

MUCH 495: Music and Disability Studies

Syllabus, Fall 2019

Class Time and Location:

Tue/Thu, 9:30-10:45 am, Room C303

Instructor

Dr. Erin Brooks

Office: Schuette Hall A102

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Phone number: x2759

Office hours:

Thursday, 12:30 - 2:30 pm

I am also happy to make office hours by appointment

Course Description

Disability Studies—there is now a disability studies minor at SUNY Potsdam—is a new interdisciplinary area which studies the cultural dimensions of disability across different chronological eras, places, and cultures. As both a human condition and as a type of identity, disability is shaped by changing perceptions constructed by cultural ideas (from the social to the political). In MUCH 495: Music and Disability Studies, you will learn to employ the interdisciplinary approaches of disability studies to examine social and cultural aspects of disability in relation to music. Through readings in a variety of disciplines (such as musicology, cultural studies, and disability studies), you will explore the ways musicians have identified as disabled, as well as how disability has shaped music and reception. We will likewise explore how disability narratives have been used in discourse about musical style. Listening, viewing, and analysis will also form part of class assignments, and each of you will undertake a final research project on the topic of music and disability.

Course Objectives

Participants who successfully complete MUCH 495 (Music and Disability Studies) should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of music and disability
- Recognize vocabulary and identify larger-scale philosophical debates from our class units on various aspects of music and disability
- Critically consider constructions of disability as it intersects with gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, and other identity categories
- Consider, develop, and implement modes of analysis that might be useful in examining relationships between music and disability
- Evaluate and critique a range of issues relevant to the seminar's subject matter, by presenting your ideas orally and engaging actively in group discussion and debate
- Reflect in written form on seminar topics (midterm essay)

- Frame a research question related to the course topic
- Identify appropriate sources for exploring the question & critically read the secondary literature related to your research question
- Communicate your own research appropriately in both written and verbal presentation at a level suitable for an upper-division undergraduate music history course

Course Prerequisites:

Students enrolled in this course should have successfully completed MUCB 201 and MUCB 202 (Music History I and History II).

Students from outside of the Crane School of Music—particularly students interested in the disability studies minor—who do not have the prerequisites may be added by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.¹

Reading/Listening Assignments

There are **no** required texts for this course. All readings and recordings for this course will be available to you through the Moodle site for this course. Visit <https://moodle.potsdam.edu> for your course resources. You may occasionally be required to visit the Crane music library to check out materials placed on reserve.

Readings and listening assignments are required, and should be completed prior to each class. For each class, log on to Moodle to access the materials—each day's module on Moodle will contain PDFs and links for each class.

It is your responsibility to make sure that you can access the class materials; please let me know as soon as possible if you are having any problems. I cannot troubleshoot issues involving your personal computer. Please understand that if you cannot access course materials through your own computer, you must work with computers on campus. The number to Computing & Technology Services (CTS) helpdesk is (315) 267-4444 or helpdesk@potsdam.edu

For additional help with your assignments, the Crane Music library has a vast variety of resources. The url <http://www.libraries.potsdam.edu/resources-subject/music.html> will take you to a page with several resources that will be useful, such as audio/visual resources and reference databases.

¹ For more information on disability studies minor requirements, please see <https://www.potsdam.edu/disability-studies-minor>

Course Evaluation

Grading will be based on attendance/participation, discussion leading and online responses, a midcourse essay, and a final research project (which has a number of internal steps).

♦ Online Moodle Commentary	15%**
♦ Class Attendance, Participation, Preparedness	15%
♦ Take-home Midcourse Exam/Essay	15%
♦ Final Project	55%

You will receive a separate handout on the internal divisions of this project at the end of Week 2, but the likely division is:

- Initial Proposal + Bibliography—5%
- Abstract—5%
- Podcast—10%
- Peer Review—7.5%
- Final Draft—20%
- Final Exam Course Wrapup—7.5%

**** Moodle Commentary/Discussion Forum Procedures:** You'll see a discussion forum posted on Moodle for most days of the class (there are a few exceptions). Start early, stay on top of it, and it should just help us start our discussions from a more complex and interesting place!

Discussion Leader Guidelines (2x a semester): Signup for topics will be on Week 2

If you're one of the assigned discussion forum leaders for that topic or day, please post (on the Moodle discussion forum) a comment and two questions based on the day's reading and listening. Please don't post your comments **before** we've started the week in question (i.e., not before we've finished the previous week—anytime after that is fine). As a discussion leader, **your comments must be posted by 9pm** the day before the class in question in order to count towards your grade.

General Discussion Commentary (8x a semester) Guidelines:

You are required to respond to the discussion forums 8 times a semester (this is separate from your discussion leader posts).

A "response" will consist of at least 3 full sentences (you may write more). I will track these throughout the semester. You only get credit for one response per forum (but feel free to post followup comments in order to make the conversation better!)

You are not required to wait to comment until the discussion leader posts, but please don't post your comments **before** we've started the topic in question (i.e., not before we've finished the previous week, but anytime after that is fine).

I will accept general commentary posts until 9am the day of the class in question (so for a Tuesday class, you can post until 9am that Tuesday).

(Guidelines on how to create a discussion post are contained on Moodle as well).

On the days on which you are not assigned to post Moodle commentary, you are still expected to complete the course readings and come to class having read your colleague's online commentary and be ready to carefully participate in class discussions.

Individual class sessions will combine lecture, listening, and discussion, overall MUCH 495 will only succeed based on the amount of effort that you invest in it. Our limited in-class time should focus on our group discussion of the concepts in the assigned reading and listening; it is imperative, therefore, that you have carefully read the assigned materials before coming to class and come prepared with questions and concerns. For selected classes, your forum posts will serve as a launching point for some of your discussion questions. You should *always* come to class having taken notes on the assigned materials and ready to respond and ask questions. I will assess your participation grade based on your preparation and thoughtful participation in class discussions. If participation in spoken class conversations is difficult for you—based on personality types, learning styles, access, etc—please come see me and we can find additional ways to make you feel more comfortable as you participate.

Course Policies

Office Hours / Emails

I will respond to emails in a timely manner (generally within 24 hours of receipt). I do not always have time to respond to emails over the weekend, so weekend emails may potentially only be answered on Monday morning. Please feel free to come to office hours to discuss papers and questions, or to talk through general problems or concerns. I suggest you schedule an appointment to maximize the use of your time. Please make sure to check your email regularly—I often send updates or class comments via email.

Note-taking/Course Materials/Slides

You should come to class with your own notes on the assigned reading and listening assignments for each class. I strongly encourage that you take notes during each class meeting, particularly on verbal content, points that emerge from class discussion, and musical concepts from scores and listening. If I present images and information on slides, I will post the slides on Moodle. Please do not record class lectures unless you have received permission to do so.

• **Technology:** I encourage you to use pen and paper to jot down notes for the most part, particularly when writing on printed music. You are welcome to use electronic devices to take notes or access readings, but be aware that you will have to skillfully manage your attention to both your device and classroom discussion—I reserve the right to ask you to keep all devices put up when we are having class discussions. Anyone who abuses the technology policy —texting during class is particularly frowned upon—may be asked to speak with me and revise their approach or access.

• **Classroom conduct:** Active participation in this class involves taking notes, contributing questions and commentary, and challenging each other to think more deeply. Indeed, critical engagement—which should include reasoned debate, critique, and questions—is one of the best ways to learn. It is essential, however, that we be considerate in the ways we conduct these discussions; have an open mind, respect for different viewpoints, and hone your ability to listen thoughtfully and compassionately to each other and the instructor. Anyone abusing this policy will be asked to meet with the instructor.

• **Attendance:** You receive points for attendance and participation in class—this includes being punctual and staying engaged until class is dismissed. You may miss **two** classes without penalty. You are also welcome to come to office hours to discuss missed material. In fairness to all students, there are no automatic deadline extensions for students who miss a regular class meeting (regardless of reason for the absence). If you miss more than two classes, you will lost 5% from your participation grade. 2 unexcused absences (beyond the three classes you are allotted without penalty) will lose you a letter grade.

Per New York State Law, any student with a conflict between an academic requirement and any religious observance should be given an alternative for meeting the academic requirement. If you have a conflict with a class meeting or exam date due to a religious observance, please let me know well in advance (at least two weeks). You will not be penalized for missing class material, but you will have to makeup your class material or take the exam at an alternate time. I will not reschedule any exams after the exam date has passed.

• **Formatting and Writing Guidelines:** I will provide you a wordcount for all assignment. As a matter of policy, the typical style required by many journals is double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, and one-inch margins (although I will not be policing acceptable font alternatives). Footnotes and bibliographies should be in Chicago Manual of Style; if you have another citation style you would like to use, you would need to discuss this with me in advance. Assignments must be free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Minor problems will result in deductions; major writing issues may result in a request to redo the assignment. I am happy to read drafts.

Grading

All grades will be determined on the following scale:

4.0: 95-100	2.7: 82-84	1.3: 68-71
3.7: 92-94	2.3: 78-81	1.0: 65-67
3.3: 88-91	2.0: 75-77	0.0: 0-64
3.0: 85-87	1.7: 72-74	

Please note that passing grade for an upper division course is 75% or above.

Grade Appeals

If you have questions about a grade, please speak with me (in person) first. Please note that the undergraduate course catalogue includes the specific criteria upon which you are allowed to appeal a course grade. If we cannot come to an informal resolution, you would then complete a formal Grade Appeal Form and we would consider if additional resolution is necessary. Details about the specific steps and timelines for this process are located in the undergraduate catalogue.

Notes About Timeliness

Late Written Work

No late work will be accepted without penalty. **Late written assignments will lose 5% for each day they are late. Assignments will not accepted more than three days late.** If you believe you will have difficulty meeting a particular deadline, you must talk with me at least *three days in advance of the due date*.

Accessibility

In order to fully include all students in this course, it is essential to provide reasonable accommodations or program modifications for anyone with a disability. Please let me know **during the first week of classes** if you need any accommodations in curriculum, instruction, or evaluation. Any accommodations or modifications require advance notice, so make sure to work out these details with me well in advance.

Academic Integrity

This class will strictly follow SUNY Potsdam's policies on academic integrity. Please consult the Student Conduct & Community Standards Academic Honor Code website (<http://www.potsdam.edu/studentlife/studentconduct/honorcode>) for more information regarding your responsibilities as a student. In general, academic misconduct includes acts in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation. Examples include (but are not limited to):

1. Cutting and pasting text from the web without quotation marks or proper citation.
2. Paraphrasing from the web or written texts without crediting the source.
3. Using notes in an exam when such use is not allowed.
4. Using another person's ideas, words, or research and presenting it as one's own.

I encourage you to to discuss class readings and listening with each other inside and outside of class. For writing assignments, however, no consultation with other students is permitted. Using classmates' responses during the exam, consulting notes without permission, or disguising words written by others as your own undermines the academic community here at SUNY Potsdam. If you have any questions about this, don't hesitate to ask me. For specific questions on intellectual property and proper citation techniques, advice is available both at SCCS and the Writing Center.

Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification and other academic honor code violations are taken very seriously. Any suspicious situations will be dealt with through proper judicial channels and may result in serious consequences.