

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

“Music is the harmonious voice of creation; an echo of the invisible world.”
- Giuseppe Mazzini

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Tim Murray

Office Location: 130 Music Building

e-mail: timothymurray@ufl.edu (messaging through the course Canvas site is preferred)

Office Hours: MW, 9-11:45 AM or by appointment.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

Benjamin Diaz

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(messaging through the course Canvas site is preferred)

COURSE DETAILS

Class Number: 19147

Meeting Time:

Tuesdays: 10:40 AM - 11:30 AM

Thursdays: 10:40 AM - 12:35 PM

Location: Music Building (MUB) 120

Quest 1 Theme: The Examined Life

General Education: Humanities (H), International (N)

(Note that a minimum grade of ‘C’ is required for General Education credit)

Course Cost: As part of the experiential learning component of this course, students must attend a spiritual musical performance. Some of these may require a ticket or other admission charge, and there are many free options as well.

Class resources, announcements, updates, assignments, and links to readings, musical examples, and other media will be made available through the class Canvas site (www.elearning.ufl.edu)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

While contemporary Western culture tends to regard music almost exclusively as a form of entertainment, from prehistory to the present day, across virtually every culture, music has been inextricably connected to the spiritual lives of humans. The essential question addressed in this course is: How does music move us spiritually? Or, to put it another way: Why do organized sounds have the power to catalyze spiritual experiences? How does music shape our spiritual experience and how do

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

our spiritual beliefs and practices shape our musical taste and aesthetic experiences?

In order to address this question, we will examine the relationship between music and spiritual practice, both within and outside the context of organized religion. Through exposure to selected case studies from contemporary and historical cultures on multiple continents, students will be led to consider the underlying philosophies in both spiritual music and spiritual practices, to compare them to contemporary American culture, and to address the essential question as it pertains to their own beliefs and practices.

QUEST 1 AND GEN ED DESCRIPTIONS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Quest 1 Description: Quest 1 courses are multidisciplinary explorations of truly challenging questions about the human condition that are not easy to answer, but also not easy to ignore: What makes life worth living? What makes a society a fair one? How do we manage conflicts? Who are we in relation to other people or to the natural world? To grapple with the kinds of open-ended and complex intellectual challenges they will face as critical, creative, and self-reflective adults navigating a complex and interconnected world, Quest 1 students use the humanities approaches present in the course to mine texts and artistic media for evidence, create arguments, and articulate ideas.

Quest 1 SLOs:

- ❖ Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine essential questions about the human condition within and across the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Content).
- ❖ Analyze and evaluate essential questions about the human condition using established practices appropriate for the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Critical Thinking).
- ❖ Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions in oral and written forms as appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication).
- ❖ Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection).

Humanities Description: Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Humanities SLOs:

- ❖ Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used in the course disciplines (Content).
- ❖ Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives (Critical Thinking)
- ❖ Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively (Communication).

International Description: International courses promote the development of students' global and intercultural awareness. Students examine the cultural, economic, geographic, historical, political, and/or social experiences and processes that characterize the contemporary world, and thereby comprehend the trends, challenges, and opportunities that affect communities around the world. Students analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultural, economic, political, and/or social systems and beliefs mediate their own and other people's understanding of an increasingly connected world.

International SLOs:

- ❖ Identify, describe, and explain the historical, cultural, economic, political, and/or social experiences and processes that characterize the contemporary world (Content).
- ❖ Analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultural, economic, political, and/or social systems and beliefs mediate understandings of an increasingly connected contemporary world (Critical Thinking).

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the basic components of music and describe musical works using discipline-specific terminology. (Q1 Content, GE-H Content SLOs)
2. Identify and describe a spiritual or religious practice using core terminology and methodologies of the discipline. (Q1 Content, GE-H Content SLOs)
3. Analyze musical works from multiple perspectives and evaluate ways in which the musical and spiritual/religious elements are related or complimentary. (Q1 Critical Thinking, GE-H Content SLOs)

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

4. Articulate specific examples of spiritual/musical connections from a variety of cultural contexts – international, historical, and contemporary – and explain their differences and commonalities. (GE-N Content SLO)
5. Analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultural expressions and beliefs facilitate understandings of an increasingly connected contemporary world. (GE-N Critical Thinking SLO)
6. Offer both subjective, emotional commentary and objective analysis of spiritual musical expressions, and to distinguish between the two, including influences and biases that have shaped these responses. (Q1 Critical Thinking SLOs)
7. Recognize and describe the role(s) that a spiritual experience of music plays in their own lives, regional culture, and contemporary society as a whole. (Q1 Critical Thinking SLOs)
8. Articulate some of the forces that have shaped their own spiritual beliefs and aesthetic tastes, critically reflecting on their intellectual, personal, and professional development. (Q1 Critical Thinking SLOs)
9. Develop and present knowledgeable, clear, and effective responses to the essential questions raised in this course. (Q1 Communication, GE-H Communication SLOs)

As a result of learning and listening, the student will acquire:

- ❖ Increased awareness and curiosity about past, present and future developments and practices in spiritual music.
- ❖ A philosophy according to which the student may express and justify his/her own personal tastes and interest in music and its relationship to their spiritual life and practices.
- ❖ A greater understanding of global musical cultures and their relationship to broader cultural changes.
- ❖ An enhanced receptivity to the beliefs, practices, and music of other cultures.

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

GRADE DISTRIBUTION AND GRADING POLICIES

Participation in class discussions, in class and online – 15%
Tools for the Explorer Review Quiz – 10%
Case Studies Test – 15%
Experiential Learning Choice – 2%
Experiential Learning Report – 13%
Capstone Project Pitch – 2%
Capstone Project Outline – 5%
Capstone Project Draft for Review – 5%
Peer Review of Capstone Projects – 5%
Capstone Projects Presentation, including Individual Q & A – 10%
Final Capstone Project Paper – 13%
Personal Philosophical/Aesthetic Statement – 5%

Grading Scale:

Consistent with UF grading policies, this course will employ the following grading scale:

A	4.00	94-100
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	64-66
D-	0.67	60-63
E	0.00	0-59

More information on UF grading policies can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

GRADED WORK AND ASSIGNMENTS

Participation/Discussion

In order to effectively participate in class, students must arrive prepared. This requires keeping current on the reading/listening/viewing assignments and being aware of the course schedule and activities as presented in this syllabus, discussed in class, and announced on the course Canvas website. Consistent, high-quality participation is expected. “High-quality” in this instance means:

- ❖ Informed (i.e., shows evidence of having done assigned work)
- ❖ Thoughtful (i.e., shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised in assignments and previous discussions)
- ❖ Considerate (e.g., takes the perspectives of others into account, recognizes and distinguishes between subjective and objective elements)

In order to accommodate different learning styles as well as time constraints, opportunities for discussion will occur in-class and online through the Canvas site. If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in either class or online discussions, such as language barriers, disabilities, etc., please see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

“Tools for the Explorer” Review Quiz

The first four modules of this course present the student with some of the basic vocabulary, theories, and methodologies used to describe, analyze, explain, and evaluate spiritual musical constructs and practices. The TFTE Review Quiz will feature objective testing of these concepts (multiple-choice, short answer, fill-in-the blank questions) as well as questions that require the application of these tools to short examples of music and ceremony.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Experiential Learning Report

After acquiring the tools for investigation of music and spiritual practices, students will select a religious ceremony that includes music or a concert/presentation of overtly spiritual music to attend. They will apply the tools they’ve learned to report on their experience and analysis of the event.

Students will identify a suitable event and submit it for approval.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

Both the University of Florida and the greater Gainesville area offer numerous opportunities for such experiential learning. These include, but are not limited to:

Buddhist:

Tibetan

Gainesville Karma Thegsum Choling
1216 NW 9th Ave
(352) 335-1975
<https://www.ktcgainesville.org/>

Vietnamese

Tu Viện A Nan Temple
2120 SE 15th Street
(352) 275-4308
<http://www.tuvienanan.org>

Christian:

Anglican

All Saints Anglican Church
8100 SW Archer Rd.
(352) 317-5757
<http://allsaintsgnv.org/>

Baptist

First Baptist Church
425 W University Ave.
(352) 376-4681
<http://fbcgainesville.net/>

Baptist Collegiate Ministries
1604 W University Ave.
(352) 376-4405
<http://www.ufbcm.org/>

Catholic

St. Augustine Church (offers services in Spanish as well as English)
1738 W University Ave.
(352) 372-3533
<https://catholicgators.org/>

Holy Faith Catholic Church

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

700 NW 39th Road
(352) 376-5405
<http://www.holyfaithchurch.org/>

Chinese Christian

Gainesville Chinese Christian Church
2850 NW 23rd Blvd
(352) 271-0776
<http://www.gcccfl.org/>

Church of Christ

Campus Church of Christ
2720 SW Second Ave.
(352) 378-1471
<http://www.campuscofc.org/>

Episcopalian

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
100 NE First St.
(352) 372-4721
<http://www.holytrinitygnv.org/>

UF Chapel House
1522 W University Ave.
(352) 372-8506
<http://www.ufchapelhouse.com/>

Evangelical

Creekside Community Church
2640 NW 39th Ave.
(352) 378-1800
<https://creekside.com>

Lutheran

University Lutheran Church
1826 W University Ave.
(352) 373-6945
<http://www.ulcgainesville.com/>

First Lutheran Church of Gainesville
1801 NW Fifth Ave.
(352) 376-2062
<http://www.flcgainesville.org/>

Methodist

First United Methodist Church

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

419 NE First St.
(352) 372-8523
<http://www.fumcgv.org/>

Nondenominational

Cru at the University of Florida
University Auditorium & other locations on or near campus
https://www.facebook.com/pg/cruatuf/community/?ref=page_internal

United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW Fifth Ave.
(352) 378-3500
<http://www.ucgainesville.org/>

Presbyterian

Presbyterian and Disciples of Christ Student Center
1402 W University Ave.
(352) 376-7539
<https://yellow.place/en/the-presbyterian-disciples-of-christ-student-center-gainesville-usa>

First Presbyterian Church
300 SW Third St.
(352) 378-1527
<http://1stpc.org/>

Hindu:

Devi Temple of Florida
12311 SW 11th Ave, Newberry, FL 32669
(352) 332-4907
<https://www.devitempleofflorida.org/>

Hare Krishna Student Center
214 NW 14th St.
(352) 336-4183
http://www.krishnalunch.com/student_center.html

Kirtan – Music of the Soul at Ayurvedic Health Retreat
14616 NW 140th St., Alachua, Florida
(352) 870-7645
<https://www.facebook.com/events/345265852980330/>

Islam

Hoda Center
5220 SW 13th Street

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

(352) 377-8080

<http://hodacenter.org/>

Islamic Center of Gainesville

1010 W University Ave.

(352) 372-1980

<https://www.islamiccenterofgainesville.com/>

Jewish

Chabad Chassidism

Lubavitch Chabad Jewish Center

2021 NW Fifth Ave.

(352) 336-5877

<https://www.jewishgator.com/>

Conservative

Congregation B'Nai Israel

3830 NW 16th Blvd

(352) 376-1508

<http://www.bnaigainesville.com/>

Reform

Temple Shir Shalom-Reform

3855 NW 8th Ave

(352) 371-6399

<http://www.shirshalom.net/>

Non-Sectarian

Temple of the Universe

15808 NW 90th St., Alachua, Florida 32615

(386) 462-7279

[Temple of the Universe - Meditation and Yoga Center - Alachua, FL \(tou.org\)](http://Temple of the Universe - Meditation and Yoga Center - Alachua, FL (tou.org))

Students will prepare for this experiential learning by reviewing the appropriate excerpts from *How to Be a Perfect Stranger: The Essential Religious Etiquette Handbook*, Stuart M. Matlins & Arthur J. Magida, Eds. (SkyLight Paths Publishing, 2006).

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9

Case Studies Test

In Weeks 4-10, students will be presented with studies involving a wide variety of spiritual music works, artists, cultures, and practices from around the globe, both

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

historical and contemporary. These case studies will also feature a range of approaches to spiritual music, demonstrating some of the methodologies of the arts and aesthetics.

After completion of these modules, students will be tested on their objective understanding of these case studies, in formats (short answer, discussion) that allow for the synthesis and application of material learned, as well as opportunities to compare and contrast the cultures and methodologies covered.

Advances SLOs: 4, 5, 9

Capstone Project

Since the case studies covered in this course present only a fraction of the myriad musical expressions of spirituality that characterize the human experience, there are ample opportunities for further exploration. The capstone project provides such an opportunity. Working with the instructor, each student will propose a topic related to spirituality and music such as a specific culture or subculture, an artist, a genre of music, or a specific construct.

This project should include documented research, but also objective analysis of the elements and principles covered in the course, description of social context, subjective responses to the topic, both by audience/participants and the student themselves, and comparison to the student's personal and cultural experience.

In order to develop the project systematically, students will:

- ❖ Select a topic and present it in class for suggestions and approval (Pitch)
- ❖ Submit an outline of the project, including subjects to be covered, sources, and general findings (Outline)
- ❖ Submit a written draft of the project for peer review (Draft for Review)
- ❖ Review the drafts of two other students (Peer Review)
- ❖ Prepare and upload a 10-minute audio/video presentation of the highlights of their research which will be viewed by their classmates. (Presentation)
- ❖ Engage in an individual Question & Answer session during class (Q & A)
- ❖ Submit a written document of their research and findings, including sources (Final Paper)

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9

Personal Philosophical/Aesthetic Statement

At the conclusion of the course, each student will submit a statement describing their personal response to the essential question(s) addressed in the course. What music moves them spiritually? How has music shaped their spiritual experience

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

and how do their spiritual beliefs and practices shape their musical taste and aesthetic experiences?

In their answer, the student should articulate some of the forces that have shaped their own spiritual beliefs and aesthetic tastes, critically reflecting on any influences in their intellectual, personal, and professional development. If the student does not have spiritual beliefs or practices, and/or are unmoved spiritually by music, they should still critically reflect on the experiences and influences that have contributed to their stance. In addition, they should articulate the role(s) that music does play in their intellectual, emotional, and personal life.

In either case, the student should be able to recognize and describe the role(s) that a spiritual experience of music plays in their family/peer groups, regional culture, and contemporary society as a whole, comparing and contrasting their personal experience with that of these groups and cultures.

Advances SLOs: 6, 7, 8, 9

TEXTS & MATERIALS

While there is no single required text for this course, individual modules feature key reading/viewing excerpts as well as playlists of musical examples. These examples will be available through links on the course Canvas site.

COURSE POLICIES AND STUDENT RESOURCES

Attendance

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to arrive on time. Unexcused absences will negatively affect the participation grade. Student taking the online section should plan to be visible, present, and engaged as much as possible.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Conduct and Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and stay for the full class period unless specific arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the class meeting.

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

Active discussion and questioning is encouraged. However, because of the personal and often-sensitive nature of spiritual beliefs, experiences, and practices, it is essential that our class meetings provide a safe environment for discussing such things. Opinions and beliefs shared by others should be treated with respect and confidentiality. Students sharing such beliefs and opinions should be open to respectful questions.

Conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be kept to a minimum.

The nature of the subject matter in this course encourages the cultivation of sustained attention. Therefore, all electronic devices should be turned off and placed in closed bags. The only exception are those occasions when the instructor may ask one or more students to use their device for a specific purpose (e.g, to look up a term, example, etc. that arises in discussion).

Special Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Technical Issues

Issues with the Canvas site, such as accessing media, submitting assignments, etc., should be addressed to: <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>.

Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code

Quest 1: MUS 1610
An Echo of the Invisible World: Music & Spirituality
Fall 2025

and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center:

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

<http://www.police.ufl.edu>

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask> Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 2215 Turlington Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>