

Music, Society, and Identity in the Americas

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Core Elective course, 4 credits

A. Introduction

This core course will explore the historical development of different musical processes, and the influence of different migration, political, cultural and social factors on the origins and identities of the Americas. It will also use those styles as a window onto broader issues, such as social movements and identity formation in the Americas. The course will explore concepts like standardization, globalization, cultural exchange, cultural industry and cultural identities in relation to different contextual frameworks for the development of music in the Americas. Along with course readings and the writing of an independent study project, students will have the opportunity to deepen their musical and cultural literacy and to appreciate some of the greatest contributions of Latin Americans to world culture. Additionally, given that ACM students frequently cultivate some musical talent, the seminar will be open to ways in which students might participate in music-making during the semester.

B. The Scope:

The word globalization became a part of our vocabulary, but we still struggle to understand the ongoing transformations that its use suggests. Rather than focusing on the main debates on this concept, the course critically will access several musical processes along the timeline of the history of Latin America and its connections with the other America, in terms of the effects of issues like capitalism, market, industry, culture, imperialism and globalization.

In order to investigate these topics, we will approach them through the readings in the fields of ethnicity, popular culture, identity, mass media and technology. This course will focus on both, contemporary and past history of Latin America. However, it will also cover the historical background of different cultural processes, reviewing migration, political and social factors on the

origins of the Latin American identities. By exploring concepts like standardization, ethnicity, cultural exchange, cultural industry and cultural identities in relation to different contextual frames and regions, the students will be able to understand the relations and the permanent interactions of capital, industry and culture. A cultural reading of the social and historical processes will be held by means of songs and poems.

C. Learning Outcomes:

1. In this course the students will read a variety of literature and use a variety of media in order to receive various perspectives and experiences while learning about the effects of globalization on Latin America.
2. The students explore several related topics as migration processes, cultural exchanges, identities, genres, music, poetry, cultural industry.
3. The students will exercise their critical thinking in the form of an analysis exercise of readings and discussions.
4. The ultimate experiences in critical thinking about the subject matter will be the students' final projects, which should be informed by reflexive approach, i.e., to question critically why the student chose the topic and represented the issue the way s/he did.
5. In general, the students will (a) acquire a better understanding of the cultural and social differences in a globalized world and (b) learn about globalization as a set of material processes, expressions of the ideology of globalism led from "the West," which has unequal outcomes among the countries, the members of global community, and within these.

The readings will be the basis of further discussion about the topics included in the syllabus or related topics suggested by the students.

D. Grading:

The course grading will be based on the in-class and outside of class activities.

Total is 100 points

Attendance and participation- 30

Presentation of the final paper drafts and advancements- 30

Final paper (research paper) and final presentation-40

Total-100

Grading Scale

A 93- 100; A- 90 – 92; B+ 87- 89; B 83 – 86; B- 80 – 82; C+ 77 – 79; C 73 – 76; C- 70 – 72; D+ 67 – 69; D 63 – 66; D- 60 – 62; F Below 60

E. The Research Proposal and Paper

The research proposal is very important in helping you plan your project and providing you with a foundation upon which to write your final paper. Try to include most of the following items in both proposal and final paper.

1. Title. It doesn't matter if the title changes during the course of your research. Providing a preliminary title helps define your question.

2. The question. Preferably there should be one main question, which can then be broken down into several smaller questions. Distinguish between the most relevant questions and those that are more peripheral. You may want to begin with more questions than you can answer – as you progress you can decide which ones are most feasible.

3. Importance of your project. Why will your research be valuable to you and to anyone who reads your final paper? In what way will it be new and different from existing information (e.g. previous ACM projects)?

4. Background information. Cite information that is relevant to your research question (publications, information from web sites, previous ACM projects, etc.). You will undoubtedly encounter more information as your project progresses, but it is useful to have at least something to help guide your research and assist you in your search for additional information.

5. Methods. How do you propose to go about answering your question? Bibliographic research? Interviews? Direct observations? Most projects will probably involve some combination of these. You may want to check out the logistics beforehand by doing a trial run. There are practical limitations of doing research far from San José.

6. Contents. This will probably change over the course of your project, but it is useful to have an idea of how you plan to organize your paper. The organization of your oral presentation will probably be somewhat different, for example by emphasizing particularly interesting results and those that are most amenable to audiovisual presentations, and deleting details that are best presented in the written version.

7. Bibliography. Your final paper should include a bibliography in a standardized format. It need not be exhaustive, but rather representative. Try to emphasize published references (ACM & UCR libraries, pdf versions of publications on the internet). When using unpublished information from the internet attempt to judge the quality of the information you find.

About the writing: Your writing assignment will give you an opportunity to express your opinions about the material read and to present yourself more accurately than would be possible in class. These assignments are aimed to enhance your ability to read and write critically and thoroughly.

E. Suggested topics for the final paper

- 1 The limonese calypso as an expression of the Afro-descendant population of Costa Rica
2. The African presence in the music of Latin America
3. The Latin American Revolution in literature
4. The sacred chants of the Bribri shamans
5. Costa Rican music and radio broadcasting
6. The political song in Costa Rica
7. The Latin American New Song Movement
8. Musical instruments and their ethnic origins
9. Radio U and the alternative radio broadcasting in Costa Rica
10. Song and poetry in the history of Latin America
11. El swing criollo: Globalization and appropriation

F. Syllabus and Time

Week 1

August 24

Session 1

Introduction to the course

Introductory lecture and guidelines for independent research project

August 26

Session 2

Axles:

The Precolumbian

The European

The African

Reading: *Theological Resistance to the Conquest of Latin America*, Michael Elphick

Week 2

August 31

Session 1

The Indian slaughter

Reading: *Population History of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas*

Song: La maldición de Malinche

September 2

Session 2

Discussion

Week 3

September 7

Session 1

Reading: John Hope Franklin, "The African Way of Life," from *From Slavery to Freedom*.

September 9

Session 2

History of migrations and cultural exchange

Reading: Maureen Warner – Lewis, "Central West Africa After European Contact," from *Central Africa in the Caribbean*.

The reinvention of the African in the Caribbean

Lecture with musical instruments and musical performance

Week 4

September 14

Session 1

The Invention of America

Reading: Benedict Anderson, "Creole Pioneers," from *Imagined Communities*.

September 16

Session 2

Latin American Culture

Hybrid cultures, hybrid Economies

Reading: Nestor Garcia Canclini, "Latin American Contradictions: Modernism Without Modernization," from *Hybrid Cultures*.

Week 5

September 21

Session 1

Cultural Identities, Mestizaje, creolization and Globalization

Changing identities in a Changing Society

The role of ethnicity

Reading: Gerhard Kubik, "Ethnicity, Culture Identity, and the Psychology of Culture Contact," from *Music and Black Ethnicity: the Caribbean and South America*.

Reading: Ronald N. Harpelle, "Ethnicity, religion and Repression: The Denial of African heritage," from *Costa Rica*.

September 23

Session 2

Discussion on ethnicity and the African heritage in Limón

Final draft of research proposal due

Weeks 6-8

Estadía Rural (25 September-16 October)

Week 9

October 19

Session 1

The Need of having an identity: Afro Descendants in Limon, Costa Rica (music as a source of identity and Political Recognition as a mean of integration)

Reading: Jonathan R. Barton, "Race, Ethnicity and Space," from *A Political Geography of Latin America*.

Video: Maestros portadores de tradición: Cahuita

October 21

Session 2

The Calypso in Limón: A song of resistance

Video: El trovador de Cahuita

Week 10

October 26

Session 1

Liberation Movements and Globalization

Reading: Christian Smith, "A Brief History of the Liberation Theology Movement," from *The Emergence of Liberation Theology: Radical Religion and Social Movement Theory*.

Movie: "The Motorcycle Diaries "

Final paper advancement document

October 28

Session 2

The new song: liberation and revolution

Reading: Joan Jara, "Song as a weapon," from *An Unfinished Song*.

Illustrative song video clips

Week 11

November 2

Session 1

Neoliberalism, Identity and Exclusion (identities as market goods)

Reading: Jonathan Barton, "Towards a Democratic Political Geography of Latin America," from *A Political Geography of Latin America*.

November 4

Session 2

Costa Rica in the Latin American Context

The invention of the nation of Costa Rica

Reading: Victor Hugo Acuña, "La invención de la diferencia en Costa Rica," *Revista de Historia*, no 45.

UCR Guest speaker: Dr. Victor Hugo Acuña or DR. Ivan Molina

Week 12

November 9

Session 1

The indigenous composition of Costa Rica: Origins and current

Guest speaker: Dra. Eugenia Ibarra

November 11

Session 2

The new literature in Costa Rica

Speakers: Tatiana Lobo, Ana Cristina Rossi

Week 13

November 18

Session 1

Popular Dance : El swing criollo

Week 14

November 23

Session 2

The cinema in Costa Rica

Guest speaker: Maria Lourdes Cortes

November 25

Session 2

Movie:

Week 15

November 30:

Final paper and oral presentation

G. Bibliography

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- Monestel, Manuel. "La Costa Rica Negra: su historia a través del calypso." *Revista Nacional de Cultura*, no. 16, agosto 1992 (San José: UNED).
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- Moore, Robin. *Nationalizing Blackness, Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997.
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