

Indigenous Music

“Survey of World Indigenous Music”

Course Information

Course number: MUHL 301
Term/Year: Fall 2024
Course location: TBD
Course time: TBD
Instructor: Professor Don Patrick Martin (don.martin@mcgill.ca)
Office: A609 (office hours to be announced)

Course Overview

The objective of the course is for students to research and present Indigenous folk music from around the globe from its earliest recorded history through to our modern times. This course is Iroquoian-centered and promotes global intercultural competency and global Indigenous awareness.

Musical analysis is integrated throughout the course with theoretical concepts intended to develop a cross-cultural appreciation of folk music, race, cultural identity, post & pre-colonialism, and globalization. Indigenous cultures and their music explored will include those from North America, South & Central America, West Africa, Northern Europe, Asia, and Oceania.

The course utilizes an Iroquoian pedagogical/experiential paradigm and critical analysis based on Iroquoian Cosmology, specifically, the *Theory of Guswenta* as its main framework. From this framework, students will research, discuss and present global ideas about music, the social organization of traditional music, and present a variety of musical sounds, instruments, performance practices, religious belief systems, and modern musical expressions connected to its original offerings.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes of this course are reflected in interconnected dimensions of learning, thinking and doing, corresponding to the core competencies of music educational sustainability.

- Students will gain a *Guswenta* mindset to understand and appreciate different musical and cultural values, practices and outcomes.
- Students will be able to identify their own worldviews within their cultural background and lived experience, compare it with that of Iroquoian values and theories, and explain how it influences their appreciation of music.

Commented [SG1]: The key to this course is a philosophical shift from Westernized understanding of music appreciation to a decolonized mindset of exploring indigenous music around the world.

Commented [BD2]: sounds fascinating.

Commented [SG3]: Learning outcomes are suggested based on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions, but will be finalized in discussion with students along the course.

Commented [BD4R3]: these look interesting. I wonder if the psychomotor dimension can be brought out a bit more clearly?

- Students will gain more practical experience in applying *Guswenta* mindset in their professional and daily life.
- Students will be able to articulate/express in different artistic ways:
 - their individual positioning within the context of being musically connected to the region;
 - intersections between individual, nature, state, sustainability, and music theories.

Instructional methods

Drawing from the Theory of *Guswenta* and embracing an Iroquoian pedagogical approach, this course aims to foster global intercultural competency and Indigenous awareness. Through a blend of theoretical analysis and experiential learning, students will engage in research, discussions, and presentations that illuminate the cultural, historical, and musical dimensions of Indigenous communities worldwide.

The instructional methods include collaborative group activities, weekly discussions, and multimedia presentations, all guided by the principles of *Guswenta* and Iroquoian cosmology, which not only convey knowledge about Indigenous folk music but also to instill a deeper appreciation for Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and relating to the world. Through this holistic approach, students are invited to explore the intersections of music, culture, and sustainability from a perspective that honors Indigenous perspectives and values.

Assessments

This course will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis. The rationale for a pass/fail system is to promote a stress-free environment for students to deeply engage with diverse cultural traditions and encourage collaboration and risk-taking, aligning with the course's focus on global intercultural competency and Indigenous awareness.

1 - *Guswenta Framework. 20% of final grade (pass/fail).*

After reviewing syllabus and student/professor expectations, students will start a process of being orientated to the 4 pillars of Iroquoia. Then, students will be organized into 3 groups consistent with Iroquoian democratic and cultural values. After that, and using an Iroquoian decision-making model, groups will determine which regions (2 regions per group) of the globe to research and present their findings on. If there are competing groups for the same region, a traditional Iroquoian game will be played to determine which group will attain its preferred regions.

2 - *Individual participation in weekly discussions and research. Ongoing. 30% of final grade (pass/fail).*

Students are expected to arrive prepared for each class discussion. Also, students must read assigned readings and arrive at each class prepared to engage in critical discussions of said readings. Students also must **prepare 1 discussion question and its context** for each class that

Commented [SG5]: This course is mainly student-led, the instructor acts as a facilitator in the discussions and presentations.

Commented [BD6R5]: this is nice and clear. Is there a link to a short accessible resource (e.g. video, website) that describes the Theory of Guswenta in general terms? Maybe that could be linked so that students who are reading the syllabus prior to the start of the course can get a sense of what they can expect? I realize that they will get a more in-depth introduction to the theory in the course, but this might help them get started.

will form a portion of that day's discussion and to submit said question prior to the beginning of each class.

3 – Group presentations & responses. Ongoing. 30% of final grade (pass/fail).

All works will be presented during class and be presented in a PowerPoint format. As individual students in a group, will work together and represent themselves as a single unit and will be evaluated on their presentation. Each presentation should be around 30 minute in length and be structured in the following format:

- A clear synopsis of region's (specific culture) original cosmology,
- A clear but brief history of its colonial experience (if applicable),
- A clear example of its current cultural condition,
- A clear example of its original traditional music with clear explanations of its musical elements,
- A modern version of a musical expression from said region & culture along with clear explanations of its musical elements.
- Include any closing comments on said culture and music.

Prompts for after-presentation discussion:

- How does the original cosmology of the region influence its cultural identity today?
- Are there any contemporary practices or beliefs that are directly linked to the region's original cosmology?
- Are there any significant challenges or opportunities facing the preservation or evolution of the region's culture today?
- What are the musical elements specific to the traditional music of the region? How do these musical elements reflect the cultural values or traditions of the region?
- What insights did you gain about the region's culture and music through this presentation?
- In what ways do you think the region's culture and music will continue to evolve in the future?
- Raise any questions you still have to the presentation group

4 – Final Portfolio. Ongoing. 20% of final grade (pass/fail).

Each student is expected to create a portfolio throughout the course that helps you meet your learning goals and demonstrates your learning in this course. You may begin preparing the portfolio and curating items for it from the beginning of the course and throughout in-class exercises. Each portfolio is expected to contain:

- Weekly journal (from week 2 to week 11), including:
 - the discussion questions you prepared before each class and 200-300 words of reflections after the class.
 - Your thoughts on the philosophical tools learned/presented in class
- A final reflection (metanarrative) on your learning journey in this course (one page, single-spaced), covering your thoughts on:

- What is your biggest takeaway from this class?
- How has your understanding of Guswenta evolved? Use some examples.
- What implications this course may have for your future study, research or career?

Course content

Week & Topic	Content	Required reading	Note
W1 Guswenta Framework, moving from Westernism to Iroquoism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions, Review of Course & Prelogical Framework • Beginning of Iroquoian cultural orientation. Introduction of the 4 Pillars of Iroquoia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and reflect on <i>the Words Before All Else</i> (Prof recital of Words...) 	<p>Sign up for reading <i>The Earth Grasper</i> (optional, student who sign up this task will be exempted from preparing discussion questions)</p> <p>Use of Mentimeter - download App</p>
W2 Guswenta Framework, moving from Westernism to Iroquoism (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue of 4 Pillars of Iroquoia (Two Row Wampum & Great Law of Peace) • Establishing the 3group clan process and understanding its process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine and reflect on the Two Row Wampum image • Read Wampum's <i>the Great Law of Peace</i> (pp.1-16 & 94-96) 	
W3 Guswenta Framework, moving from Westernism to Iroquoism (Continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue of 4 Pillars of Iroquoia (Earth Grasper) • Establishing and Assigning Global Regions to Groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Intro of <i>the Earth Grasper</i> (pp. i-xix) 	Signup for presentations
W4 Finish Guswenta Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of Earth Grasper • Class discussions and conclusion of Earth Grasper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>the Earth Grasper</i> (pp. 1-96) 	Film assignments for viewing begins

W5 Indigenous music in Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film discussions • Groups presentations on regional/global cosmology, music, and historical context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The Musical Human</i> (Ch.2 Cradle and All) 	
W6 Indigenous music in Oceania		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The Musical Human</i> (Ch.4 Imaginary Landscapes, Invisible Cities) 	
W7 Indigenous music in North Europe		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The Musical Human</i> (Ch.5 Ice, Sand, Savannah and Forest) 	
W8 Indigenous music in Africa		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The Musical Human</i> (Ch.6 The Tuning of the West) 	
W9 Indigenous music in South America		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The Musical Human</i> (Ch.7 Superpowers) 	
W10 Indigenous music in Central America		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The Musical Human</i> (Ch.8 Endgames) 	
W11 Indigenous music in North America		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read <i>The Musical Human</i> (Ch.12 Eleven Lessons on Music's Nature) 	
W12 Closing celebration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on what you have learned from this course, choose 1 aspect of indigenous culture where you are from/ or from a specific region that inspired you most • Use creative methods to showcase the indigenous culture, such as musical performances, dance demonstrations, artifact display, poetry readings, or storytelling sessions that highlight the Indigenous culture you choose • Exhibition stations will be set up where all students can walk around and interact with each other • An indigenous guest speaker will be invited to share their knowledge, stories, or demonstrations (TBD). • The event will conclude with honors to Indigenous traditions, gratitude to participants and contributors, and reflections on the significance of preserving and celebrating Indigenous cultures. 		

Iroquois Cosmology and *Guswenta* in relation to A Sustainable World View

Commented [SG7]: This part draws attention to how the notion of Sustainability is embedded in Iroquois cosmology and can be further developed through students' discussions of worldwide music and culture.

Commented [BD8R7]: Really nice.

Iroquois cosmology refers to the ancestral structures and functions of the Iroquois belief systems, a group of Original American Nations primarily located in what is now known as northeastern United States and southeastern Canada. Their cosmology and theories encompass a feminine understanding of the universe through her creation myth, political structures, and the interconnectedness of all human beings through her positionality within all life forms.

Central to Iroquois cosmology is the concept of *Guswenta*, which at its core, is the notion of Iroquoian dualism which perceives the universe as feminine and environmental intersectionality where everything and everyone is interrelated and dependent on a structure that promotes critical thinking, problem solving, and emotional well-being.

With its emphasis on environmental intersectionality and the importance of maintaining harmonious relations with the natural world, Iroquois cosmology and her *Guswenta* have a deep connection to sustainability. This worldview and its structures inherently promote sustainable practices and environmental interconnections from the following perspectives:

- Respect for Nature’s feminine construct: The Iroquois “*Earth Grasper*” creation epic fosters a mindset of caretaking and cooperation rather than exploitation, leading to sustainable interactions with the environment.
- Interconnectedness: Through the Iroquoian “*Words Before All Else*” doctrine, the interconnectedness of all living beings means that actions taken by humans have consequences for the entire ecosystem. This understanding encourages sustainable practices that consider the long-term effects (thinking 7-generations ahead) on the environment and future generations.
- Reciprocity: Within the theory of “*Guswenta*”, reciprocity emphasizes the importance of giving back to the people and Earth for what it provides.
- Harmony: The Iroquois “*Great Law of Peace*” presents a series of constitutional articles that stresses the importance of living in balance with the rhythms of the natural world and minimizing disruptions to ecosystems. This also promotes harmonious inter-personal and intra-personal relations.
- In-class Practices: The ancestral structures and functions of the Iroquois utilized in class are inherently sustainable, which recognize the value of both natural and non-natural heritage along with promoting cultural diversity, environmental respect, and community wide volunteerism.

Overall, Iroquois cosmology provides a feminine and philosophical framework that supports its sustainability values of environment, social, and economic objectives, with living practices. By embracing the concept of *Guswenta*, interconnectedness, reciprocity, harmony and cultural diversity, individuals and communities can guide each other towards a clear sustainable future in music Education based on Iroquoian concepts.

Required Reading:

- BOOK: The Musical Human, Michael Spitzer
- Words Before All Else PDF

Commented [SG9]: To be finalized in consultation with more Indigenous scholars, fellows and students.

- Two Row Wampum Image
- Great Law of Peace PDF + Image
- Myth of the Earth Grasper PDF
- Any Items from “Useful Links” listed below

Useful Links Example:

World

Useful links for a tour in world music:

<https://folkcloud.com/folk-music/asia>

A useful link to look up folk/indigenous music around the world

<https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/collections/>

A collection of different music genres around the world

Asia

- China
 - Music of China: <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/media-and-interactives/media/international/music-of-china/>

Chinese music dates back thousands of years and sounds different from Western music thanks to important differences in tone, musical scale, pitch, instrumentation, and individual instruments. With instruments crafted from a wide variety of materials, including, bamboo, silk, gourd, clay and stone—and played in a diverse range of styles, from single voices to richly melodic orchestral pieces—Chinese music is as varied as the people who create it.
- Japan
 - Hakata Kinjishi Taiko and Hakata Koma: <https://www.kennedy-center.org/video/education/music-world/the-festival-of-japan-hakata-kinjishi-taiko--hakata-koma/>

Hakata Kinjishi Taiko and Hakata Koma is led by siblings Jyuraku and Syouraku Chikushi and performs Japanese taiko drumming and traditional Hakata Top-spinning act. These drummers use a wide range of stick percussion instruments to meld their drumbeat with other genres such as jazz and rock while integrating a traditional Hakata Top-spinning act into this unique sound experience
 - Book: [The Ashgate research companion to Japanese music](#)

This is the first book to cover in detail all genres, including court music, Buddhist chant, theatre music, chamber ensemble music and folk music, as well as

contemporary music and the connections between music and society in various periods.

- Korea
 - Book: [Korean music: historical and other aspects](#)

This book attempts to deal with historical matters and other aspects of Korean music and Korean musicology. Part One: "Korean Music and Musicology" with six chapters devoted to the state of contemporary Korean traditional music and the development of Korean musicology; Part Two: "Studies in Korean Music History" (five chapters) discusses the major issue in Korean music history; Part Three: "Aspects of Korean Traditional Music" (six chapters) deals with pansori, sanjo, and other topics in Korean music

Oceania/Asian-Pacific

- Overview
 - Book chapter: Bartleet, Brydie-Leigh, Cain, Melissa, Tolmie, Diana, Power, Anne and Shiobara, Mari. "CHAPTER 1. Community Music in the Asia Pacific: An Introduction". Community Music in Oceania: Many Voices, One Horizon, edited by Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Melissa Cain, Diana Tolmie, Anne Power and Mari Shiobara, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2018, pp. 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780824867034-001>
 - Blog post: Christensen, D. and Kaeppler, . Adrienne L. (2018, May 29). *Oceanic music and dance*. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/art/Oceanic-music>
- Maori
 - Article: Clements, A. C. (2015). Maori Waiata (Music): Re-Writing and Re-Righting the Indigenous Experience. *Published in IK: Other Ways of Knowing*, volume 1, issue 2. <https://doi.org/10.18113/P8IK159884>
 - Video: <https://www.nzonscreen.com/title/when-haka-became-boogie-showbands-1990>
Directed by Tainui Stephens, this 1990 TVNZ series surveyed Māori contemporary music. This second episode looks at the showband era (1950s - 70s), when musicians mixed genres (electric guitar, rock'n'roll) with Māori culture, to make a unique contribution to Kiwi show business.

North Europe

- Overview
 - Blog post: Sounds From The North: Tonality And Nordic Composers <https://corymbus.co.uk/sounds-from-the-north-tonality-and-nordic-composers/>

- Book chapter: Karlsen, S., Westerlund, H., Partti, H., & Solbu, E. (2013). Community music in the Nordic countries: Politics, research, programs, and educational significance. *Community music today*, 41-60.
- Multimedia: <https://gromaudio.com/blog/2018/03/music-around-the-world-northern-europe/>

This blog post surveys some of the most important elements the folk music character of North Europe and begin to develop a fundamental understanding of what make the music of this region unique.

South America

- Overview
- Article: Yupari, Fabiola (2019) Peru's Musical Heritage of the Vice Royalty - The Creation of a National Identity. <https://cedar.wvu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1911&context=wwuet>
- Inca: Empire, Religion & Civilization. This web source looks at the history and structures of the region. It includes videos, blogs, and print material. <https://www.history.com/topics/south-america/inca>
- Preinvasion Inca Music. Ancient music from Peru is performed for ceremony and for tourists. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_G3jtl8-hQ
- Modern Andean Music from Peru. Modern and well-known works performed on traditional Inca instruments. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_gSydN_BYM&list=PLsXQvVTkGHEbs690jaTW_HQux4JggWPNE

Central America

- Overview
- Mayan Civilization. Calendar, Pyramids & Ruins. This web source looks at the history and achievements of the Maya through time. <https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-americas/maya>
- Article: Wantanabe, J.M. (1983). In the World of the Sun: A Cognitive Model of Mayan Cosmology. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2801904?seq=1>
- Preinvasion Myan Music from Guatemala with Maya AJ. Ancient Myan ceremonial music. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HILbfuvBD0>
- Modern Myan Music from the film *Apocalypto*. This selection has excerpts from the movie with stand-alone works. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4KbGB-clhAA>

North America

- Overview
- Article: Mark, J.J (2023). Lakota Sioux Creation Story. This myth forms the structures and functions of the Lakota. <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/2279/lakota-sioux-creation-story/>
- Article: Brown, Diane. The creation of Haida'Gwii. This myth outlines Haida ways of being. https://www.historymuseum.ca/history-hall/origins/_media/Creation-of-Haidagwii-EN.pdf

- Videos: Lakota/Dakota Sundance Songs. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZtvsML_iO8
- Video: Haida'Gwaii 2022 Potlatch Song. After being outlawed for decades, Potlatch songs are back. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d43oB1nx0Fc>
- Book: Murrell, N.S. (2010) Afro-Caribbean Religions: An Introduction to Their Historical and Sacred Traditions. Tempel University Press. The book has several articles on Afro-Caribbean Religions and is one of the most important elements of Caribbean culture that links Afro-Caribbean people to their African past. Scattered over the three-thousand-mile-long rainbow-shaped archipelago and nestled near the American mainland bordering the beautiful Caribbean Sea are living spiritual memories and traditions of the African diaspora. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bw1hxx>
- Web Source: Unveiling the Global Impact of Caribbean Music. A Melodic Journey. A very good resource on this exciting musical expression. <https://five3radio.com/influence-of-caribbean-music/>

Africa

- Overview
- Article: Nyang, Sulayman (1980). "Essay Reflections on Traditional African Cosmology," New Directions Vol 8. https://mcgill-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/personal/don_martin_mcgill_ca/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B62E682A8-D5B0-4F0D-96FF-6C97D32766FB%7D&file=Feb%207-World%20Survey%20Course.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1&login_hint=don.martin%40mcgill.ca&ct=1713452227352&wdOrigin=OFFICECOM-WEBSITE.MAIN.REC&cid=d8aa9240-9b36-4bc2-809d-bf4e7ae023a2&wdPreviousSessionSrc=HarmonyWeb&wdPreviousSession=0fe65568-472c-4172-89c6-3aa17acd84c1
- Web Site: Pardee School of Global Studies-African Studies Center. 19th & 20th c. Colonialism and Resistance. This site looks at various regions of Africa and how cultures managed colonialism through time. <https://www.bu.edu/africa/outreach/teachingresources/history/colonialism/>
- Article: PB Pressbooks. Chapter 1, the music of Africa. The article discusses music elements in traditional African music. <https://pressbooks.cuny.edu/apiza/chapter/chapter-2-the-music-of-africa/>

Indigenous Music in Films

- **Asia**
- Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (2000)
- The Last Emperor (1987)
- Hero (2002)
- The Grandmaster (2013)
- **South America**
- The Bridge of San Luis Rey (1957)
- The Emperor's New Groove (2000)

- Peru: Hidden Treasure (2017)
 - **Central America**
- Apocalypto (2006)
- Ixcanul (2015)
- La Llorona (2019)

- **North America**
- Dances With Wolves (1990)
- Last of the Mohicans (1992)
- Geronimo, An American Legend (1993)
- **Oceania**
- Whale Rider (2002)
- The Dead Lands (2014)
- Poi E (2016)
- **North Europe**
- Braveheart (1995)
- The Water Horse (2007)
- The Mists of Avalon (2001)
- Beowulf & Grendel (2005)
- **Africa**
- The Lion King (2019)
- Black Panther (2018)
- Finding Fela (2014)