Course Description
In this course you will learn about Boston’s diverse musical scenes and communities by engaging with historical and ethnographic texts, media and guest lectures, and by conducting your own semester-long local ethnographic research projects. We will interrogate the term “community” as we encounter musical groups forged variously through affinity, taste, practice, locality, religion, language, and ethnic identity. How do the city’s diverse residents use music to cultivate a sense of subjectivity, sociality, and place? What are the histories of immigration, intercultural contact, and creative transformation that inform Boston’s contemporary musical life? And how do pressing social issues, from urban restructuring to economic inequality shape the sounds of the city? As you encounter select musical practices you will also be introduced to the practice of doing ethnomusicology, in particular the craft of fieldwork, and workshop your own local qualitative ethnographic research in relation to issues both practical and ethical. This course centers on experiential learning and as such requires you to be open-minded, collaborative, and creative as you embark on your own ethnographic projects.
Goals
engage with diverse individuals and musical traditions through readings and media, in-class guest lectures, and fieldwork | learn the practical skills of conducting ethnographic fieldwork on music, including identifying a musical community, documenting music-making and social activity through fieldnotes, high-quality photographs, audio and video recordings, and personal interviews | learn to work collaboratively through team-projects, workshopping of research, and peer-review | learn to carry out original research in the field of ethnomusicology by engaging with archival material, scholarly literature, and qualitative data emerging from your fieldwork | improve your ability to write persuasively about musical experiences | learn what it means to listen empathetically as a way into understanding someone else’s experiences of the world

Texts and A/V Resources
All readings, viewings, and listening will be made available on the course’s Blackboard website. There are no required texts for this class.

Office Hours and Assistance
My door is always open during office hours (TBD, room 363) to discuss any questions or issues you have related to this class...or simply to drink tea and chat. If you are unavailable during my office hours, please feel free to contact me to set up a time that is mutually convenient. I will do my best to respond within 24 hours during regular working hours. If you do not hear from me after 48 hours, feel free to send a follow-up email.

Assignments
Attendance – Punctual attendance is a critical component of your grade. You are expected to attend all class meetings. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class period and your grade will be reduced for late arrivals (after 10 minutes), early departure, and disruptive behavior (side conversations, use of phones and electronic devises for non-class related activities, etc.). If you have to miss a class, please let me know as far in advance as possible. You are responsible for checking with your classmates about any missed work and scheduling a time to meet with me during office hours if necessary. You are allowed (2) two unexcused absences, any additional unexcused absences (which means no note from a doctor or dean) will be noted and will negatively impact your attendance record and final grade in the course.

In-Class Participation – Participation is a large part of your grade in this course. This course is centered on collegial discussion and heavily relies on the active participation of all students. You are expected to come to class having read, viewed, and listened to all of the materials associated with the class session and actively participate in discussions and
any workshops. Your grade will be awarded on the basis of familiarity with the course material, as evidenced by thoughtful in-class participation. **You should always have all readings available and ready to access while in class.** Creative tensions are expected and encouraged, but a positive presence and respectful listening count for a lot. Basic questions and advanced questions are always encouraged. Keep your ears open.

**Weekly Online Posts** - In addition to regular in-class participation. You will be asked to write one (1) weekly critical response (250 words), 5 points each, that will summarize the core argument(s) in the week’s reading, highlight one aspect you found provocative or had a difficult time understanding, and post one open-ended question to the rest of the students in the class. These need to be posted by **Thursday at 5pm** as they will be used to guide Friday’s in-class discussion. You will not receive credit for late posts.

**Semester-Long Ethnographic Project** – Most of your work in this class is part of your semester-long ethnographic project. For this project you will conduct ethnographic fieldwork on a Boston-based musical community or individual of your choosing. You may work in pairs, but each member’s contributions must be well-defined. You will establish a topic early in the semester and will complete the following assignments over the course of the semester. Please see Blackboard and in-class handouts for detailed discussion of all assignments.

- **Preliminary Project Abstract**
- **Annotated Bibliography**
- **Interview Audio Recording and Transcription**
  - Your interview should last at least 30 min. total; you will be asked to transcribe 500-750 words
- **Photo Portfolio**
  - Your portfolio should consist of 7 photos of your musical scene, it needs to include at least (i) portrait (i) image of an instrument (i) image that you feel captures the entire musical scene
- **Audio or Video Recording**
  - A high quality 5-10 min. recording (either audio or video) of music
- **Peer Feedback**
- **Final Blog Post** - The capstone project for this course is a final ethnographic blog post which will incorporate the text and edited versions of the audio/visual media that you have produced earlier in the term. Minimum requirements for this will be:
  - 1,500-2,000 words of your very best polished writing, includes description of topic and why it matters, statement of research methods, references to field materials, initial findings, contextualization of findings with reference to course concepts and readings, potential for further research.
- (5) five links to related web materials
- (3) three of your best photos from your portfolio
- (1) one 3-5 min. clip from your best video or audio recording
- (1) one 5 min. clip from your interview recording
- (1) one works cited list, including 3 scholarly books/articles not assigned in class

**Grade Distribution**

10% Attendance | 20% In-Class Participation | 15% Weekly Online Posts
5% Abstract | 5% Annotated Bibliography | 10% Recording and Transcription | 5% Photo Portfolio | 5% Audio or Video recording | 5% Peer Review | 20% Final Blog Post

**Grading Rubric (all half points between grades will be rounded up)**

For example: 93.45% rounds up to 94% (A); 93.44 rounds down to 93% (A-)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A (94-100%)</th>
<th>B (84-87%)</th>
<th>C (74-76%)</th>
<th>D (64-67%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A- (90-94%)</td>
<td>B- (80-84%)</td>
<td>C- (70-74%)</td>
<td>D- (60-64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+ (87-90%)</td>
<td>C+ (77-80%)</td>
<td>D+ (67-70%)</td>
<td>F (0-60%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Civil Discussion**

You are expected to treat your instructor and all other participants in the course with courtesy and respect. Your comments to others should be factual, constructive, and free from harassing statements. You are encouraged to disagree with other students and the instructor, but such disagreements need to respectful and be based upon facts and documentation (rather than prejudices and personalities). Repeated unprofessional or disrespectful conduct may result in a lower grade. Part of the learning process in this course is respectful engagement of ideas with others.
Use of Computers and Electronics
We will discuss this on the first day of class and collectively arrive at a policy that allows for optimal communication, respect, and learning. You will not be allowed to record the class without prior permission from the instructor.

Academic Code
Plagiarism, copying, or any other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are found to have plagiarized or in any way violated Northeastern’s academic integrity policy you will receive a zero on that assignment and it will be reported to OSCCR. If it happens again, you will receive a zero in the entire class. If in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, consult Northeastern’s Academic Integrity Policy: http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academic-integrity-policy/ and/or speak to me during office hours. A good rule of thumb: if in doubt about the propriety of any actions or choices, please ask!

Student Accommodations
Your experience in this course is very important to me. If you have a health condition, disability, or any personal circumstance that may negatively impact your attendance and performance in the course please provide a Dean’s note or speak directly with me as early in the term as possible (by the end of the second week) about any accommodations you may need. If you have not already received a Dean’s note, but believe you need accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center at (617) 373-2675 or 20 Dodge Hall; http://www.northeastern.edu/drc.

Religious Observances
Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.
LEADING VOICES SPEAKER SERIES
all events 3:00-4:30pm
ryder 433

1/10 Steve Waksman (Smith College) discusses his research on mid-1960s booking agents, concert promoters, and their prefiguration of today’s centralization of the live music industry in a talk titled, "Arena Rock and the Industrialization of Liveness"

1/31 Gary Greenstein (Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati) discusses his experience as a music industry lawyer, working with such clients as Google/YouTube, Pandora, Spotify.

2/28 Ryan Walsh (Boston Globe, Vice, etc.) discusses his work as a music journalist, and his new book Astral Weeks about the Van Morrison album of that name and its Boston roots.

3/21 Liz Pelly (Pitchfork, The Baffler, Frieze, etc.) discusses her work as a music writer, and her findings on Spotify’s effects on music consumption and gender bias in the music industry.

You can earn additional participation points by attending at least two Leading Voices speaker series events during the semester, and submitting a 2-3 paragraph response to the event (what you learned, found interesting, surprising, or confusing, further questions raised for you, etc.) by 5pm the following Monday. Leading Voices speaker series events take place select Thursdays at 3pm, and bring practitioners and scholars at the forefront of their fields to campus to discuss their work and experiences in music. These events are an opportunity not only to hear from seasoned and up-and-coming music professionals, but also to engage in conversation with them – hence the chance for participation!
Syllabus (subject to change, always check Blackboard for latest assignment updates)

Week One

Tuesday 1/7 WELCOME [GETTING TO KNOW BOSTON THROUGH MUSIC & MAPS]

Global Boston Project, BC: https://globalboston.bc.edu/

Friday 1/11 WHAT IS ETHNOMUSICOLOGY?


Week Two

Tuesday 1/15 CREATING IDENTIFY & CONNECTION THROUGH MUSIC

Molly Brown @ Snell 90 on Elma Lewis Collection, The Pheonix & an Introduction to Social Justice and Communities of Boston Archives


Due: Do you consider yourself part of a musical community? How does music shape your identity?

Friday 1/18 PARTICIPATORY PRACTICE & SACRED HARP PLURALISM [+INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS ABOUT PROJECT IDEAS]


Explore Robert Stoddard's field recordings: https://www.bostonsing.org/recordings/

Watch: “Awake My Soul”; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YaLnG7vIvOc

Due: Locate a musical scene, start hanging out
Week Three

Tuesday 1/21 MLK Jr.’s Birthday NO CLASS

Friday 1/25 RESEARCH DESIGN & BECOMING IRISH IN THE IRISH SEISIÚN: DIASPORIC, SECOND GENERATION AND ETHNIC AFFINITY


Due: Preliminary Project Abstract, come prepared to share
Week Four

Tuesday 1/29 DOING FIELDWORK: PRACTICAL QUESTIONS, ETHICAL STAKES

Meet with Debra Mandel and Jonathan Iannone on 4th floor of Snell (Room 422) for Pre-Production Intro and Studio Tour


Due: Fieldwork check-in

Friday 2/1 OBSERVATIONS AND FIELDNOTES


Due: Share excerpt from your fieldnotes with class
Week Five

Tuesday 2/5 AFRO-BRAZILIAN CAPOEIRA IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT

GUEST: CONTRA MESTRE CALANGO ON PRACTICING CAPOEIRA ANGOLA


Due: Come in comfortable clothes and shoes, and be ready to move!

Friday 2/8 IDENTITY IN THE FIELD


Due: Annotated Bibliography
Week Six

Tuesday 2/12 CAPTURING SOUND: PRACTICAL AND ETHICAL CONCERNS


Friday 2/15 COMMUNITY THROUGH HERITAGE PRESERVATION: CHINESE MUSIC AND FESTIVALS

**GUEST: CHI-SUN CHAN ON CHINESE MUSIC ENSEMBLES & CULTURAL PRESERVATION**


**Due: Set up interviews**
Week Seven

Tuesday 2/19 THE ART OF THE INTERVIEW


Due: Practice interviewing techniques in class

Friday 2/22 SPACE, IMPROVISATION AND COMMUNITIES IN DIALOGUE:
WALLY’S JAZZ CAFÉ


Due: Share a fieldwork experience
Week Eight

Tuesday 2/26 ETHICS OF INTERACTION

Meet with Nan C. Regina, Director of Office of Human Subject Research Protection at NU


Friday 3/1 VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY

Amanda Rust & Debra Mandel introduction to Digital Repository and Archiving at Northeastern (30 min)


Due: Interview Recording and Transcription

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
SPRING BREAK WEEK
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
Week Nine

Tuesday 3/12 ARMENIAN & MIDDLE EASTERN MUSIC-MAKING

GUEST: MAL BARSAMAMIAN ON THE OUD & ARMENIAN MUSIC


Global Boston Project, BC, “Armenians” and “Syrians, Lebanese and Other Arab Americans”: https://globalboston.bc.edu/index.php/home/ethnic-groups/armenians/

Friday 3/15 ETHICS OF WRITING, REPRESENTATION AND ARCHIVING


Due: Book editing sessions at Snell if you haven’t already
Week Ten

Tuesday 3/19 ACTS OF TRANSLATION: ETHNOGRAPHY OF PERFORMANCE


Due: Photo + Audio or Video Portfolio

Friday 3/22 A COMMUNITY OF TASTE: MAKING EARLY MUSIC IN BOSTON

GUEST: JOHN TYSON ON EARLY MUSIC / HISTORICALLY INFORMED PERFORMANCE

Reading/Viewing: TBD

Amanda Rust introduction to Course Website and Final Blog Post (1 hour)
Week Eleven

Tuesday 3/26 NORTH INDIAN MUSIC MAKING IN BOSTON

**GUEST: AMIT KAVTHEKAR ON TABLAS & NORTH INDIAN MUSICKING IN BOSTON**

Explore: [https://www.youtube.com/user/tablatabs](https://www.youtube.com/user/tablatabs)

Watch: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Joyk_EMzno](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Joyk_EMzno) (see Blackbaord for more)

Friday 3/29 PUBLIC AND ACTIVIST ETHNOMUSICOCOLOGY

**GUEST: REBEKAH E. MOORE ON ACTIVIST ETHNOMUSICOCOLOGY**


**Due: Draft of Final Blog Post, come prepared to sing!**
Week Twelve

Tuesday 4/2 REPRESENTING CULTURE THROUGH NARRATIVES AND DATA VISUALIZATION

Due: Bring in examples of innovative websites that tell stories about music or culture in interesting or provocative ways

Friday 4/5 PEER REVIEW WORKSHOP

Due: Come ready to read and offer constructive feedback on one another’s final blog posts

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Week Thirteen

Tuesday 4/9 FINAL PRESENTATIONS

Friday 4/12 FINAL PRESENTATIONS

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Tuesday 4/16 WRAP UP & GOODBYES