophical issues that we've discussed in class (will be implicit in both what and how you teach); connecting musical processes to cultural, social, historical processes, and other areas of study (subjects); implementing a variety of tools of contextualization: videos, recordings, instruments, scores, pictures, maps, food, clothing, stories, etc.; evaluating how your goals/objectives have been met; how the lesson is relevant/meaningful to you and your students

Final Project (30%)

Choose a musical genre, practice, or culture in which you are interested and/or have some prior experience. Using a combination of ethnography (interviews, participant observation with participants *in* the culture) and secondary sources (resources *about* the culture), prepare three lessons.

For each lesson, include: lesson goals; possible step-by-step sequencing of each lesson; specific questions to ask students and a range of possible answers; lists of materials and resources; copies of maps, pictures, stories; cassette and/or video tapes with clearly labeled examples.

Think about: ways of introducing and concluding the unit; sequencing of lessons; reviewing/spiralling back through skills/knowledge to add new layers of meaning; all the issues delineated above in regard to the specific lesson.

Bibliography: Include all primary and secondary sources of information that have informed your curriculum (recordings, interviews, books, internet sites, notes from participant observations, etc.).

Appendices: Include transcriptions of interviews and notes from participant observations.

Reflection Papers/Reports (5% each)

Reflection Paper 1: Musical Maps: Music in My Life

Draw a visual representation of the different pools of musical activity in your personal history.

What does this representation reveal about your music interests and involvement?

- various roles that music plays in your life
- how you interact with music through listening, performing, valuing
- breadth and variety of your musical repertoire
- strongly held preferences and personal opinions

In what ways does this representation reflect the influences of the time and place you were born, places you've lived, and significant people in your life?

How might you use musical maps effectively in your teaching, particularly as you teach *in a cultural perspective*?

Reflection Paper 2: Critique of Introduction to Multicultural Music Education Articles.

A. Prepare a point-form summary of the main ideas of your assigned article. Put the reference information, in proper bibliographical format, at the top of the page. Pay attention specifically to the following: specific definitions of music, culture, multiculturalism, etc.; different models of "music education in cultural perspective" or "multicultural music education" or "teaching world musics"; rationales; pedagogical methods; resources; the author's main perspective/point of view.

- B. Prepare a one- to two-page written response to the article. For example: What is your opinion of the content of this article? With which points do you agree/disagree? WHY??? How does/do the model(s) of "music education in cultural perspective" described by the authors coincide with your vision of your future music teaching? What parts of the article might be useful to you in your future music teaching? How? What parts will you ignore? Why?

Campbell, Patricia Shehan. 1996. Music, Education, and Community in a Multicultural Society. In Marie McCarthy (Ed.) *Cross Currents: Setting an Agenda for Music Education in Community Culture*, pp. 4-33. College Park, MD: University of Maryland, College Park.

Elliott, David J. 1989. Key Concepts in Multicultural Music Education. *International Journal of Music Education* 13: 11-18.

_____. 1990. Music as Culture: Toward a Multicultural Concept of Arts Education. *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 24/1: 147-166.

Stock, Jonathon. 1994. Concepts of World Music and their Integration within Western Secondary Music Education. *International Journal of Music Education* 23, 3-16.

Swanick, Keith. 1988. Music Education in a Pluralist Society. *International Journal of Music Education* 12: 3-8.

Volk, Terese M. 1998. Chapter One: The Difficult Question of Multiculturalism. In *Music, Education, and Multiculturalism: Foundations and Principles*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Reflection Paper 3: Authenticity

An American music education professor teaches a Native North American lullaby to a group of music educators at a music education conference. She begins by teaching us the solfege hand signs and syllables for the melody. We continue to use the hand signs while we learn the text.

An American composer is fascinated by the sounds of different world musics. He composes many choral songs incorporating rhythms, melodies, and/or text from songs he has heard on recordings, or for which he has some sort of notated version. He does not provide, nor is he interested in, the cultural context of the musics from which he is borrowing. He believes it is more important to make young choral singers aware of the variety of sounds that exist in the world.

A prominent American choral conductor takes his nationally renowned choir on a tour of Lithuania, where he and his choir learn a 4-part Lithuanian folk song from a local choir. The next year he writes out the text and parts and distributes them to the NY State Youth Choir, who love the song, and consequently include it in their fall tour.

An American music teacher (percussionist) travels to Ghana where she studies with a master drummer for four months. She learns rhythms, songs, and dances by ear from her teacher. When she returns to the USA, she gives workshops at schools and music educator conferences, teaching one particular song and dance that she learned there. It was originally used as a war chant by an Ewe-speaking people, but now it is used as a popular cheer at soccer games. Participants take turns playing particular percussion instruments, dancing, and singing in the Ewe language. Some participants ask for sheet music to take home so they can remember the song to teach to their students, but the workshop leader has not and does not intend to write it out.

Reflection Paper 4: Comparative Analysis of Two Multicultural Teaching Resources

Choose two contrasting classroom resources for “multicultural music education” and compare them.

1. What is the purpose/mandate of the resource? How does it correspond to your own aims in teaching world musics?

2. Who is presenting? Who is represented? What is the relationship between presenter and represented?
3. Look specifically at: musical examples, transcriptions, text and translation, recordings, video performances, performance instructions, contextual information, terminology, etc.....
4. What do you like about these resources? What do you dislike about them?
5. How might these resources be used most effectively?

Reflection Paper 5: Reflections on a Micro-lesson

Reflect on your own micro-lesson:

Where did you stick to your plan? Where did you improvise? Why?

How did this particular class/group of people affect what and how you taught this lesson? What do you think worked particularly well? What didn't work so well? How could you tell?

What would you do the same if you were repeating this lesson with a different group?

What would you do differently? Why?

How will this teaching experience change the development of your curriculum project?

Reflection Paper Six: Your Choice

Titon, Jeff Todd, ed. *Worlds of Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World's Peoples*. New York: Schirmer Books.

Ethnocentricity/Colonialism/Universality/Pluralism

Reimer, Bennett. 1994. Can We Understand Music of Foreign Cultures? In Heath Lees (Ed) *Musical Connections: Tradition and Change, Proceedings of the 21st World Conference of the International Society for Music Education*, pp. 227-245. Tampa, FL: ISME.

Swanick, Keith. 1996. Music Education liberated from new praxis. *International Journal of Music Education* 28: 16-24.

Walker, Robert. 1996. Music education freed from colonialism: a new praxis. *International Journal of Music Education* 27: 2-15.

Walker, Robert. 1998. Swanick puts music education back in its western prison – a reply. *International Journal of Music Education* 31: 59-65.

Westerlund, Heidi. 1999. Universalism against contextual thinking in multicultural music education – Western colonialism or pluralism? *International Journal of Music Education* 33: 94-103.

1. Outline the author's main argument for or against teaching music of *other* cultures.
2. What are the problems inherent in teaching music of other cultures?
3. What solutions does the author suggest for countering those problems?

Possible Readings for Oral Reports and Essays

- Campbell, Patricia S. (1998). Songs in their Heads: Music and Its Meaning in Children's Lives. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ehrlich, D. (1997). Inside the Music: Conversations with Contemporary Musicians about Spirituality, Creativity, and Consciousness. Boston: Shambhala.
- Gerstin, J. (1998). "Reputation in a Musical Scene: The Everyday Context of Connections Between Music, Identity, and Politics." Ethnomusicology, 42(3): 385-414.
- Leppert, R. (1993). The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation and the History of the Body. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Leppert, R. & McClary, S. (Eds.), (1987). Music and Society: The Politics of Composition, Performance and Reception. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McClary, S. (1991). Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Reynolds, S. (1995). The Sex Revolts: Gender, Rebellion and Rock n' Roll. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rideout, R. (Ed.) (1997). On the Sociology of Music. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Shepherd, J. (1991). Music as Social Text. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Small, C. (1998). Musiking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press.
- Veblen, K. (1997). Sound Ways of Knowing: Music in the Interdisciplinary Curriculum. New York: Schirmer.
- Walser, R. (1993). Running with the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press.
- White, A. (1987). Lost in Music: Culture, Style, and Musical Event. New York: Routledge.
- Whitely, S. (Ed.). (1997). Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender. New York: Routledge.