

Discovering Africa in the New World through Music  
Special Topics/ Community Engagement Course/ Music 370  
Dwight D. Andrews  
Emory Music Department  
SPRING 2016

Class Meeting: Seminar Room 204, Burlington Road Bldg.

Instructor: Dwight Andrews, Office # 218, Burlington Road. Bldg.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10AM-11:15AM, or on Wednesday mornings by appointment. Dr. Andrews is generally not available for appointments on Fridays. You may make an appointment by speaking with him after class or by email. Please use email to communicate with Dr. Andrews rather than the telephone.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Scholars readily acknowledge the numerous ways that African cultural retentions have helped to shape African American and American culture. African American musics such as jazz, blues, gospel, and the spirituals resonate with an African impulse on many levels. The African presence in Latin American and Caribbean culture is also well documented, but discussions of its relevance are often the primary province of ethnomusicologists and ethnographers. This course and community-engagement activity seeks to discover the relationship between African American and Latin American musical cultures because of the shared African legacy and heritage.

Our racial and ethnic constructions have had a strong influence and a powerful impact on our scholarship. For example, within the study of rural folk music in North America, our understanding of the so-called "Black and White spirituals" has been principally in black and white. Such work tends to obscure the shared geographies, circumstances, and interactions between rural black and white communities. One of the principal aims of this course is a deeper understanding of the "African" in the black Atlantic Diaspora. Given the shared histories of slavery, economics, politics, and power, recent scholarship offers a new way of thinking about African American and Latino/Hispanic culture and communities in the Americas. Clearly race matters, but how it is situated in a review of the very way we do scholarship could benefit from careful scrutiny. This course provides Latino and African American communities, as well as university students of these cultures, a systematic and rigorous examination of the musical commonalities across forms and genres.

This course is interdisciplinary by design and students will consider the sound or sonic aspects of the music as well as the social function and social, historical, and cultural context of the music. No prior musical knowledge is required and students need not be music majors. Students are also not required to be fluent in Spanish or Portuguese. Rather they will simply need to possess an intellectual curiosity for the many ways music both reflects and projects our cultural identities.

Dance and movement will be core elements of this course. Students will not only observe dances with a strong African underpinning, they will learn several dance forms in order to "experience" the African sensibility through the body. For example, the polyrhythms of African music and its adherents are readily seen in the way different parts of the body

carry different rhythms simultaneously. The hips maintain one rhythm while the hands and feet maintain a different rhythm. By learning the dance we can create an innovative method of learning the music through experience; physically demonstrating notions of syncopation, rhythmic strata, the “push” or anticipation of the beat. Jazz, jitterbug, boogie-woogie, break dancing, capoeira, salsa, mambo, samba, tango, cha-cha, and merengue, are all examples of musical forms with these commonalities

The aesthetics of posture and stance, the power of facial expressions, notions of “cool” or “hot”, the high value placed on improvisation, and the meaning of the Yoruba concept, *ashé* in the new world will receive strong emphasis.

This course includes a community-engaged learning component that involves the students serving as facilitators/mentors in the designated school communities. In addition to the weekly class sessions on campus, the students will be assigned to one of the target community schools and be expected to attend a few weekly sessions with the students there. Their role on-site is to facilitate a parallel study with the students and to engage them in a dialogue about the music and their relationship to it. I envision dance classes in school gyms that compare the use of foundational African rhythms such as the clave rhythm in different new world dance forms and styles, from zydeco and New Orleans ‘second line’ music to salsa and Brazilian samba.

This course will offer a new avenue for Emory undergraduate and graduate students to experience and learn from communities they might not otherwise encounter. An important side benefit for my Emory students will be the creative process to determine how to best connect and share what they've learned in the new course with the students in the neighborhood schools. A growing concern of many of my colleagues around the nation is the challenge and difficulty some of our students have with being able to communicate or demonstrate what they know and understand *outside* of the parameters of an examination or a term paper.

This project will enhance their ability to communicate both verbally and in written form. Also, it will give everyone involved avenues to uncover new pedagogies, learning strategies, and teaching methods. Equally important, our Emory students will serve as bridge or connector between disparate communities that are sometimes insulated and isolated from one another; helping to discover some of the commonalities of their cultures by learning each other’s musical traditions and discovering the shared cultural foundation---Africa!

The vehicle for intersection with the Emory students and students from these area communities would involve a series of weekly after school encounters. We will begin by asking the community students to share their own musical preferences and proclivities. After learning about the music they are immersed in, we will provide musical profiles or “snapshots” of the various musical styles and forms they have mentioned. Our ‘engagement’ will begin with the music that the students know best. From here we will begin a more in-depth exploration of the history, evolution, and heritage of the forms themselves. Each week we will demonstrate the African in the New World forms through video, slide presentations, and class demonstrations; including dance classes of the more accessible forms such as salsa, samba, mambo, breakin’, and the jitterbug. The dance classes will teach us how to physically express the rhythms and nuances through our steps and body movements. The students will be encouraged to keep a journal throughout the program so they can track their own progress and discoveries.

In addition to meeting with the students in their discrete clusters, will meet together as a whole to share what we are learning *as* we learn it with our new found colleagues. We want the community students to share what they have learned about their respective musical cultures and challenge them to communicate what they have learned in a setting that is both diverse and unfamiliar. By asking the Emory students to facilitate this aspect of the program, they too will learn how to encourage good communication with others. The Emory students will write up their findings in a course journal that is one of the writing assignments of the course.

All of the students will be encouraged to think critically about the music they are engaged in, to evaluate the impact of the various technologies through which they experience music, and to reflect how music can help to frame or disrupt one's sense of community and personal/collective identity. I am particularly interested in determining if this experience causes any of the students to re-consider their own cultural or ethnic self-identifiers.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

There is no textbook for this course. The primary readings will be drawn from various author of the literature. All readings will be assigned well in advance and available on Blackboard. Several Video resources will also be regarded as primary texts. YouTube or other online video links will be given in class. Some of the mini-essay assignments will be based on the readings and class discussions. Essays will include:

Dwight Andrews, *From Black to Blues*, in the Journal of Theomusicology (Date)

Portia Maultsby, *Africanisms in African American Music*,

Olly Wilson, *The Significance of the Relationship between Afro-American Music and West African Music*, *The Black Perspective in Music*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring, 1974), pp. 3-22.

Joseph Holloway, *The Origins of African American Culture*, in *Africanisms in American Culture*, J.E. Boone, ed., Indiana University Press, 1990.

Jessie Gaston Mulira, *The Case of Voodoo in New Orleans*, in *Africanisms in American Culture*, J.E. Boone, ed., Indiana University Press, 1990.

Robert Farris Thompson, *Kongo Influences on African-American Artistic Culture*, in *Africanisms in American Culture*, J.E. Boone, ed., Indiana University Press, 1990.

George Brandon, *Sacrificial Practices in Santeria, an African Cuban Religion in the United States*, in *Africanisms in American Culture*, J, d.E. Boone, ed., Indiana University Press, 1990.

### Video/DVD

From *Mambo to Hip Hop: A South Bronx Tale*, directed by Henry Chalfant

The Spirit Moves: A History of Black Social Dance on Film, 1900-1986, Part 1.

Online: Black in Latin America, Episode 1, *Haiti and Dominican Republic*, H. L. Gates, director

Online: Black in Latin America, Episode 2, *Cuba: The Next Revolution*, H. L. Gates, director

Online: Black in Latin America, Episode 3, *Brazil, A Racial Paradise*, H. L. Gates, director

These materials should be regarded as part of your required reading and kept as part of your terms coursework. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to keep up to date with the

assignments, readings, and handouts. All required readings will be available on Blackboard (classes.emory.edu).

Core supplemental readings include Robert Farris Thompson's works *African Art in Motion*, *Flash of the Spirit: African and African American Art and Philosophy*, *Tango: The Art History of Love*, *the Aesthetics of the Cool: Afro Atlantic Art and Music*.

#### GRADING SYSTEM

Your final grade will be based on your performance on the mini essays, class presentation, project design and execution with the community engagement students, a final project write-up. **There are no mechanisms for extra credit in this class.** Your final grade will be based on the following criteria and scale system:

Class Participation/Attendance	16%	(Note that poor attendance will affect your letter grade at the end of the term)
Mini Essay #1	12%	
Mini Essay #2	12%	
Mini Essay #3	12%	
Class Presentation	10%	
Project design & execution	18%	
Project Reflection and write-up	<u>20%</u>	
	100%	

Your letter grade will be based on the following scale:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	62-66
F	61 and below

#### ATTENDANCE

Since much of the information given in the lectures is designed to complement the readings, films, and listening assignments, your attendance in class will be a critical factor in your success in this course. If you find yourself having difficulties with any aspect of this course, Dr. Andrews will be happy to meet with you during his office hours as listed above or by appointment.

#### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Each student is encouraged to maintain a journal or notebook. It will contain your class notes, all handouts, as well as entries from your listening assignments. This journal will be your bible as you prepare for the mini-essays and project designs. You will not be asked to turn the journal in but you are encouraged to keep all of your materials in an organized manner so that you can use them for study and review.

#### LISTENING

Listening is a vital component of this study. Several film and video resources have also been integrated into the course. Dr. Andrews will discuss access to the video resources in the next few sessions. Both the listening assignments and videos should be thought of as primary texts in this course. You can access these musical examples via Blackboard. The Listening Programs will be assigned on a regular basis throughout the term and listening guide sheets will be provided in class. You should plan on using and listening to these programs of musical examples much like you would for a language course. As you log your listening experience in your journal, you will discover that your ability to discern musical details and to connect your aural understanding with the written materials will continue to improve as the semester proceeds. Each student discovers the method that best suits his or her approach to learning this kind of material. It is recommended that you begin by starting your listening notes for each musical example on a separate page. Each time you return to the excerpt, you will hear new features. By placing all of your reflections in one place you will be able to track your own growth and depth of perception as the term unfolds. Similarly, you should take notes on the videos that are assigned throughout the term.

Listening Criteria should include:

- Title of work
- Performer of work
- Form/Genre/Dance form
- Geographical/Cultural association
- Instrumentation
- Musical Characteristics
- Additional Commentary
- Personal observations

#### COLLEGE WRITING REQUIREMENT

Please note that since there is neither a major written assignment nor an intensive writing component in Music 370/AAS 385, this course cannot fulfill the Emory College Writing Requirement.

#### HONOR SYSTEM

The Emory College Honor Code is presumed in every aspect of your work in this course. Do your own work and do not allow yourself to be put in any position that might jeopardize your college career. **DO YOUR OWN WORK AND OBEY THE HONOR CODE.**

#### TREATMENT OF INCOMPLETES

Incompletes will be granted only in extreme circumstances and in strict accordance with the guidelines set forth by Emory College.

#### MUSICAL TERMS AND CONCEPTS

A cappella	Implied beat	Timbre
Accent	Unison	Harmony
Barline	Vocables	Call and response
Bar/measure	Melody	Race versus racism
Beat/pulse	Motive	Cross rhythms
Syncopation	Metrical accent	Off beat phrasing
Meter	Scale	Cultural tabalula rasa
polymeter	Pentatonic scale	Metronomic sense
Falsetto	Tempo	

MUSIC 370/AAS 385 DISCOVERING AFRICA IN THE MUSIC OF THE AMERICAS  
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. Tues 1/12 First day of Class. Review Syllabus and Introduction to the Study
2. Thurs 1/14 Beginning Vocabulary and Method. Video: Hip Hop and Mambo
  
3. Tues 1/19 Last day for drop/add. H.L Gates Video: Blacks in Latin America, Vol.1
4. Thurs 1/21 Gates Video Vol.1, Discussion of Olly Wilson and Maultsby essays
  
5. Tues 1/26 Discussion of Andrews essay,
6. Thurs 1/28 No Class. Study assigned Video and respond to the viewing assignment  
for Tuesday 2/2.
  
7. Tues 2/2 Mini Essay #1 assignment given
8. Thurs 2/4
  
9. Tues 2/9
10. Thurs 2/11 Mini Essay #1 Due. No Class. Study assigned Video and complete reflection
  
11. Tues 2/16
12. Thurs 2/18 Field Trip #1
  
13. Tues 2/23 Mini Essay #2 assignment given
14. Thurs 2/25 Field Trip #2
  
15. Tues 3/1 Class Presentation #1
16. Thurs 3/3 Mini Essay # 2 Due  
SPRING BREAK (March 7-12)
17. Tues 3/15
18. Thurs 3/17 Class Presentation #2
  
19. Tues 3/22 Mini Essay #3 assignment given
20. Thurs 3/24 Field Trip #3
  
21. Tues 3/29
22. Thurs 3/31 Mini Essay # 3 Due
  
23. Tues 4/5 Class Presentation #3
24. Thurs 4/7 Field Trip #4
  
25. Tues 4/12
26. Thurs 4/14 Field Trip #5
  
27. Tues 4/19
28. Thurs 4/21

**FINAL PROJECT DUE: \_\_\_\_\_**

