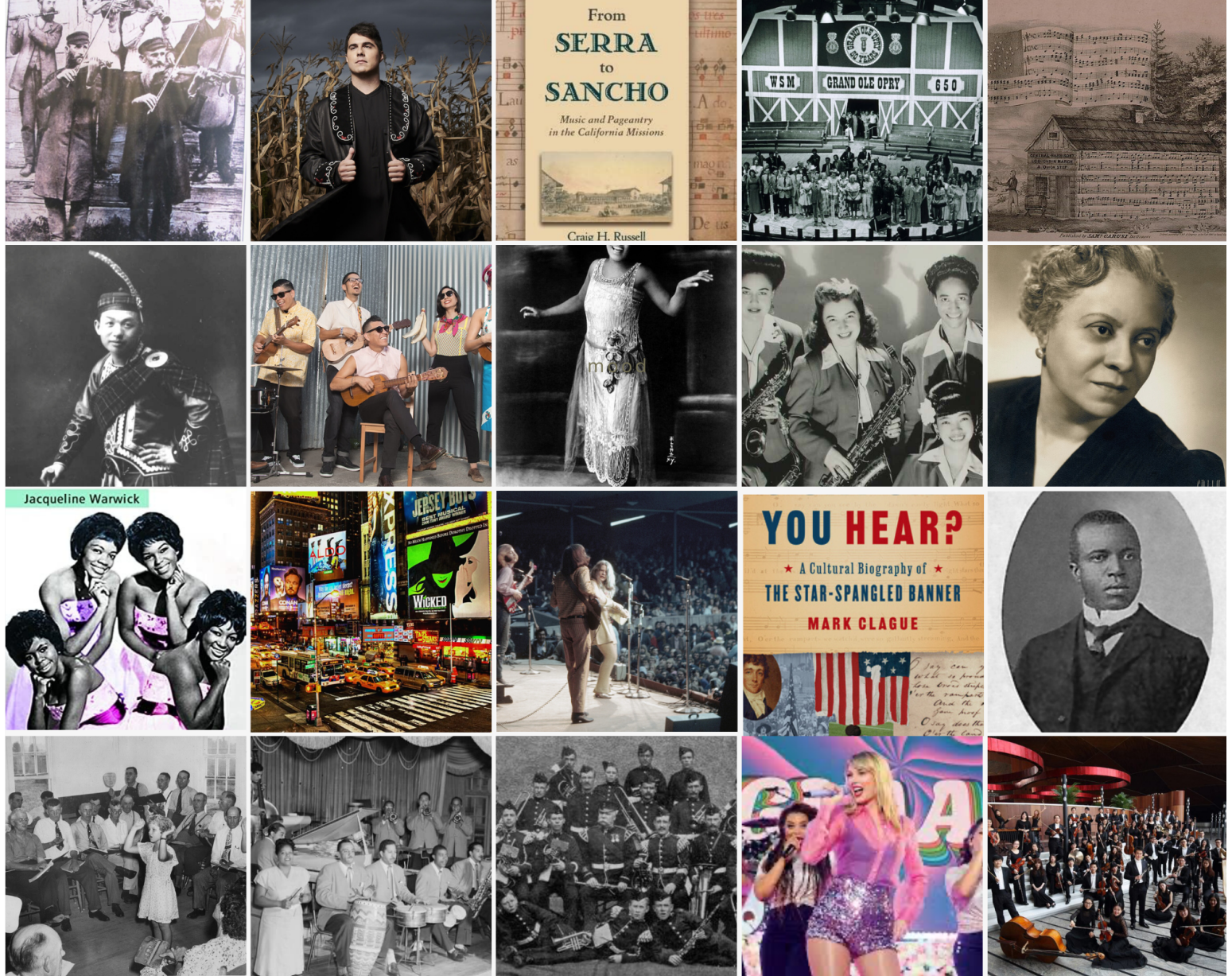




MUCH 638: Music in America

Spring 2023

Class Times and Location: Bishop Hall C214, Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30am-10:45am

Instructor

Dr. Erin Brooks

Email: brooksem@potsdam.edu

Office: Schuette Hall A102

Office hours:

Office hours can be in-person or via online meeting or by phone—any office hour is scheduled by appointment in order to maximize the overlap between your schedule and mine. Please email or message me to set up these office hour meetings; I'm very happy to discuss course material or just offer a supportive ear for anything you'd like to share in a safe space.

Course Description and Objectives:

The catalogue's word on the subject: Survey of the variety of musical experiences in the United States, including Native-American music, early American psalmody, and the respective developments leading to jazz and the commercial genres. Special emphasis will be given to major movements and composers of the cultivated tradition and the avant-garde.

A bit of an update and some more information:

What *is* music in America? A massively messy and fascinating question—hopefully we have some thoughts today and will have additional ones by the end of Week 15. For us this semester:

"MUCH 638: Music in America" is a course for those who wish to explore what it means to "music"—whether listening, composing, performing, or consuming—in America. Our chronological scope ranges from early periods of Indigenous music making to 17th, 18th, and 19th century styles to 2023... though of course we'll have to tread lightly over many parts of this vast history! We'll trace major themes such as faith, commerce, patriotism and nationhood, regionalism, politics, and war, to name a few. We'll explore how American musics intersect with gender, sexuality, social class, disability, age, and race. We'll underscore the complex contributions of various streams of American music, including Indigenous music, Latin music, Black musics, etc. We'll survey these manifestations via a range of repertoires, musicians, and circumstances, encompassing folk, popular, and "art" genres. Finally, because we're all engaged in education in one way or another, we'll think about the pedagogy of American music.

During the semester you will develop an individual research project. Research, methods, and analysis will be shared with classmates at various stages; at the end of the semester, you will present your work and engage in peer commenting on each other's projects.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successfully completing MUCH 638, you should be able to:

- Recognize vocabulary, styles, genres, forms, musicians, and individual works from our class units on various aspects of American music
- Comprehend various layers and roles within music making, including practice, interpretation, and reception of music in America
- Articulate multiple social, cultural, and political meanings connected to music making in America between approximately 1500 to the present
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of various debates about what it means to "be American" or make music in America (can you articulate some of the historical questions and arguments around this term?)
- Reflect on how to engage with American music in your performance or teaching—what can you change or think about differently after taking this course?
- Frame a research question related to the course topic & identify appropriate sources for exploring the question
- Analyze primary sources & critically read the secondary literature related to your research topic in order to construct an argument
- Communicate your ideas to classmates at various points in the research and writing process
- Produce a final project and consider how your work might be developed for an research journal/presentation, used as a writing sample for job applications, or presented in some sort of other public format

Course Prerequisites and Requirements:

Students enrolled in this course be at the end of their undergraduate studies, or have successfully completed an undergraduate degree and been admitted to the graduate program.

Recommended Materials and How to Access Reading/Assignments:

There is no required text for this course. All readings and recordings for this course will be available to you through Brightspace. Visit <https://brightspace.potsdam.edu> for your course resources; we'll do this together starting Week 1.

What kind of stuff might be assigned as homework?

- Throughout the course of the semester, you'll usually have to some work to do before coming to class—maybe some pages to read, music to listen to, a video to watch.

How much?

- I've tried to be as humane as possible: while this is a reading-intensive course (it's a graduate music history seminar!), I have often tried to vary the length of work you'll do per week. Sometimes this will mean a long article one day and a more activity-based assignment another; occasionally this will mean that I'll split the class up into two groups (a Tuesday group and a Thursday group), and you'll only do the reading one day a week.

How to get to it?

- Course content and activities are structured using a weekly format on Brightspace
- You'll see a module for a week, then individual modules for each day.
- All of the specific reading / listening / viewing instructions will always be provided on the day's module.
- Each day's module on Brightspace will contain the exact assignment of required page numbers, and (if applicable) PDFs and listening links

When can I access the homework?

- I generally will have the work for the following week posted by the end of business on Friday, so you can do it as it fits into your schedule.
- You should likely have a look at Brightspace every day for listening/reading assignments, discussion questions, quizzes, and any possible updates/changes.
- Anything that's listed for a day, please do it **BEFORE** I see you in class that day.
- Once modules are opened, they will remain visible for the rest of the semester.

Gentle reminder:

- SUNY guidelines assume **at least 2** hours of study time per hour of class time or credit. For this 3-credit class, which meets 3 hours/week, you could potentially spend 6 additional hours a week outside of class (studying, listening, reading).
- Now: that number of hours you spend reading or listening will vary over the course of the week or the semester, but if you are obviously not doing work outside class, you may not be successful in this course.
- Please feel free to come meet with me for guidance on how to organize your studying and reading time most effectively.
- 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 may be able to help, but it's also possible I might not be able to troubleshoot some issues— if you've got problems with your setup, campus 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 <https://library.potsdam.edu/music> will take you to a page with essential resources such as links to audio/visual databases, articles, the library catalog, etc. We'll talk more about specific resources as the class progresses.

Course Evaluation:

Grading will be based on five overall categories: weekly short assignments, in-class work (attendance, participation in in-class activities, discussion, in-class writing, etc), an early semester project, a final research project (which has a number of internal steps), and reflection questions. For more details on specific categories, see below:

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| 1. Weekly assignments/forum posts on Brightspace | 25% |
| 2. Class attendance, Participation, Preparation | 20% |
| 3. Early/Mid Semester Project | 15% |
| 4. Final Project | 35% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Projected due dates for each part will be posted on Brightspace at the beginning of Week 5.• I reserve the right to push due dates back due to unforeseen events, etc<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One on One Consultation on Research Topic—2%• Initial Research Topic—3%• Research Question and Initial Bibliography—5%• Brief Presentation, last week of classes—5%• Final Project—20% | |
| 5. Reflection questions—we'll work on these together during the last week of classes | 5% |

* Explanations of procedures:

1. Weekly Assignments/Forum Post/Discussion Forum Procedures and Guidelines:

- * You'll be asked to either complete an assignment or a discussion forum post on Brightspace at *least once* each week of the class. Start early, stay on top of it, and it should help us start our discussions from a more complex and interesting place!
- * However many forum posts/homework assignments I give you—there will be between 15 and 25 of them this semester—you can miss up to four of them with no penalty.
- * If you miss additional assignments beyond the four freebies, you will lose 10% from your weekly assignment grade for each additional missing assignment/post.
- * I will often give you some specific guidelines or things to think about to help you focus your thoughts a little. Starting in week 2, I'll give you a rubric to explain what counts as a "good/thorough" response to a reading (this is the basis for my grading of this).
- * Your post or assignment must be completed the evening before our class, 11:59pm (so that I and others can read them before class that morning)

2. Class attendance/Participation/Preparedness Procedures:

This class will only be successful if it becomes an engaged, active learning community, especially because it's a seminar-style course for graduate students. Simply put, you can't successfully engage with this course if you're routinely not here. Due to these factors, attendance and participation is **essential** and is encouraged through multiple means of evaluation. I've tried to build in some **flexibility** into this class—**EVERYONE NEEDS IT!**—while also acknowledging the **reality** that you can't be successful in this class without being present.

- A. Each day during our class sessions, I will track attendance and participation. Many days you'll have a discussion post to do before class, and during participatory discussions, you are expected to contribute (simply being present is not enough).
- B. There are a couple of days built into this semester when we won't meet in person, ranging from spring break and April recess....and who knows what else will come up in addition (snow days??). Overall, we're likely to have around 30 class meetings.
- C. This spring, you can miss **FOUR** classes for whatever reason with **no** penalty. **Use these as you see fit—you can use them for illness, mental health days, prep for some giant deadline or recital, whatever works. I strongly suggest you reserve some of your absences for sickness, since we all get sick. Four days=two entire weeks of class, if you're counting.**
- D. If you miss more than **FOUR** classes, I have concerns about the extent to you are participating in our semester-long communal work and discussions. **I reserve the right to subtract 10% from your participation grade for each additional absence after the four "use-as-you-see fit" absences.**
- E. If you have more extended issues this spring—major illness, family crises, or anything else that significantly impacts your ability to attend the class sessions—please schedule a time to talk to me *as soon as possible.* I want to help anyone in need find workarounds, but I can't help if I don't know the situation. It is to your advantage in these kinds of extraordinary situations to make sure to communicate with me and/or Dean Heuser so that we can help you find the right solution for your situation.
- F. **Except under specific circumstances, if you miss more than EIGHT classes during the term (that's one month of classes or more than 25% of our class meetings), I reserve the right to consider that you haven't been able to do enough of the work to successfully complete the course (meaning you can't "pass" the course or receive your graduate degree).** Please don't let this happen!
- G. For **any** class you've missed, I strongly suggest you contact me to discuss missed course content, as you'll still need to know it for projects.
- H. If you have a religious observance during the semester, any missed coursework during that particular class will not count against you. However, you should inform me before the absence and you'll still want to stay on top of the relevant coursework for that class date.

- 3. **Early-Mid Semester Project:** To be explained around Week 3.
- 4. **Final Project**—we'll start working on this about Week 5 and continue throughout the entire semester.
- 5. **Reflection Questions**—important to help us pull it all together, we'll work through these together in Week 15.

Course Policies

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 a graduate course is a 3.0 or above.

Grade Appeals

If you have questions about a grade, please speak with me (in person) first. Please note that the graduate catalog 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 catalog: <https://catalog.potsdam.edu/index.php>

- **Emails:** I check email several times a day; if you don't hear back from me within 24 hours, feel free to try again. Please make sure to check your campus email regularly—I frequently send essential updates or class comments via email.
- **Appointments/Office Hours:** Office hours can be in person or via online meeting or by phone—any office hour is scheduled by appointment in order to maximize the overlap between your schedule and mine! Please email or message me to set up these office hour meetings; I'm very happy to discuss course material or just offer a supportive ear for anything you'd like to share in a safe space.
- **Pandemic-related Concerns:** Well, we continue to be in the midst of this....at the moment there aren't a lot of specific protocols on campus that should impact this class, but given the changing nature of the pandemic, it is entirely possible that circumstances may change during the semester (for better or worse). Pay close attention to your Potsdam email account: there may be changes to academic policies. As a faculty member, I will continue to follow official campus guidelines, which may mean that our classroom policies could change over the course of the semester. I'll keep you posted about any changes in policy as we go.
- Please let me know if you have concerns—depending on the nature of the question, some of those inquiries may be redirected to the Dean or Assistant Dean, but I'm happy to work with you if you have any questions or concerns related to pandemic policies. I know we're all grateful to gather to make music, talk music, and have the opportunity to be part of an in-person community. And I know we all want to do this as safely as possible.
- **Trauma-Sensitive Teaching:** In my entry ticket for the course, I asked each of you to feel free to come to me with any personal issues and/or other limitations that might impact your ability to participate in the semester; please always feel free to keep me updated should your circumstances change during the semester.
- I am committed to using trauma-sensitive teaching and learning principles to support your resilience and success in this course. Trauma-sensitive principles help create a safe, transparent, connected, and collaborative classroom environment where you feel empowered and respected. Be sure to do periodic self-checks on how course material—and the ways in which material is delivered and discussed—are affecting you, and please talk with me if you are having difficulties with any aspect of the course. Getting support from friends, colleagues, family, and mental health professionals is also important, especially if you have risk factors or you find yourself becoming distressed. For additional links to campus and community services, see <https://www.potsdam.edu/studentlife/wellness/counseling-center>
- **Accessibility:** I'd like to borrow a few words from the wonderful scholar Mimi Khúc (scholar/artist/activist in Residence in Disability Studies at Georgetown University): "Everyone's access needs matter, and we will try collectively to meet them as they arise. Access needs are needs that when met enable participation in the course to the fullest--therefore they are wide-ranging and can be met in wide-ranging, creative ways. I am committed to making participation as accessible as possible. Please let me know if anything comes up that makes participation feel hard....We are taught not to have needs, that needs mean we are "weak"; resist this impulse. Access is relational. This means that creating access and accessibility is something we do together, in relationship and community. It requires a shared commitment to each other's wellbeing and participation in the community space, and requires communication and negotiation and flexibility. We learn each other's needs and try to meet them as best we can, so that we can all participate as much as possible in this classroom space. Everyone has access needs, and these needs change over time. I will try to anticipate

as much as possible but I cannot know everyone's needs at all times. When you become aware of your access needs, please communicate them to me."

- If you have any concerns about our in-class work, please let me know and I will work with you to find acceptable accommodations. I know that some of you may have a registration on file with Accommodative Services (<http://potsdam.edu/support/oas>)—you're very welcome to share these with me. I look forward to talking to all of you about your access needs as we work together this semester.
- **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, don't make assumptions about your classmates, have respect for different viewpoints, and hone your ability to listen thoughtfully and compassionately to each other and the instructor. Anyone who struggles with this policy will be asked to meet with me to figure out better approaches; please let me know if you have any concerns about discussion during the course.

A couple of particular notes about this class:

- We're dealing with *historical* subject matter in this course, so we will encounter earlier frameworks of thinking about race, gender, sexuality, etc (some of which will likely intrigue, surprise, aggravate, or infuriate us in turn). While these feelings are appropriate, we need to be able to discuss historical change—so don't be surprised to encounter dated terms or ideas at certain points in the semester. Some articles or readings may include as primary sources terms which may be considered offensive in modern contexts. We'll try to discuss this as needed, but also make sure we have a nuanced understanding of terminology and ideas used during the 16th- 21st centuries [in addition to our modern terminology, which is itself always in flux!]
- This class material will deal with identities that are relevant to everyone—and we all live in the United States and have opinions about what it means to be American. With that said, there is no chance that *all* the course material will be an identity you are part of. No one has lived experience of all identities or positionalities! :) So this entire course is an opportunity for learning and growth and listening for each of us. It's also a good reminder to be thoughtful—we don't know where a specific person may be coming from, and we importantly and inevitably don't know it all. We'll each take a pledge to be as thoughtful and compassionate as possible, but also offer apologies and learning for when we may stumble at times—that's an important thing to practice, as well.
- I may occasionally give content warnings in class about particular class dates. Please feel free to let me know (in private) if you have any concerns about any class content in this regard and we can find a solution for you.
- **Note taking:** A few friendly note-taking suggestions:
 - If I use slides in the class, I will post the slides on Brightspace, no need to copy down all the info directly from the slides as you go. In particular, it will help you the most to focus on ways of jotting down important verbal content from lecture (i.e. material beyond just copying down any information directly from a slide).
- **Technology:** we're likely to be using technology regularly in this class! Please feel free to come to me personal issues and/or technology limitations that might impact your ability to participate in the semester. You'll likely find it helpful to bring laptops, tablets, or phones to class—I'll let you know in advance if there's a particular class where it is especially useful to have such devices. Regardless of what we're doing during our in-class meetings (unless we're specifically using the internet to look things up) please try to help yourself focus on your classmates by refraining from multitasking (texting, being on social media, etc).
- **Late work:** See above, but as a general policy, all larger assignments have an automatic two week "grace period" (no need to ask for extensions, you can submit it up to two weeks after the deadline with no problems at all). I am unlikely to grant any extensions beyond this window, since it causes problems for you and me! Please contact me with questions.

- **Academic Integrity:** This class will strictly follow SUNY Potsdam's policies on academic integrity. Please consult the 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.

***Please note that this also includes working together on any assignments that are not explicitly framed as collaborative projects.**

I encourage you to discuss class content with each other inside and outside of class. For assignments, however, no collaboration with other students is permitted. Disguising words or work 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. For more information about academic misconduct procedures, see the processes and procedures at the Academic Honor Code website.

**** Please ask me if you have ANY questions about what to do on assignments in terms of academic integrity—as graduate students, you're supposed to be getting to the point (especially after Intro to Grad Studies), where you know how to cite, etc—so best ask so you make sure you get all of this right before you graduate!**