

MUL2010: EXPERIENCING MUSIC

Spring 2026 — Class # 13652/13654 (Online)

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Office Hours and Instructor Contact: Office hours are held virtually and available by appointment. To schedule a meeting, please [click here](#) (this link is also on the “Instructor Contact” page in the Canvas course site). All correspondence with the instructor should be conducted through the Inbox tool in Canvas – unless Canvas is down, please do not send messages to my e-mail address (it makes it easier to manage messages if they are all in Canvas). I aim to respond to all messages within 24 hours during the week; responses may take longer on the weekend or in case of holidays.

Course Description

MUL 2010 is designed to examine music and its role in culture: how it both shapes and is shaped by social, political, national, and cultural forces. Examples from art music, popular music, and world music will be used to demonstrate music’s inextricable link to life in both historical and contemporary settings. No prior or concurrent courses are required for enrollment in MUL 2010, nor is any prior musical training or experience.

General Education and Student Learning Outcomes

This course satisfies humanities (H) and international (N) requirements for general education. 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 key elements, biases, and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

International courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes, and norms that constitute the contemporary cultures of countries outside the United States. These courses lead students to understand how geographic location and socioeconomic factors affect these cultures and the lives of citizens in other countries. Through analysis and evaluation of the students’ own cultural norms and values in relation to those held by the citizens of other countries, they will develop a cross-cultural understanding of the rest of the contemporary world.

In MUL2010, the course is broken down into six modules, through which a variety of aspects on music are addressed in the context of three major classifications of music: Western “art” music; “popular” music; and “world” music:

- **What is Music?**: In order to spend the semester talking about music, we must first establish a basic means of defining music. Whether or not you have previous experience studying or performing music, this module will give us all a basic framework by which we can describe (Western) music.
- **Tell Me a Story**: Here, we will look at how composers use music to develop characters and scenes in film, opera, ballet, and in standalone musical works. We will look at historically significant examples of Western music in each of these settings, and you will consider how the elements and examples relate to your own experience of musical characterization.
- **A Little Song and Dance**: This section focuses on several types of music dramas (opera, musical theatre, film musicals, ballet/dance) in more depth, identifying points of commonality across them, while also learning about elements that make them unique.
- **What's in a Song?**: This module will look more closely at song, a form of music seen in every culture. We will examine ways that composers conceive and construct songs, how they are delivered by performers, and how they are transmitted throughout society.
- **Song Without Words**: There are many solely instrumental works that tell stories or convey meaning, so we will move away from music that relies on text and examine more closely instrumental works, and how seemingly abstract sounds relay meaning. Some prominent examples from Western music history will demonstrate

associations that are likely familiar to those of us raised in Western culture, and we will also look at non-Western examples to see how culture and meaning is conveyed in other parts of the world.

- **You Call That (Good) Music?:** While the course has explored a number of “significant” works from various times and cultures, we have not yet directly considered how or why we ascribe value or quality to certain composers, artists, and works. This module will help us explore more deeply the factors that we might consider when evaluating the “goodness” of a work. We will also spend some time demystifying some aspects and expectations of the Western concertgoing experience.

General education student learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to acquire while completing a general education course at the University of Florida. These outcomes fall into three areas: content, communication, and critical thinking.

- Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies, and theories used within the discipline. Content is primarily assessed through the module quizzes.
- Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Communication is primarily assessed through students’ original posts and responses on the discussion boards.
- Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Critical thinking is primarily assessed through the essay assignments.

Textbooks

REQUIRED: Morgan-Ellis, Esther M. (ed). *Resonances: Engaging Music in Its Cultural Context*. University of North Georgia Press. **The text will be linked within the course site via Perusall.**

RECOMMENDED: A current edition of a writing style manual (MLA, APA, Chicago). While the field of musicology adheres to the Chicago Manual of Style, students may choose whichever style manual is recommended by their major discipline. As the essays may require research, students not located on the UF campus must have access to a library (physical or virtual) with the scholarly resources needed to complete these assignments.

Objectives

This course is designed to enhance the student's understanding of music from a technical, aesthetic, historical, and sociological perspective. To accomplish these goals, the course will concentrate on:

- The development of an attentive style of listening.
- The introduction and systematic study of the building blocks of music.
- Enhancing awareness of the main musical styles of selected Western and non-Western cultures.
- Application of critical thinking skills to musical constructs to better understand human creativity and problem-solving.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify the basic components of music using discipline-specific terminology.
- Describe musical works by accurately employing the vocabulary learned in this course.
- Aurally identify musical instruments and voices by classification.
- Demonstrate an understanding of musical form and texture.
- Express an aesthetic response to a work of art and verbally defend it.
- Define an overview of some of the major stylistic periods in Western music and draw analogies to other arts from the same era.
- Identify some of the major works and artists from these periods.
- Compare and contrast these works to contemporary, popular, and non-Western musical examples.
- Recognize and describe the role(s) that music plays in their own lives, regional culture, and contemporary society.
- Offer both subjective commentary and objective analysis of artistic expressions, and to distinguish between the two.
- Articulate some of the forces that have shaped their own taste and aesthetic responses.

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

- Increased awareness and curiosity about the past, present, and future developments in music.
- A philosophy according to which the student may express and justify their own personal tastes and interest in music.
- The ability to offer music criticisms based upon an acquired set of value judgments.
- An awareness of uses of music in the entertainment and commercial field.
- A greater understanding of Western concert music, as well as modern popular music.
- An enhanced receptivity to the music of other cultures.

Evaluation

The grades for this course will be based on a 400-point system, broken down as follows:

132 points (33% of grade) = six quizzes (22 points each), one per module

20 points (5% of grade) = end-of-semester listening reflection

150 points (37% of grade) = 3 essays, written according to guidelines presented during the course (Essay 1 = 40 points; Essay 2 = 50 points; Essay 3 = 60 points).

98 points (25% of grade) = participation in seven online discussions, one per module, plus an introduction discussion at the beginning of the course. Each student makes an original post (8 points), followed by responses to at least two other posts (3 points each). A grading rubric will be provided for both the individual post and responses.

Final grades will be calculated according to the point system below and are not negotiable. If you “need an A,” plan to log in regularly, study, listen to the music, meet deadlines, and be honest. You are responsible for keeping track of your progress throughout the semester – the Gradebook in Canvas will always show your current grade. If you are doing poorly, especially near the withdrawal deadline, please feel free to discuss your progress with me. However, keep in mind that the numbers are the numbers; being “close to” a certain grade does not warrant receiving it. The instructor reserves the right to give (or not give) extra credit beyond that already built into the course – please do not ask for special/individual extra credit opportunities (especially if you have not been on top of all required assignments). Once you have read this syllabus to completion, please email me (via Canvas) a picture of a duck.

All grades will be determined based on the following scale (corresponding grade points are listed in parentheses, consistent with the university grading regulations outlined at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>):

376-400 points = A (4.00)	320-335 points = B- (2.67)	268-279 points = D+ (1.33)
360-375 points = A- (3.67)	308-319 points = C+ (2.33)	256-267 points = D (1.00)
348-359 points = B+ (3.33)	296-307 points = C (2.00)	240-255 points = D- (0.67)
336-347 points = B (3.00)	280-295 points = C- (1.67)	0-239 points = E (0)

PLEASE NOTE: If you perceive a grading error, you must address the issue within 72 hours of the grade posting, otherwise the grade is final and will not be discussed further. Specific grade questions and concerns will only be discussed with the student. Due to the 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, I cannot and will not discuss your progress or grades with anyone but you, including your parents or family. For more information on FERPA, please visit <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/ferpa.html>. Any correspondence received from anyone other than you will be responded to with a link to the FERPA information site and nothing more.

Attendance and Conduct

While the presentation of this course in an online format gives you, the student, great freedom in deciding when to engage in the course, it is expected that you will log on to the course website regularly and check all assignments. This is not a “self-paced” course – all required assignments for the course will be due according to the dates posted in Canvas. The nature of the course format is such that it will not be possible to submit assignments or take quizzes after the closing deadline. If late assignments are accepted/permited, there will be a grade penalty. Please note that technical difficulties do arise and will generally not be considered an excuse to miss a deadline without documentation from the UF Computing Helpdesk – it is in your best interest to complete your assignments early so that you have time to work through any unforeseeable problems. You are advised to read through the technical information posted on the e-Learning website (<http://elearning.ufl.edu>) to minimize any potential technical issues.

For conflicts that may arise due to University-sponsored events or religious holidays, you are advised to plan your work in advance. The instructor recognizes and will comply with the University's attendance policy (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>); however, since no assignment requires that you log on the day of the deadline, you are responsible for planning ahead and taking care of work before a trip or holiday (including university holidays such as Homecoming). If a conflict seems unavoidable, you must contact the instructor at least one week prior to the date in question.

Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own. Contributions from anyone or anything else, including AI sources, must be properly quoted and cited every time they are used. Failure to do so constitutes an academic integrity violation, and I will follow the institution's policy to the letter in those instances. All violations of academic honesty, no matter how big or small, will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action, without exception or warning. PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING **WILL** RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE FOR THE PLAGIARIZED ASSIGNMENT, AND POSSIBLY THE COURSE. If you are uncertain about these guidelines, please contact me. **Ignorance of the rules is no excuse.**

UF students are bound by the Honor Code 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 (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code 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 or TAs in this class. In short, please don't place yourself in a situation to end up in an Honor Code hearing because you chose not to do your own work.

The instructor reserves the right to amend any portion of the course structure; any such changes will be posted on the Announcements page within the course site.

Accommodations

Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center (0001 Reid Hall; 352.392.8565; <http://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, the student and instructor will receive a letter that specifies the student's course accommodation(s). Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester. Accommodations are not provided retroactively.

Online Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available

at <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Evaluations are collected anonymously (unless a student provides identifying information in the open comments) and are not available to the instructor until after final grades are submitted and posted. Your feedback is valuable in making improvements to the course.

Campus Wellness Resources

Your physical and mental well-being is vital, and important to me, and while I may not be professionally equipped to help you with such matters, there are experts in the following offices who **can** help you:

- ***U Matter, We Care:*** If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575 or visit <http://umatter.ufl.edu> to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
- ***Counseling and Wellness Center:*** Visit <http://counseling.ufl.edu> or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

- *Student Health Care Center*: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>.
- *University Police Department*: Visit <http://police.ufl.edu/> or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
- *UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center*: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, <http://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center>.

Academic Resources

- *E-learning technical support*: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk (<http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
- *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services <http://career.ufl.edu/>.
- *Library Support*: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>—several ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>
- *Student Complaints On Campus*: <http://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor- code-student-conduct-code/>
- *Online Students Complaints*: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

MUL2010 - Experiencing Music: Spring 2026 Due Dates listing

All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. ET on the due date

Week #: Assignments	Description/Notes	Points	Due (on time)	Accepted Until (date)
1: 12th-16th January				
Syllabus Quiz	You must pass this quiz to unlock Module 1 - take it early!	5 (EC)	1/19	1/21
Introduction Discussion	Introduce Yourself!	8	1/19	1/21
Introduction Discussion - Two Responses		6	1/19	1/23
Module 1 Reading and Video	"What is Music?"			
	Week 1 subtotal	14		
2: 19th-23rd January				
Discussion 1 - Original Post	What is Music to Me?	8	1/21	1/23
Module 1 Quiz		22	1/21	1/25
Discussion 1 - Two Responses		6	1/24	1/25
	Week 2 subtotal	36		
3: 26th-30th January				
Module 2 Reading and Video	"Tell Me a Story"			
	Week 3 subtotal			
4: 2nd-6th February				
Discussion 2 - Original Post	You're the Star!	8	2/2	2/6
Module 2 Quiz		22	2/4	2/8
Discussion 2 - Two Responses		6	2/6	2/8
	Week 4 subtotal	36		
5: 9th-13th February				
Essay #1	The Dimensions of Sound in Action	40	2/11	2/15
Module 3 Reading and Video	"A Little Song and Dance"			
	Week 5 subtotal	40		
6: 16th-20th February				
Discussion 3 - Original Post	The Impact of Music Dramas	8	2/16	2/20
Module 3 Quiz		22	2/18	2/22
Discussion 3 - Two Responses		6	2/20	2/22
	Week 6 subtotal	36		
7: 23rd-27th February				
Module 4 Reading and Video	"What's In a Song?"			
	Week 7 subtotal			
8: 2nd-6th March				
Discussion 4 - Original Post	The Song of You	8	3/2	3/6
Module 4 Quiz		22	3/4	3/8
Discussion 4 - Two Responses		6	3/6	3/8
	Week 8 subtotal	36		
9: 9th-13th March				
Essay #2	Music and Meaning	50	3/11	3/15
	Week 9 subtotal	50		
10: 16th-20th March				
No assignments	Spring Break - relax and stay safe!			
	Week 10 subtotal			
11: 23rd-27th March				
Module 5 Reading and Video	"Song Without Words"			
	Week 11 subtotal			
12: 30th March - 3rd April				
Discussion 5 - Original Post	The Music Spoke to Me	8	3/30	4/3
Module 5 Quiz		22	4/1	4/5
Discussion 5 - Two Responses		6	4/3	4/5
	Week 12 subtotal	36		
13: 6th-10th April				
Module 6 Reading and Video	"You Call That (Good) Music?"			
	Week 13 subtotal			
14: 13th-17th April				
Discussion 6 - Original Post	Recognizing Good Music	8	4/13	4/17
Module 6 Quiz		22	4/15	4/19
Discussion 6 - Two Responses		6	4/17	4/19
	Week 14 subtotal	36		
15: 20th-22nd April				
Essay #3	Music and Connection	60	4/22	4/26
Listening Reflection		20	4/24	4/26
	Week 15 subtotal	80		
Total Points	Course Total	400		