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Articles

- Mind the Gap: Inclusive Pedagogies for Diverse Classrooms 119–172
LOUIS KAISER EPSTEIN, TAYLOR OKONEK, AND ANNA PERKINS
- A Faculty Learning Community 173–193
ESTHER MORGAN-ELLIS
- Remaking the Canon in their Own Images 195–214
ALEXANDER STEFANIAK
- Retracing the Roots of Bluegrass Music through an Affrilachian Aesthetic 215–233
HEESEUNG LEE

Concert Report

- Pedagogy into Practice: Teaching Music Theory in the Twenty-First Century 235–237
(Santa Barbara, California, May 23–25, 2019)
SCOTT DIRKSE

Mind the Gap: Inclusive Pedagogies for Diverse Classrooms

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In recent years, discussions of equity and inclusion in higher education have proliferated. The growing desire to achieve equity and inclusion on college campuses represents an acknowledgment that increasing diversity is not an end but a beginning, and that higher education struggles to ensure that historically underserved students are as likely as any other student to succeed at a high level.¹ St. Olaf College has been grappling publicly with the meanings of “equity” and “inclusion” after student protests exposed a common problem: while the college’s efforts over the past ten years to increase diversity within the student population have achieved some success, systems of support for underserved students and changes to the college’s culture have not kept pace with its shifting demographics.² The protesters’ calls for change at the institutional level—hiring more faculty and staff of color, instituting microaggressions training, revising the general education curriculum—echoed now decades-old calls within musicology to train more underrepresented faculty, to decolonize or decommission the canon, and to create curricula that represent the diversity of the practices that musicologists study and teach.³ With musicological atten-

1. Our definitions of equity and inclusion are informed by the following: Georgia L. Bauman et al., “Achieving Equitable Educational Outcomes with All Students: The Institution’s Roles and Responsibilities,” Association of American Colleges and Universities (2005); Kevin Gannon, “The Case for Inclusive Teaching,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 27 February 2018, accessible at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Case-for-Inclusive/242636>; and “Committing to Equity and Inclusive Excellence,” special issue of *Peer Review* 19, no. 2 (Spring 2017).

2. For more information about shifting demographics at St. Olaf College, see “Primer on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.” The protests received national press attention; see Lindsey Bever, “Protests Erupt, Classes Canceled after Racist Notes Enrage a Minnesota College,” *The Washington Post*, 1 May 2017, available online at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2017/05/01/protests-erupt-classes-canceled-after-racist-notes-enrage-a-minnesota-college/?utm_term=.d3c182ca6688.

3. To cite only the most recent salvos in scholarly discourse over the relationship between curricula, the canon, and decolonization, see Lucie Vágnerová and Andrés García Molina,

tion focused on broader issues connected to the canon and overall curriculum, important questions remain about what and how individual music instructors should be teaching at a more granular level. What exactly do “equity” and “inclusion” mean for individual learners as well as groups of students in the context of course policy and daily lesson plans?

These are pressing questions across disciplines but particularly pressing in music, where barriers to equity and inclusion may be higher than in other fields. Like all students, music students enter college classrooms with disparate levels of prior knowledge, study skills, and family or work situations, not to mention aptitude and motivation—but not every music student enjoys equal opportunities for studying or performing music. Studies have shown that as early as middle school, underserved minorities begin encountering the obstacles that make it harder to reach the highest levels of musical achievement, obstacles that include stereotype threat, lack of access to lessons, instruments, facilities, and the resources to pursue musical study.⁴ At the college-level such obstacles are more likely to be exacerbated than alleviated.⁵ In music history and musicology classrooms, we not only face the challenge of general student differences but also the additional challenge posed by the fact that students bring diverse levels of music literacy into our classrooms, even as literacy remains a skill that our most commonly used textbooks and listening-based teaching strategies presume or implicitly reward. Musicologists may primarily teach musically literate graduate students, music majors, and non-majors, but even within this core constituency there is enormous diversity of background, ability, and purpose.⁶

“Academic Labor and Music Curricula,” *Current Musicology* 102 (Spring 2018), accessible online at <https://currentmusicology.columbia.edu/article/academic-labor-and-music-curricula/>. The fall 2018 conference at Smith College, “The Idea of Canon in the Twenty-First Century” touched on similar debates.

4. Eugenia Costa-Giomi and Elizabeth Chappell, “Characteristics of Band Programs in a Large Urban School District: Diversity or Inequality?” *Journal of Band Research* 42, no. 2 (2007): 1–18; Kenneth Elpus and Carlos R. Abril, “High School Music Ensemble Students in the United States: A Demographic Profile,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 64 (2011): 128–145; Daryl Kinney, “Selected Nonmusic Predictors of Urban Students’ Decisions to Enroll and Persist in Middle School Band Programs,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 57 (2010): 334–350.

5. Kate Fitzpatrick, Jacqueline Henninger, and Don Taylor, “Access and Retention of Marginalized Populations within Undergraduate Music Education Degree Programs,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62 (2014): 105–127.

6. Drawing on Bruno Nettl’s *Heartland Excursions*, James A. Davis has argued that music programs inculcate exclusion by training music majors to understand themselves as a homogeneous community of *musicians*, writing “There is probably no other discipline on a college campus that both consciously and unconsciously fosters this kind of social cohesion between majors with a consequential segregation from other majors on campus.” But Davis does not push back on the assumption that majors have much reason to feel cohesion beyond their choice of major or their ostensible musical talent, and he does not address the fact that within any group of learners can be found an enormous variety of abilities, motivations, senses of

Key questions for our field remain largely unexamined: Is musicology a discipline for all, or instead a discipline for those with extensive musical experience? If all are welcome, how can we ensure equitable access and opportunities for success for non-majors, students without notational literacy, or traditionally underserved students in music? Which students are already best equipped to succeed in musicology classrooms? The same questions apply to course offerings catering to those with little to no notational literacy, mainly in the area of music appreciation as well as for any classes that include non-majors alongside majors. To answer these questions, we need studies that measure inequities in student preparation and opportunities for success in music courses and studies that demonstrate how to counteract these inequities.⁷

The burgeoning field of research on inclusive teaching and learning practices offers models and lessons that musicologists can apply to our distinctive pedagogical context.⁸ Pedagogies typical of “inclusive teaching” function at several levels. At the curricular level, faculty might assign readings or other materials that allow students to see and hear their identities and subject positions represented, and that allow for increased student agency within and across courses. At the level of course policies, faculty can practice transparency, get to know students as individuals, and develop structures designed to support the least prepared students—for instance, giving frequent, low-stakes assessments

belonging, and attitudes. James A. Davis, “Classroom Discussion and the Community of Music Majors,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 1, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 10.

7. In his extensive review of empirical research in music appreciation classes, Scott Dirkse identified no studies that evaluated how the differences students bring into the classroom affect their performance in a given course, and we have identified only one study within a music history context similar to the studies we are proposing: Dale Misenhelter and Harry Price, “An Examination of Music and Nonmusic Majors’ Responses to Selected Excerpts from Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre du printemps*,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 49, no. 4 (2001): 323–329. See also Scott Dirkse, “Encouraging Empirical Research: Findings from the Music Appreciation Classroom,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2011): 25–35.

8. For accessible introductions to the field, see Kevin Gannon, “The Case for Inclusive Teaching,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 27 February 2018, accessible at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Case-for-Inclusive/242636>; and Beckie Supiano, “Traditional Teaching May Deepen Inequality. Can a Different Approach Fix It?” 6 May 2018, accessible at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Traditional-Teaching-May/243339>. See also Gwen Lawrie et al., “Moving towards Inclusive Learning and Teaching: A Synthesis of Recent Literature.” *Teaching & Learning Inquiry: The ISSOTL Journal* 5, no. 1 (2017), accessible at <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1148444.pdf>; Christine Hockings, *Inclusive Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: A Synthesis of Research*, (York: Higher Education Academy, 2010). Retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/inclusive_teaching_and_learning_in_he_synthesis_200410_0.pdf; Claude Steele, *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*, Reprint ed. (New York: Norton, 2010). Nicole Stephens et al., “Unseen Disadvantage: How American Universities’ Focus on Independence Undermines the Academic Performance of First-Generation College Students,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 102, no. 6 (2012): 1178–1197.

rather than infrequent, high-stakes assessments. And on a day-to-day basis, faculty can acknowledge and engage critically with student differences related to identity and ability.⁹ Inclusive learning practices overlap significantly with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices, but with an emphasis on rectifying histories of racial and socioeconomic inequity.¹⁰ Musicologists might apply inclusive learning and UDL strategies to improve access and outcomes among historically underserved students in our classrooms, which means attending not only to racial and socioeconomic difference but also differences in ability and prior musical experience.

As a first step toward applying inclusive learning pedagogies, musicologists need to study obstacles currently faced by students in music classrooms. With support from one of our institution's equity and inclusion initiatives (the Mellon-funded research program *To Include is to Excel*), we undertook a semester-long, classroom research study that investigated the relationship between student success and prior musical experience in a large, introductory music course. Specifically, we explored whether students with less musical experience were at a disadvantage in a music course without prerequisites. Our research showed that indeed, students with less musical experience underperformed in the course relative to their more experienced peers, but not necessarily due to disparities in prior musical experience. We present our study as a much-needed initial effort to measure the ways introductory music classes intentionally or unintentionally privilege certain prior experiences—and therefore certain students—over others. We argue that research on equity and inclusion in music classroom pedagogy matters not just for classes that attract non-majors or a mix of majors and non-majors, but also for classes composed exclusively of majors. All of our classes *contain* students with differing levels of musical experience and ability; all of our classes do not *include* students equitably in the learning process. We need to know why—not only because our current students deserve

9. A number of university centers for teaching and learning offer resource pages on inclusive teaching, for example Michigan (<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/multicultural-teaching/inclusive-teaching-strategies>), Brown (<https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/definitions>), Harvard (<https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/inclusive-moves>), and Texas (<https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/inclusive>).

10. UDL practices are of increasing interest within musicology. See Kimberly Francis, Michael Accinno, and Megan Troop, "Six Easy Ways to Foster an Accessible and Inclusive Music History Classroom," *Musicology Now* (14 August 2018), <http://www.musicologynow.org/2018/08/six-easy-ways-to-foster-accessible-and.html> and Bruce W. Quaglia, "Planning for Student Variability: Universal Design for Learning in the Music Theory Classroom and Curriculum," *Music Theory Online* 21, no. 1 (March 2015), <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.15.21.1/mto.15.21.1.quaglia.html>. For a general overview of UDL, see the website Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education: <http://udloncampus.cast.org/home#.W0-UEdhKiCQ>.

a fair shake at succeeding in our classes, but also as an important step toward closing the opportunity gap for underrepresented and underserved students.

Background

We (Professor Louis Epstein and then-fourth-year undergraduate researchers Taylor Okonek and Anna Perkins) conducted our study at St. Olaf College, a liberal arts institution with approximately 3,000 undergraduates and 280 faculty located in Northfield, Minnesota. The NASM-accredited St. Olaf College Music Department is distinct among its liberal arts peers in pursuing a conservatory model—all students must audition as part of the admissions process, and both BA and BM degrees are offered—even as it caters exclusively to undergraduates and requires BM students to complete many of the same general education requirements as BA students. The department serves approximately 300 majors as well as an additional 400–500 non-majors engaged in ensembles, instrument or voice lessons, and courses. Each cohort of 75 majors is evenly split between BA and BM degrees; the largest major within the department is Music Education. We currently offer paths to a degree in music only for students who enter with proficiency in Western classical music performance, and traditionally we have offered, at most, one or two courses per year that were exclusively, or at least partially, open to non-majors. Until the 2017–2018 academic year, non-majors were excluded from the two-semester music history survey, although there were usually ten or fifteen seats available for them in World Music.

Beginning in 2014–2015, the department undertook its first top-to-bottom curriculum reform effort in over 20 years, inspired in part by earlier reforms at Vanderbilt University, the University of Virginia, Carleton College, and Colorado College. Among other changes, we dropped our two-semester music history survey requirement in favor of a one-semester introduction to musicological approaches and methods, thus allowing students greater agency and flexibility in their choice of music electives. (The two-semester survey remains in the catalogue, but only counts toward elective requirements for majors.) We hired our first tenure-track ethnomusicologist, and we took steps to open more courses to non-majors, particularly within the theory and ethno/musicology areas. In the new curriculum it is now possible for non-majors to take both introductory and upper-level ethno/musicology courses as electives.

As we moved from a two-semester music history survey requirement to a one-semester introductory course required of majors but also open to non-majors, we needed to adjust content and course policy to provide as equitable an experience as possible for all students. Inspired by inclusive teaching scholarship, by recent disciplinary debates, and by existing music history pedagogy scholarship, the syllabus for our new course, “Introduction to Musicology,” cast

wide geographic, chronological, and cultural nets (see Appendix A).¹¹ We deemphasized style analysis, style history, and notation. The course relied heavily on Christopher Small's notion of "musicking"¹² to define a broad scope of inquiry, applied critiques of the "work" concept from social, cultural, and religious perspectives, and introduced methods such as transmission and reception study, ethnography, primary-source study, and formal analysis. In class, in place of the traditional lectures reciting a litany of composers and their pieces or delivering overwhelming contextual details, we created space for active learning activities that allowed students to practice critical thinking, analytical methods, self-reflection, and research methodology.

Reforming our content and our pedagogical priorities did not make the course any less rigorous than the formerly required music history survey, as exam averages and end-of-semester evaluations attest. We merely replaced certain kinds of challenges tied closely to more formalist and positivist modes of "knowing" music history with new challenges designed to train students in the musicological strategies and methodologies that now dominate the field. Specifically, just as we designed the syllabus to balance attention to approaches and methods with music-historical content, we changed our assessments to measure students' ability to apply methods and skills rather than regurgitate content knowledge. For instance, students were only sometimes asked to identify pieces, genres, and compositional/performative techniques; more often they were asked to cite authors of course readings in short answer questions or to select appropriate methods to apply in a given musical context.¹³ Our course

11. See especially the "End of the Music History Sequence?" roundtable, *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 5, no. 2 (2015), especially Melanie Lowe's contribution, "Rethinking the Undergraduate Music History Sequence in the Information Age": 65–71; Alejandro L. Madrid, "Diversity, Tokenism, Non-Canonical Musics, and the Crisis of the Humanities in U.S. Academia," *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 124–125; Steven Cornelius and Mary Natvig, "Teaching Music Appreciation: A Cultural Approach," *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 4, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 139–150; William Robin, "What Controversial Changes at Harvard Mean for Music in the University," *National Sawdust* 25 April 2017, accessible at <https://nationalsawdust.org/thelog/2017/04/25/what-controversial-changes-at-harvard-means-for-music-in-the-university/>; Gretchen Peters, "Do Students See Themselves in the Music Curriculum?: A Project to Encourage Inclusion," *Music Educators Journal* 102, no. 4 (June 2016): 22–29, doi:10.1177/0027432116644330; Christopher Moore, "Music and Politics, Performance, and the Paradigm of Historical Contextualism," *Music & Politics* 4, no. 1 (Winter 2010), doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0004.105>; and Maria Archetto, "Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Introduction to Music Course," in *Teaching Music History*, ed. Mary Natvig (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2002), 69–76. We are also grateful to several colleagues who shared syllabi and ideas and who participated in a virtual workshop during the development of the course: Andrew Dell'Antonio, Rehanna Kheshgi, Melanie Lowe, William Robin, Erica Scheinberg, and Meredith Schweig.

12. Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

13. Quiz and midterm exam questions are available as Appendix B.

objectives emphasized broad skills we hoped would be transferable to other courses and intellectual pursuits:

- Recognize and ask musicological questions
- Apply varied musicological methods to the academic study of diverse musics
- Distinguish between pieces and traditions on the basis of distinctive sonic and sociocultural features
- Describe music and musical practices using appropriate terminology
- Reflect critically on your own practices and traditions within our musical world

Students demonstrated competency in each of these objectives primarily through a series of four short essays (autoethnography, primary source show-and-tell, mini-ethnography, program notes) and a final project proposal in which they began a significant, original research project.¹⁴ Each writing assignment required students to cite authors we had read as a class and apply their insights to materials and topics adjacent to those addressed in class. Altogether, students with varying backgrounds and prior musical experiences were asked to study music familiar and unfamiliar to them in class. In their chosen assignment topics they could choose their own adventure, specializing further or exploring new terrain. No matter what topics they chose, however, at some point in the course all students practiced analytical skills and research methods they had never encountered before. Music majors who had never encountered ethnography or primary source study before would experience a similar challenge to a non-major who brought experience from sociology or history classes but had not described salient musical details for a general audience. Thus assignments were designed so as not to inequitably advantage any one group of students with a specific set of prior experiences.

Course policy, too, reflected an awareness that students with different musical and demographic backgrounds would require different levels of challenge and support. All quizzes and tests took place asynchronously and online, with more time allotted than usual in a class-time testing scenario. Thus students with testing anxiety need not seek special accommodations or suffer through a high-pressure class period. Review sessions were offered once every two weeks. Blending elements of contract grading and traditional extra credit, a “B-minus insurance policy” was available to students willing to do all their regular coursework and fulfill additional requirements (including two office hours appointments, essay revisions, and attending a musicology lecture and

14. All writing assignment prompts are available as Appendix C: see <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XBVSIpeT-MbN-jVyhxPf3irfyRkMUFZMuBxOboekdY8/edit?usp=sharing>.

other performances) to ensure a course grade no lower than B-minus, although if they exceeded that grade they could keep the higher result. The optional B-minus grade floor could thus serve as a backstop in the event that the course proved profoundly inequitable to any group of students.

Methodology

Thanks in part to its required status for majors and the two general education credits it carried, the class attracted a high enrollment, ensuring that our power to detect statistically significant results was high. 122 students remained enrolled throughout the semester in the course, which the professor taught in two sections of 59 and 63 students, respectively. During the IRB-mandated process of securing subjects' consent to participation in the study, five students elected not to participate, although all students were still required to complete all the assessments used in the study.¹⁵ The final subject pool of 117 included 81 majors and 36 non-majors; 44 students in at least one of three underrepresented minority (URM) categories (low income [LI], first generation [FG], and domestic students of color [DM]) and 72 students not in those categories.¹⁶ All student data was anonymized for the purposes of the study, and all evaluation of assessments was performed with student identities hidden.

To measure differences in course success between students with varying levels of music experience, we collected data from a variety of sources. We predominantly relied on assessments and surveys that students were already required to submit for course credit. To measure student learning, students completed identical pre- and post-tests,¹⁷ two quizzes, and a midterm, all administered through our learning management software, Moodle, so that we could break down the results on a student-by-student and question-by-question basis. Students also completed four graded writing assignments. Students earned their attendance and participation grades by answering in-class questions through the web-based polling software PollEverywhere; their responses

15. This article is in compliance with St. Olaf College's rules regarding the protection of human research subjects.

16. We are grateful to Kelsey Thompson, Assistant Director of St. Olaf College's Educational Research & Assessment office, for providing demographic data and analyzing that data against the data we collected, allowing us to consider demographics without violating the privacy of our subjects. The total number of non-underserved and underserved students totals only 116 because we do not know race/ethnicity information for one student, and therefore they were excluded from any subsequent analyses with the URM (LI/FG/DM) group. Additionally, the two international students who were not first generation were also excluded for these analyses as we do not have family income information for them and thus had insufficient information to determine whether they belonged in the URM or non-URM group.

17. Pre- and post-test questions are available as Appendix D.

provided further assessment data. Students completed a survey through which they self-reported musical experience in a number of ways.¹⁸ Finally, students could receive extra credit if they were willing to be interviewed for the study. Thirty-five students volunteered, and a student researcher conducted the interviews in the hope that informants would speak candidly about how they thought the class supported or undermined students with varying levels of musical experience.¹⁹

Drawing on self-reported survey data about musical experience, we used hierarchical clustering methods to divide the students into three groups within and between which we could measure success in the course. To define the groups, we considered whether students were majors or not; how many music courses they had taken, with “courses” defined to include partial-credit lessons and zero-credit ensemble participation, as well as classroom-based courses; how many years of experience they had playing or singing, as defined by lessons and performance opportunities before or during college; whether they read music; and whether they currently played an instrument or sang.²⁰ Throughout the paper we will refer to the resulting three clusters as Cluster H (high level of musical experience), Cluster M (medium level of music experience), and Cluster L (low level of musical experience). Cluster L contained 25 students who averaged just over one music course at St. Olaf College and claimed fewer than six years of musical experience. This group was almost exclusively composed of non-majors and included some who had taken no music classes and had absolutely no musical experience, including no ability to read music. Cluster M was the largest group, with 67 students, and it included a mix of majors and non-majors within a middle range of musical experience, from seven to seventeen years of study and from one to fourteen classes. Cluster H with 25 students represented a group with similar musical experience to the middle cluster but a greater number of courses taken, between 14 and 24, and was composed entirely of majors [Tables 1 and 2]. For every assessment, we compared average performance between groups within three broad demographic categories: majors and non-majors; students in each of the musical experience clusters; and students

18. Self-reported musical experience survey questions are available as Appendix E.

19. Interview questions are available as Appendix F.

20. We developed these measures using our own survey, accessible at <https://tinyurl.com/spring2018music141survey>, but it is also possible to use a survey instrument like the Goldsmith Musical Sophistication Index, which uses a broader range of measures (both self-reported and aural skills-based) to distinguish between levels of musical ability and engagement, although it is optimized for non-musicians. See Daniel Müllensiefen, Bruno Gingras, Jason Musil, and Lauren Stewart, “The Musicality of Non-Musicians: An Index for Assessing Musical Sophistication in the General Population,” *PLoS ONE* 9, no. 2 (2014): doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0089642. The Goldsmith survey instrument is available at https://www.gold.ac.uk/media/documents-by-section/departments/psychology/full_gmsi-1.pdf.

from URM categories against non-URM students. In what follows, we present detailed results and discussion from each of those comparisons.

Attribute	Courses Taken	Years Experience	Major	Notes
Cluster L (n = 25)	0 to 1	0 to 6	Mostly non-majors	4 lacked notational literacy
Cluster M (n = 67)	1 to 14	7 to 17	Majors and non-majors	1 lacked notational literacy
Cluster H (n = 25)	14 to 24	7 to 17	All Majors	

Table 1: Definitions of each cluster

	Read Music	Sing/Play Instrument	Years Experience	Music Major	Number of Courses
Cluster L	No: 4 A little bit: 8 Yes: 13	No: 4 Yes: 21	Mean: 5.6 SD: 4.0	No: 24 Yes: 1	Mean: 1.1 SD: 5.4
Cluster M	No: 1 A little bit: 1 Yes: 65	No: 0 Yes: 67	Mean: 12.2 SD: 2.4	No: 13 Yes: 54	Mean: 7.5 SD: 3.9
Cluster H	No: 0 A little bit: 0 Yes: 25	No: 0 Yes: 25	Mean: 11.5 SD: 2.5	No: 0 Yes: 25	Mean: 18.2 SD: 2.8

Table 2: Demographics of each cluster

Results and Discussion: Majors versus Non-Majors

We first compared various test scores among majors and non-majors. We found that majors scored on average 8.5 percentage points higher than non-majors on the pre-test ($p < .001$).²¹ Majors earned an average score of 62% and non-majors earned an average score of 53.5%. Similarly, majors scored 5.3 percentage points higher than non-majors on the first quiz ($p = .04$), with majors scoring an average of 82.8% and non-majors scoring an average of 77.5% (additional comparisons between majors and non-majors' scores on other assignments can be found in Table 3 below).

21. Results with a p-value of less than .05 are considered statistically significant. As the p-value decreases (for instances, less than .01 or .001), the statistical significance strengthens. Note that a more significant p-value does not necessarily correspond to a greater effect size (difference between groups).

	Quiz 1	Quiz 2	Midterm	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Course Total
Non-Major	77.5%	73.7%	77.1%	53.5%	72.9%	85.2%
Major	82.8%	82.0%	80.3%	62.0%	80.0%	88.6%
P-Value	< 0.05	< 0.001	< 0.05	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.01

Table 3: Difference in mean score on assessments between majors and non-majors

There were just as many cases, however, where the differences between majors and non-majors were smaller, insignificant, or nonexistent. For instance, the difference between majors and non-majors' scores was only 3.2 percentage points on the midterm exam ($p = .03$), and excluding the scores on two particularly difficult questions from the analysis resulted in an even smaller difference between majors and non-majors that was not statistically significant. Similarly, by excluding the lowest overall score observed on the midterm—a nine-point outlier—the difference between majors and non-majors is no longer significant ($p = .15$). Our results suggest that just one particularly overwhelmed or unprepared student who happened to be a non-major may have distorted the averages among the rest of the non-majors. This is supported by the fact that the difference in medians between the two groups is slightly smaller than the difference in means (differences of 2.7% vs. 3.2%). Another piece of evidence pointing to the likelihood that a small number of non-majors might have disproportionately affected the non-major averages can be found in the scores of non-majors who lacked notational literacy: their average score of 70.3% on the midterm was much lower than the average on the midterm for non-majors with notational literacy (78.1%), although the small number of students who could not read music ($n = 5$) means we cannot speak to the significance of this result. Nevertheless, with some exceptions, non-majors did not on average fare significantly worse in the class than did majors.²²

One reason non-majors were often at no significant disadvantage in the course is that many boasted extensive musical experience and chose the class out of interest rather than necessity. In interviews, some students argued that various kinds of musical experience, including the ability to read notation, were not absolutely necessary for success in the class—but might make the class more engaging. They acknowledged the benefits of previous experiences outside of music, like coursework in philosophy, history, sociology and

22. Our results replicate those of studies comparing majors and nonmajors in STEM classes. See, for example, Jennifer K. Knight and Michelle K. Smith, "Different but Equal? How Nonmajors and Majors Approach and Learn Genetics," *CBE - Life Sciences* 9, no. 33 (Spring 2010): 34–44.

anthropology, or race and ethnic studies. Such coursework was helpful in part because Introduction to Musicology presented numerous topics and methods to which majors had no prior exposure.

More common, however, were concerns among majors and non-majors alike regarding their self-perceived learning efficacy, that is, their estimation of their ability to learn in the course. Formal interviews and informal conversations alike revealed that students perceived that they enjoyed advantages or suffered disadvantages in the course based on their respective opportunities for previous musical training. The disparities students perceived felt most acute after class days spent on music analytical methods and transmission, producing more disorienting or disheartening feelings in the students who lacked a music theory background.²³ Though our data shows that differences between majors and non-majors were less profound than students felt them to be, our data also shows that students with the most musical experience boasted significant advantages.

Results and Discussion: Hierarchical Clusters Based on Musical Experience

Comparisons between students in our three hierarchical clusters produced more fruitful and consistent insights into the question, “did the course offer all students equal opportunities to succeed?” Crucially, we found that Cluster H significantly outperformed Cluster L—but not Cluster M—on every measure. For instance, when responding to PollEverywhere questions, on average Cluster H students correctly answered 10.8% more questions than Cluster L students. On the midterm, on average Cluster H students earned grades 5.8 percentage points higher than Cluster L students, as opposed to the 3% difference between majors and non-majors. Cluster H consistently outperformed Cluster L on the pre- and post-tests, the two quizzes, and even the writing assignments (see Table 4 below).

23. For instance, during two days focused on musical analysis as a musicological tool we discussed topics present in Mozart’s Piano Sonata in F Major, K. 332 and Beethoven’s Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13 as well as the narrative and pedagogical functions of sonata form; and on one of three days focused on different modes of musical transmission we read two chapters from Thomas Forrest Kelly’s *Capturing Music: The Story of Notation* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014).

	Quiz 1	Quiz 2	Midterm	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Course Total
Cluster L	78.5%	72.6%	78.0%	50.6%	72.2%	85.8%
Cluster M	79.4%	80.2%	78.1%	60.1%	78.2%	86.8%
Cluster H	88.5%	83.9%	83.8%	65.9%	82.1%	91.1%
Class	81.2%	79.4%	79.3%	59.3%	77.7%	87.5%
P-Value	< 0.01	< 0.001	< 0.05	< 0.001	= 0.001	< 0.001

Table 4: Difference in mean score on assignments between clusters and in comparison with averages for the entire class. P-values refer to significance of overall difference in scores by cluster.

The gap in performance between Clusters L and H was slightly larger on the second quiz than the first quiz (11.3%, compared to 10% on Quiz 1). Although not statistically significant, the gap between Clusters L and H closed slightly between the pre- and post-test [Figure 1], going from 15.3% on the pretest to 9.9% on the post-test, which suggests that on average Cluster L students made the greatest gains in learning.

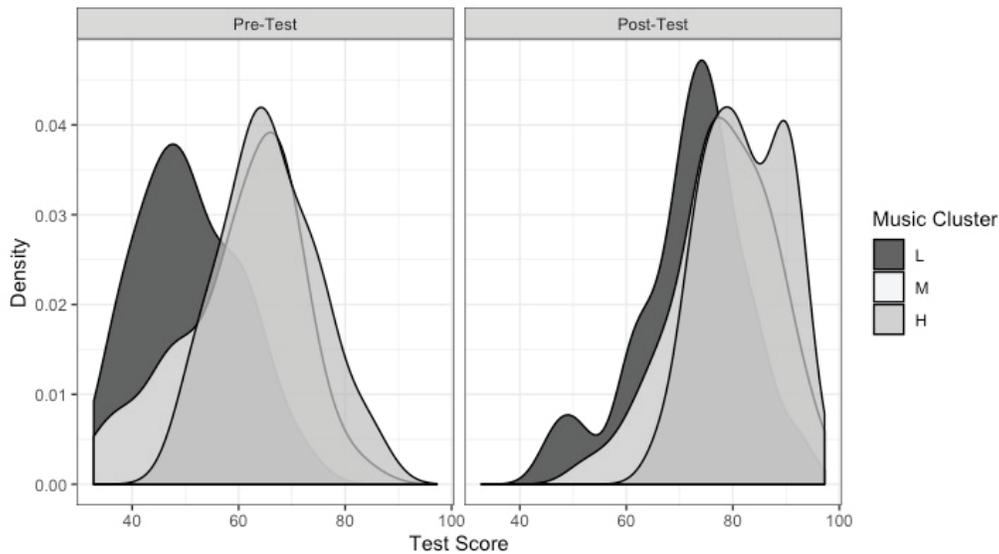


Figure 1: Difference in before and after test scores by cluster

Across all assessments, the differences between Cluster H and Cluster L ran between 5 and 11 percentage points, or between a half and a whole letter grade, including in the final course grade where Cluster H enjoyed an A- average while Cluster L averaged a B. Harder to see in the results above is that the performance of Cluster M—the largest group of students—was not significantly different from either Cluster H or Cluster L, and the lack of statistically

significant difference persisted throughout the course. Remember that Cluster M included both majors and non-majors who demonstrated a wide range of musical experience and courses taken.

Our results suggest that in its current state, the class disadvantaged Cluster L or advantaged Cluster H. These results also suggest the possibility that Cluster M's ability to succeed in the course may be on par with that of Cluster L's or Cluster H's. Particularly interesting is the possibility that in a class composed only of the majors and non-majors in Clusters L and M, students would enter with a roughly equivalent chance at success. In fact, one biology major with three years of self-reported experience playing saxophone in middle school and no music courses at St. Olaf College received the tenth highest grade out of 122. Stepping away from averages, then, we note that it was possible for a student in Cluster L to do well in the course. But for most students, taking a class that included inexperienced as well as significantly experienced musicians provoked a particular kind of pedagogical challenge. While the differences are arguably minor, these are still problematic results: knowing that a student with a lower level of musical experience is likely to earn a B while an average student with more musical experience is likely to earn an A-minus, we are faced with a decision about whether to change the course itself, or change our registration policies. In the end, should students with disparate levels of musical experience be allowed to take music classes together?

Results and Discussion: GPA and Underrepresented Status

While the strength of the relationship between musical experience and course outcomes suggests that we have some difficult decisions ahead about whether or how to accommodate students with varying levels of musical experience, we must first take into account possible underlying causes for those relationships. With help from our Educational Research & Assessment office, we were able to factor overall student GPA and underrepresented status into our comparisons of major/non-major status and hierarchical cluster. First, we examined the way average GPA and underrepresented status related to course grade. For the basis of comparison, in the table below we also included the average GPA and course grades of students in each of the hierarchical clusters:

Demographics	Average Course Grade	Average Overall GPA
Not LI/FG/DM (N=69)	88.19	3.49
Low Income (N=24)	87.05	3.37
Domestic Multicultural (N=24)	86.61	3.20
First Generation (N=11)	84.62	3.14
All Underrepresented (N=44)	87.12	3.29
Musical Experience Cluster		
H (N=25; 11 are LI, FG, and/or DM)	91.15	3.62
M (N=67; 24 are LI, FG, and/or DM)	86.79	3.38
L (N=25; 9 are LI, FG, and/or DM)	85.78	3.30

Table 5: GPA by demographic and hierarchical cluster²⁴

We ran a multiple linear regression analysis to determine whether hierarchical cluster was still a significant predictor of success in the course after accounting for underrepresented status and GPA.²⁵ Across all assessments other than the pre-test, GPA proved a significant predictor of student success in the course. For example, on average, a difference of 1.0 GPA between two students is associated with an 11.13 point higher final course average, for students of the same underrepresented status and hierarchical cluster. Overall, 55% of the variation in final course grade can be accounted for by the variation in overall GPA, and GPA was found to be significantly associated with student performance ($p < 0.001$). Notably, on the pre-test, musical experience had a stronger association with student success than GPA. Musical experience was also significantly associated with performance on the post-test and Quiz 2, while underrepresented status was not significantly associated with performance for any of the assessments. Table 6 (below) shows the regression coefficients of the various groups we studied relative to all other groups; the higher the number, the greater the contribution of the attribute relative to all other variables to assessment performance.

24. As a reminder, LI refers to low-income students, FG refers to first-generation students, and DM refers to domestic students of color.

25. Multiple linear regression analysis uses multiple variables to predict a single quantitative outcome. In our case, given differences in students' classification within high/medium/low clusters, underrepresented status, and GPA, we wanted to know how those variables interacted and which most strongly predicted success in the course.

Dependent Variable	Overall GPA	Underrepresented Status	Music Cluster: Medium	Music Cluster: High
Writing Assignment 1	(***) 0.91	0.07	0.08	0.13
Writing Assignment 2	(***) 0.96	0.15	-0.18	-0.05
Writing Assignment 3	(**) 0.68	0.31	-0.09	0.02
Writing Assignment 4	(**) 0.78	-0.06	0.11	0.22
Pre-Test	2.90	-1.30	(***) 9.42	(***) 14.14
Post-Test	(*) 6.19	1.35	(*) 5.29	(**) 7.51
Quiz 1	(***) 0.84	-0.11	-0.05	0.15
Quiz 2	(***) 1.17	0.07	(**) 0.57	(*) 0.69
Midterm	(***) 11.53	-1.48	-1.58	0.77
Final Project	(***) 1.89	0.27	-0.37	-0.25
Final Course Grade	(***) 11.13	1.19	0.03	1.40

Table 6: Multiple Linear Regression Results. * = $p < 0.05$; ** = $p < 0.01$; *** = $p < 0.001$

Knowing that GPA was generally a stronger predictor of performance in the course than musical experience complicates our efforts to understand students' experiences in the course and to recommend appropriate interventions to improve outcomes for the students who struggled most. We might be inclined to exclude students without a threshold level of musical experience (for example, using notational literacy as a proxy) from a music class, either permanently or by instituting a prerequisite—but that would be no solution at all. The problem with prerequisites, especially for 100-level classes, is that they create an additional barrier to access for students who are already less likely to have received musical training before college. Arguably, in a liberal arts setting, but also in comprehensive school or school of music settings, these students should have an opportunity to learn about music history without signing up to be a music major. Funneling inexperienced students into music appreciation courses might seem a viable alternative, but music appreciation comes with its own problematic history and set of assumptions about what music is worth studying and what methods are worth practicing.²⁶

Even if we might consider excluding students on the basis of musical experience, we would never exclude students on the basis of incoming GPA. And why should we? The purpose of any introductory class is to teach students

26. In his 1939 polemic, *The State of Music*, Virgil Thomson described the “Music-Appreciation racket” as a problem, and more recent studies suggest that this type of course has not much developed in the years since. See Virgil Thomson, *Virgil Thomson: A Reader*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Routledge, 2002), 38–44; Edward Hafer, “The Pedagogy of the Pedagogy of Music Appreciation,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 3, no. 1 (Fall 2012): 57–75; Jennifer L. Hund, “What is the Discipline of Music Appreciation? Reconsidering the Concert Report,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 4, no. 2 (2014): 255–272.

things they do not already know, not reward students for entering the class with a certain set of skills and knowledge gained through prior study. By the same logic, though, our rationale for excluding inexperienced musicians from introductory music classes should seem equally suspect. And even in classes where all students have notational literacy or other significant forms of prior musical experience, some students will enter with lower GPAs and some with higher GPAs, reinforcing the need for policies and pedagogical practices that facilitate more equitable learning in any music class.

Interventions

A traditional approach to helping at-risk students is to offer them extra help. In our context, that might include providing significant opportunities for learning music fundamentals while taking the class, or requiring extra review sessions or office hours visits of students who score below a certain threshold on the pre-test. But these solutions promise unattractive consequences. They put an additional burden of time and effort on students already at greater risk of struggling and they risk stigmatizing and incurring stereotype threat among students who realize they are receiving additional help. Instead, we might apply inclusive learning and UDL techniques including and beyond those already adopted in the course design described above. Research in STEM fields, for instance, has shown that increasing course structure improves all outcomes, but disproportionately improves outcomes for the most at-risk students.²⁷ Increasing course structure means adding course policies and assignments that require all students to take advantage of resources and opportunities to learn. In our case, in the next iteration of Introduction to Musicology (underway in spring 2019), we now require office hours visits of all students rather than making them optional; send more frequent reminders about assignment due dates; and require all students to complete readings and activities on close reading and general study skills. An undergraduate TA who successfully completed last spring's course attends all class meetings and leads three supplemental instruction (SI) sessions every week at which they offer study skills help as well as course content review.²⁸ Unlike one-on-one tutoring, which targets high-risk

27. Sarah Eddy and Kelly Hogan, "Getting Under the Hood: How and for Whom Does Increasing Course Structure Work?" *CBE—Life Sciences Education* 13 (2014): 453–468; Kimberly D. Tanner, "Structure Matters: Twenty-One Teaching Strategies to Promote Student Engagement and Cultivate Classroom Equity," *CBE—Life Sciences Education* 12 (Fall 2013): 322–331.

28. On the efficacy of supplemental instruction in improving study skills and academic performance, see Hoi Kwan Ning & Kevin Downing "The Impact of Supplemental Instruction on Learning Competence and Academic Performance," *Studies in Higher Education* 35, no. 8 (2010): 921–939, doi: 10.1080/03075070903390786; and Martin Stigmar "Peer-to-Peer

students and thus distinguishes them from their classmates in a negative way, regular SI sessions reduce the stigma associated with “getting help” because the sessions attach to difficult courses and are available to all students.

Other interventions inspired by UDL scholarship include allowing students to prepare a notecard before the tests and, as we have done, ensuring that students have more than enough time to get through test questions, either by reducing test material or making testing web-based and asynchronous. More frequent, lower-stakes testing is another way to increase structure and compel all students to study regularly, rather than cramming only before infrequent quizzes and tests. In the future we plan to require students to play the “Music History Game,” a flashcard-based quizzing app we designed in collaboration with faculty and students in the Computer Science department (similar to Quizlet or learning management software quiz features) to ensure that all students consistently review past material and practice connecting it to new content.²⁹ Another way to improve equity in the course no matter who takes it is to offer a grade bump to students who demonstrate the greatest improvement in the course, thereby rewarding learning and hard work, not prior knowledge. Our grade floor, what we call the “B- Insurance Policy,” took a step in that direction. Of the six students who completed the extra work required to satisfy the policy, three had relatively little musical experience and three were more experienced, suggesting that equitable policies can help all the students who need them most, not just the students identified by particular assessments as most at risk.

Another inclusive teaching intervention is inspired by an observation about student seating habits. When we mapped student seating in one section and identified students according to the number of music courses they had taken, we noticed a striking pattern [Figure 2]:

Teaching in Higher Education: A Critical Literature Review,” *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning* 24, no. 2 (2016): 124_136, doi: 10.1080/13611267.2016.1178963.

29. Epstein presented the Music History Game in greater detail at the 2017 Teaching Music History Conference in Boston, MA. See <https://youtu.be/C055rsTL-Xs?t=17m8s> for a video recording of the presentation.

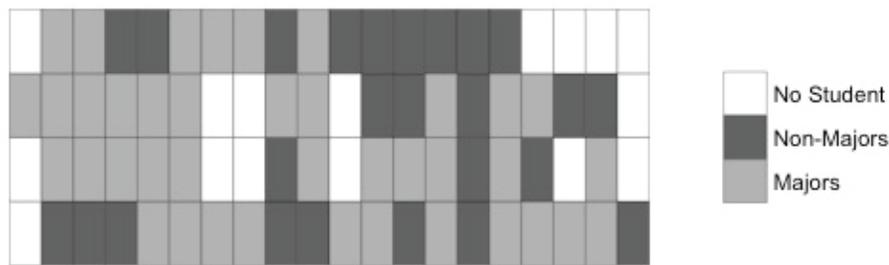


Figure 2: Student Seating Habits in Music 141, Section B

Each row represents a row of chairs in the amphitheater-style classroom, so horizontal relationships matter more than vertical relationships. The image shows that students with similarly low levels of experience tended to sit together, lessening the frequency of opportunities to engage with more experienced students. (Not shown, but similarly revealing: students not only sat next to peers with similar levels of musical experience, but musically experienced students also sat next to peers who participated in the same ensembles or studied in the same studios.) In opening this course to non-majors, we hoped music majors might hear new ideas about music from non-majors with fresh perspectives. Such exchange may have happened in large-group discussions, but may not have taken place during near-daily think/pair/share exercises. Research has shown that when students self-segregate on the basis of academic affinity or friendship, or when they isolate themselves from their classmates, the result is decreased equity in opportunity to succeed.³⁰ A more inclusive course might address the resulting disparities by assigning seating so as to ensure that students with varying levels of musical experience sit next to each other and therefore benefit from a new set of perspectives and life experiences. With early-semester diagnosis of relative musical experience and perhaps GPA, students could be placed in conversation with the classmates they are least likely to encounter through ensembles, studios, and other music courses.

Next Steps

In some respects, we found that the course was not equitable: even though GPA was a better predictor of student success than any other factor, musical experience still emerged as a significant force in the discrepancies we noticed between student groups. Of course, we recognize that grades are only a flimsy proxy for success, and that they often do not capture the full extent of student

30. David Smith, Angela Hoare, and Melissa Lacey, "Who Goes Where? The Importance of Peer Groups on Attainment and the Student Use of the Lecture Theatre Teaching Space," *FEBS Open Bio* 8, no. 9 (2018): 1368–1378, doi:10.1002/2211-5463.12494.

learning. Having administered learning-oriented assessments, we know that students in this class learned a great deal, as shown in the nearly 20% overall class improvement between pre- and post-test results and by the fact that students with the least musical experience showed the greatest gains between those two assessments. We also recognize that though students in Cluster L may have underperformed with respect to Cluster H, none of them failed, and their average grade (B) could just as easily be touted as success as the A-minus average of high-experience students [Figure 3].

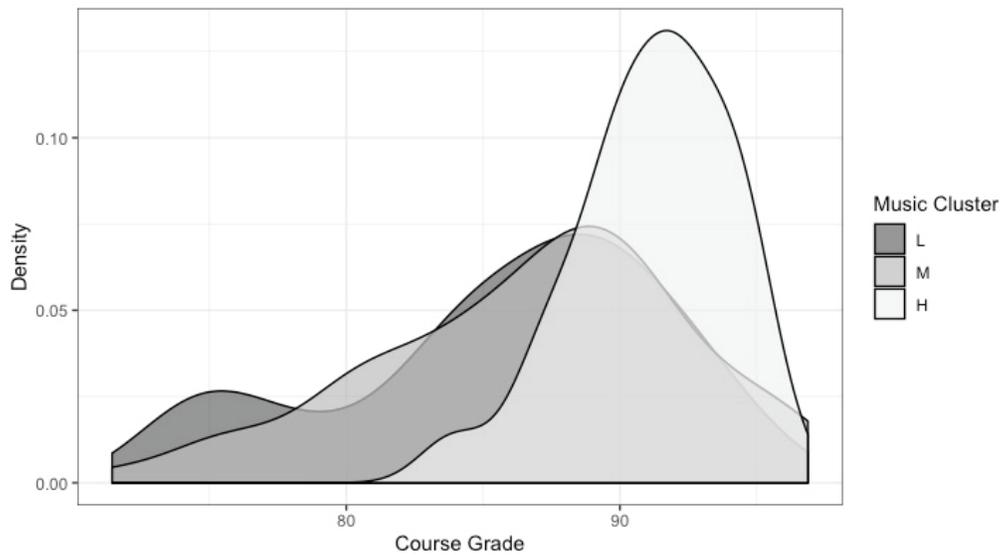


Figure 3: Course grade by cluster

Based on our evaluation of test responses and written work, we can safely conclude that our students achieved most course objectives. We also acknowledge that even as we seek equity not only in opportunity but also outcome, we can never ensure that all of our students will succeed, because their fate in their courses is as much in their hands as it is in ours. Regardless of how we interpret the student outcomes data, the study had one undoubtedly positive result: it played a crucial role in helping us identify potential inequities in the first iteration of the course, leading to what we hope will be improvements that disproportionately benefit at-risk students in future iterations of the course.

Our research is ongoing. In the department's second year of offering Music 141, we are replicating the study described here. We hope to validate some of the results of this study, and we hope to show that our proposed interventions have the desired effect of closing the achievement gap between the least and most prepared students, whether as measured by GPA or by musical experience. We were encouraged to see that underrepresented status was a poor predictor

of student success or lack thereof, but we remain vigilant to ensure that the course does not exacerbate the inequalities identified in literature on access to music education among socioeconomic and racial minorities. As we continue the study, we hope to fine-tune the ways in which we group and compare students. No subdivision of a classroom student body can adequately capture the intersectional nature of students' identities and prior experiences. "Diversity" refers to more than race and socioeconomic status, and music pedagogy that strives toward inclusion must look beyond major, musical experience, GPA, and underrepresented status. Liz Thomas and Helen May have argued that studies on inclusive teaching must "incorporate difference across a number of dimensions, namely previous education, personal disposition, current circumstances, and cultural heritage," thus making higher education "accessible, relevant and engaging to all students."³¹

Our research will not end with one or two repetitions of the study we have presented here. In several years, we will be able to administer exit surveys to the first cohort of students to experience the music major with our Introduction to Musicology, as well as with non-majors who took additional courses in the department. These exit surveys will help us determine whether we provided a foundational experience that helped students in later courses, and/or whether our radical reimagining of an introductory music course helped some students at the expense of others. While there is no such thing as a perfectly equitable course, we can at least seek out a better balance in how we reward prior knowledge and experience. Along the way we seek balance, weighing the pedagogical, moral, and social good of including nontraditional students in previously exclusive classes against the challenges or potential harm that such inclusion entails for both traditional and nontraditional students. It may take several more years to fine-tune these tensions; in the meantime we invite further studies of inclusive teaching and learning practices in a variety of educational contexts. As we all improve our tools for understanding the diversity of student experiences in our classrooms, we move closer to a more inclusive musicology.

31. Liz Thomas and Helen May, *Inclusive Learning and Teaching in Higher Education* (York: Higher Education Academy, 2010), 4–5, retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/inclusivelearningandteaching_finalreport.pdf.

Appendix A. Course Syllabus

Music 141: Introduction to Musicology

Professor Louis Epstein

Spring 2018

CHM 232 - MWF 9:05-10 a.m. and 10:45-11:40 a.m.

Office Hours: CHM 238 Mondays 1-2:30 p.m., Tuesdays 9-10:30 a.m.,
Wednesdays 1-2:30 p.m.

Schedule an Office Hours Appointment

Course Description

Think of all the verbs we use to describe our relationships with music: We know what it means to play, perform, make, compose, write, listen, consume, download, buy, enjoy, and love music. But do we know what it means to critique, analyze, interpret, and generally study music? In this class, we'll develop new tools to deepen, complicate, and enrich our traditional relationships with music. We'll ask questions like "What *is* music?" and "How does music help us define our individual identities?" and "How does music express meaning and influence social behavior?" To illustrate why these questions matter and to provide a range of responses to them, we'll explore a broad array of musical traditions from throughout the world - classical and popular, art and commercial, local and global, historical and contemporary - with the goal of formulating and exploring still other fundamental questions about music.

Along with *asking* critical questions about music, we will learn how to *answer* questions by deploying musicological methods, tools, and approaches. You'll conduct primary source research and interviews; compare musical practices historically and culturally; perform unfamiliar repertory and participate in new practices; read broadly and reflect deeply. You'll connect music with its contexts and subtexts: gender, race, politics, philosophy, religion, class, fashion, technology, power, history. Throughout, you'll develop essential skills for thinking, writing, and speaking critically about music.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Recognize and ask musicological questions

- Apply varied musicological methods to the academic study of diverse musics
- Distinguish between pieces and traditions on the basis of distinctive sonic and sociocultural features
- Describe music and musical practices using appropriate terminology
- Reflect on your own practices and traditions within our musical world

There are no required books for this course. Readings will be available digitally via Moodle as well as on physical reserve at Halvorson Music Library when the reading comes from a book. Listeners will be available digitally, again as links via Moodle, and on reserve in Halvorson.

Learning Imperatives

In this course we'll encounter what may seem like an astounding amount of music, much of it unfamiliar, and we'll imbibe a strong dose of academic writing about music. As with any musical activity or learning experience, practice makes progress. Listen regularly to each piece of assigned listening - before and after class, and repeatedly throughout the rest of the semester. Write frequently and repeatedly about your experience of that music, drawing on terminology you're learning in class (especially if it's new and unfamiliar). Practice focused listening: not just while you're doing reading or walking across campus, but sometimes in a darkened room, wearing headphones, thinking of nothing else but what you're hearing, why it sounds the way it does, how its sounds connect to discussions and arguments and contexts you've read or heard about in this class.

Speaking of reading: whether this is your first encounter or your fourteenth encounter with academic writing about music, you may find it helpful to read with specific questions in mind to help you make sense of the material: why was this essay written? Who wrote it? Who was the intended audience? How does this information affect the way I think about music? Why did my professor assign it? How does it connect with or contradict other readings we've done? You'll also find it helpful to consult the discussion questions included on the daily handout *before* you do the reading so that you can focus your attention on more specific aspects of the reading. Similarly, you'll want to make sure you can define all of the terms on each class's handout *before* you come to class; if any seem impossible to define without my help, please bring that to my attention in class. Ultimately, I am responsible for creating a classroom environment and course framework that enables and supports your learning; you're responsible for constructing your own learning in that environment and upon

that framework. We'll work together to ensure that you learn so much in this course.

Assignments

- **Attendance/Participation:** Although this is a large course, I expect students to engage actively with me and with other students during classtime. Much of the learning in the course will take place through small groupwork or in small- or all-class discussions. I also expect you to *make music* during class, usually by participating in group singing, speaking, clapping, and dancing exercises. Finally, we will be using PollEverywhere, an online polling platform to generate discussion and help me gauge your understanding of various concepts. You should register for a PollEverywhere account at www.pollerywhere.com; please use your St. Olaf email address when registering.
- **Research/Writing Assignments:** If the PollEverywhere questions represent the kind of work musicians do in practice rooms, these assignments are auditions: slightly higher-stakes opportunities to show off the skills and knowledge you're gaining in the course. For each assignment, you'll do some research (comparing primary sources, reading secondary literature, conducting interviews, attending performances) and you'll write up your research in the style of the scholarship we're reading throughout the semester. Each assignment will be evaluated according to a rubric that rewards conscientiousness on both the research and the writing sides of the assignment.
- **Tests:** Two graded quizzes, one graded midterm exam, and two ungraded "before-and-after" exams will make it possible to measure the progress you make in the course from beginning through the end. Each exam will feature a combination of listening examples you'll identify and answer questions about; terminology identification questions; and critical thinking questions or short essays.
- **Final Project:** While you won't write a full-fledged research paper in this course, it's important that you have an opportunity to practice the skills you develop in your short research/writing assignments in anticipation of writing research papers in upper-level music courses. To that end, you'll research and write a final project proposal (4-6 pages of prose, plus annotated bibliography) on a topic you'll choose from a list of possibilities.

Grading Breakdown

Attendance and Participation (20%)

5 short research/writing assignments, (30%, or 6% each)

Two Quizzes (10% total)

Midterm (20%)

Before-and-After Quizzes (10%)

Final project (10%)

If you complete all required coursework and do the following, you are assured of earning at least a B- in the class, no matter how you perform on graded assignments:

- Visit office hours twice
- Attend 5 pink card events, including 1 musicology lecture
- Submit 2 additional research/writing exercises (one revision of a previously submitted assignment, and one brand new submission for an existing prompt)
- Attend 2 review sessions

In addition, everyone can earn one extra point of course credit (out of a total of 100) for participating in an ethnographic interview with my research assistant, who is helping me study your learning in the course.

Final Grade Scale - all numbers are inclusive (I don't round up):

A+/A	95-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%
A-	90-94%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%
		B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%

Detailed explanations of what is meant by each letter grade range can be found at <http://catalog.stolaf.edu/academic-regulations-procedures/grades/>.

Expectations:

Mine: 1) I expect you to come to class prepared. That means doing the assigned reading and listening, reviewing notes from previously classes, and answering any reading questions as needed. **You should spend at least one hour every day reading, listening, and writing.** If you work steadily and write in short chunks (rather than bingeing the night before a quiz or an assignment is due), you'll go far toward achieving the course goals. 2) I expect you to **check your email and Moodle at least once every day.** I'll send out important course info via email that you won't want to miss! 3) I expect you to extend respect,

patience, and civility to your classmates and to your professor. That includes moments when some of us are at our most vulnerable – for instance, singing and performing music in class, or posting research and writing on Moodle. 4) I expect you to **use technology in class responsibly**. Sometimes I'll ask you to take devices out, and sometimes I'll ask you to put them away. Remember that with few exceptions, you learn more when you take notes by hand. 5) I expect you to **attend class**. If you have a legitimate reason to miss or be late to class, **contact me in advance**. More than one unexcused absence will result in a loss of 10% of your attendance grade for each additional absence.

Yours: 1) You can expect a dry sense of humor, a sincere concern about your interests, needs, and problems, and an irrepressible passion for music. 2) I'll try my hardest to create assessments that are fair, reasonable in scope, and focused on helping you learn, not on punishing you for what you haven't learned. 3) You can expect that I'll be accessible in person and via email. Specifically, you can expect a response to your email within 48 hours except on the weekend; if it's taking longer than that, send me another email in case I missed the first.

Accommodations:

If you have a documented disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact the Academic Support Center (507-786-3288, Buntrock 108, wp.stolaf.edu/asc/dac) as soon as possible to discuss accommodations. Accommodations will only be provided after the letter is submitted to me and with sufficient lead-time for me to arrange testing or other accommodations.

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster, please let me know. Please correct me on your preferred gender pronoun if I botch it. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Writing Services

Peer tutors at the Writing Desk offer help with any paper, in any class, at any stage of the writing process. You can sign up for an appointment online or drop in Sundays-Thursdays 12pm-5pm and 7pm-10pm or Fridays 12pm-5pm in Rolvaag Library across from the Reference Desk/by the IT Helpdesk. Learn more at <http://wp.stolaf.edu/asc/writing-help/>.

Late Work:

Assignments are due during class time on the day noted on the schedule. Late work will receive an automatic grade-level deduction (from A to A-, A- to B+, etc.). If you miss class for an excused reason on the day an assignment is due, please contact me directly to discuss a revised due date. If you miss class for an unexcused reason, the work cannot be made up.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment Due Before Class
2/9	Introductions	Complete “Getting to Know You” Survey Sign up for PollEverywhere
<p style="text-align: center;">Unit 1: What is Music?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our first unit broadly explores how music is defined across time and space, by individuals and by societies. We’ll study music as something people <i>do</i> as well as music’s physical, philosophical, and spiritual “thingness.” Our goal is to disrupt our familiar approaches to music so that we’re more open to the methods and approaches to music we’ll apply in the subsequent two units.</p>		
2/12	Music as Acts and Things	
2/14	Faith, Ritual, and Politics: Gregorian Chant I	“Before” Quiz
2/16	Gregorian Chant II: Meet in Boe Chapel - Sing Mass for Christmas Day	Practice Mass
2/19	Public Ritual: The Islamic Call to Prayer	
2/21	Morality, Taste, and the Citizen: Plato to St. Augustine to Kaepernick	
2/22	Pink Card Event: Chelsea Burns lecture, 12-1 pm, Carleton Weitz M215	
2/23	Biology and Cosmology: Why Suyá Sing	
<p style="text-align: center;">Unit 2: How do we study music?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In which we encounter and practice several methods and approaches that make up the musicological toolbox. We’ll engage closely with musical meaning, study how music moves, and systematically examine several examples of musicking.</p>		
2/26	Analysis I: Form and Affect in Mozart	Unit 1 Quiz

2/28	Analysis II: A Beethoven Piano Sonata	
3/2	Research Instruction Session - Beth Christensen Presents	Writing Assignment #1 Due (Autoethnography)
3/5	Transmission I: Notation and Transcription	
3/7	Transmission II: Orality	
3/9	Transmission III: Embodiment - Special Guest: Dave Hagedorn	
3/12	Ethnography I: Concert and Conservatory	
3/14	Ethnography II: Jewish Song	
3/16	Ethnography III: Ewe Drumming	
3/19	Performance Studies I: North Indian Classical Music	Writing Assignment #2 Due (Primary Source Show and Tell)
3/21	Performance Studies II: South Indian Song	
3/23	Midterm	MIDTERM AHHH-HHHH!!!!!!
3/26-4/2	No Class - Spring Break	WOOOOOOOOOO
<p>Unit 3: Issues and Contexts</p> <p>If the first two units dealt with the “what” and the “how” of music studies, this unit addresses the “so what?” and “why.” Through a series of case studies, we’ll confront some of the thorniest aspects of music. We’ll ask how music reflects and constructs identities, why authenticity in music is so difficult to define, how politics, nationalism, gender, race, and class inform how music is made and consumed, and how music speaks for and against the powerful.</p>		
4/4	Identity I: Malian Music: The Sundiata Epic and Neba Solo	
4/6	Identity II: National Anthems	Writing Assignment #3 Due (Ethnography)
4/9	Identity III: Charles Ives, Masculinity, and Americanness - Special Guest: Beth Christensen (Research Instruction)	
4/11	Identity IV: Beyoncé, Gender, and Sexuality	
4/13	Identity V: The Lutheran Worldview of J. S. Bach	
4/16	Authenticity I: Historically-Informed Performance and Folk Revivals	
4/18	Authenticity II: The “Original” Spirituals	

4/20	Authenticity III: Fisk Jubilee Singers and Concert Spirituals - Special Guest: Carol Oja '74	
4/21	Pink Card Events: Student Research Symposium Panels, CHM 239, 8:45-9:45 a.m., 12:30-2 p.m., and 2:05-3:05 p.m.; and Carol Oja Lecture, CHM 233, 3:45 pm, "Marian Anderson and Racial Desegregation of the American Concert Stage"	
4/23	Othering and Selfing I: Georges Bizet's <i>Carmen</i>	
4/25	Othering and Selfing II: Gamelan and Claude Debussy	Writing Assignment #4 Due (Program Notes)
4/27	Othering and Selfing III: Duke Ellington, George Gershwin, and Duke Ellington Again	
4/30	Cultural Appropriation I: What's culture, and who owns it?	Quiz 2
5/2	Cultural Appropriation II: In defense of cultural appropriation	
5/4	Cultural Appropriation III: Beyond cultural appropriation	
5/7	Power I: Music and the State	
5/9	Power II: Music and Protest	
5/11	Power III: Canons, Inclusion, and Exclusion	
5/14	Music Today	"After" Quiz
5/16	Final Reflections	Final Project Proposal and all B- Insurance Assignments Due

Appendix B. Midterm Questions

1. Which of these terms applies to one but not both of these excerpts? [audio excerpts are Comtessa de Dia's *A chantar m'er* and the monophonic gradual *Viderunt Omnes* from the Mass for Christmas Day]
 - a. Liturgical
 - b. Orally Transmitted
 - c. Jubilus
 - d. Antiphonal

2. Which terms apply best to this excerpt? Select all that apply. [audio excerpt is Islamic call to prayer]
 - a. Quilisma
 - b. Imam
 - c. Maqam
 - d. Muezzin
 - e. Sacred
 - f. Half-flat

3. Which of the following do you hear in this excerpt? Select all that apply. [audio excerpt is Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique*, mvt. 1]
 - a. French overture topic
 - b. Ethos
 - c. Graphic notation
 - d. Psalmody
 - e. Rocket motive

4. Which terms might you use to describe this excerpt? Select all that apply. [audio excerpt is Syrian pizmonim "Attah el kabbir"]
 - a. Recapitulation
 - b. Topic
 - c. Contrafact
 - d. Responsorial
 - e. Melisma
 - f. Oud

5. What do these three pieces have in common? [audio excerpts are Chuck Berry's "Roll Over Beethoven," Bernart de Ventadorn's *Can vei lauzeta mover*, and Ethyl Merman's 1930 recording of George Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm"]
 - a. All reflect a belief in music as a form of control
 - b. None were notated

- c. None were recorded in any form by their original authors
 - d. All come from performance traditions that valued variance over fixity
6. Which of these do you hear in the following excerpt? Select all that apply. [audio excerpt is Islamic call to prayer]
- a. Melisma
 - b. Jubilus
 - c. Imam
 - d. Improvisation
 - e. Cosmology
 - f. Antiphonal
7. Place these terms in the order in which they were invented or first applied in music history.
- a. Jubilus
 - b. Sonata form
 - c. Azān
 - d. Virga and Punctum
 - e. Dorian and Phrygian
 - f. Graphic Notation
8. Which of these pieces would it be most productive to examine using sonata form analysis?
- a. [Audio recording of Gamelan Cayala Asri performance]
 - b. [Audio recording of Beyoncé's "Crazy in Love"]
 - c. [Audio recording of Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, K. 332, mvt. 1]
 - d. [Audio recording of Ethyl Merman's 1930 recording of George Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm"]
9. Which of these *shouldn't* you do when conducting ethnographic work?
- a. Get permission from musickers in the target culture
 - b. Share the benefits of your work with the community you studied
 - c. Interview performers and/or attendees
 - d. Do background research
 - e. You should do all of these
10. Where in the form does this excerpt fall? [audio excerpt is development of Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique*, mvt. 1]
- a. Exposition
 - b. Need more information
 - c. Development
 - d. Recapitulation

11. Where in the form does this excerpt fall? [audio excerpt is recapitulation of Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, K. 332, mvt. 1]
 - a. Exposition
 - b. Need more information
 - c. Development
 - d. Recapitulation

12. Which of these examples of musicking can be understood through ethnography? Select all that apply.
 - a. Suyá song
 - b. [Audio recording of Beyoncé's "Run the World (Girls)"]
 - c. A performance of *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*
 - d. Ewe dance-drumming

13. Which of the following examples of musicking can be better understood through analysis? Select all that apply.
 - a. Suyá song
 - b. [Audio recording of Beyoncé's "Run the World (Girls)"]
 - c. A performance of *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*
 - d. Ewe dance-drumming

14. Choose ONE of the following three essay topics and respond in a paragraph or two. Remember that the most successful responses to these prompts will cite authors we've read, compare multiple cases, and synthesize course material smoothly and critically.
 1. In what ways can notation be considered a form of technology? How have changes in that technology over the last 1000 years reflected the changing needs and habits of its users?
OR
 2. On the whole, are aural and embodied kinds of musicianship more similar to Western European/American classical traditions than they are different? Or are they more different than they are similar?
OR
 3. Is "aural, written, printed, recorded" a useful chronological order for understanding music history? What are examples of each stage in Western European/American classical music? Does the same order apply just as well to global or popular traditions?

Appendix C. Writing Assignments

Writing Assignment #1: Autoethnography

Introduction

Autoethnographies are essays that use the author/researcher's own experiences to **make arguments or tell stories about the author's culture**. Sometimes autoethnographies are used to counter claims about the author's culture by writers outside that culture; sometimes autoethnographies offer new perspectives on an issue or practice that has traditionally been studied in a more impersonal manner.

The Assignment

Write a 500-750-word essay in which you reflect on your personal relationship(s) with music/musicking, as broadly or narrowly defined as you like. "Reflecting" means writing about the ways that your experiences with music/musicking relate to the questions we've been asking and the stories we've been telling in class so far this semester. **The goal of your essay is for you and for a reader to learn something about a broader question/issue through the personal examples you provide.** How do your musical tastes and practices relate to the identities you claim, to the communities you've associated with, to the histories that underlie how you came to those tastes and practices? For instance, I would write about how my participation in a rock band reflects a process of coming to terms with the conflict I feel as a classically trained musician who resented peer pressure to conform to fashionable musical tastes as a child but who nevertheless came to value popular music for the same reasons I value classical music: both are sites where technical skill, self-expression, performing an alternate identity, and audience feedback contribute to feelings of accomplishment and personal satisfaction.

In your autoethnography, you should draw on readings we've done. You can just name-drop the authors we've read, or, if you quote from them, you can give a parenthetical citation (Plato, 5) so that it's easy for me to locate the quote. In my essay, I would write something like, "By forcing me to practice the pieces I was assigned and by discounting the improvising I did as 'fooling around,' my mother rendered my childhood training in classical music an elitist exercise in line with Plato's notion that musical discipline - playing the right music in the right way - is central to societal and political discipline." I would also use Christopher Small to reflect on my longstanding struggle to

grasp that easy-sounding music isn't easy to play, and that just because something is easy-sounding doesn't mean it has less cultural value than something difficult-sounding.

Submitting Your Assignment

You'll submit your essay through Moodle. Please copy and paste the prose of your essay into the text box that you'll see when you click on the assignment and scroll down. **Please do not link to a Google Doc or other external file; I prefer to read your essays within Moodle (it also makes grading easier).** Please also leave your name and any other identifying information out of the text box; I prefer to grade student writing anonymously. Finally, you should keep in mind that Moodle will count the words in your essay, and if you exceed 1,000 words, you will not be able to submit. There's a special knack to saying what you need to say concisely and compellingly; if you don't already have the knack, you'll have at least five chances to develop it in this course.

Evaluation

You will be graded on a six-point scale, where the top grade (six points) recognizes stylishly-written, compelling essays that fluently **use personal musical practices and experiences to reveal new or nuanced insights about connections between the self and the social, historical, religious, and/or philosophical contexts of those practices and experiences.** These essays demonstrate an ability to explore beyond superficial details of your musical life in search of these insights. Six-point essays cite multiple relevant sources from the class reading list. Essays that meet some but not all of these criteria will receive fewer points, and essays that do not seem to respond to the prompt or that fail to address most of these criteria will receive 1 point.

Background on Autoethnographies

The autoethnography is both an easy and a difficult form of writing. It is easy because we are writing about what we know: ourselves. It is difficult because we must communicate the significance of our experience to our audience, making a connection between our own experiences and those of our readers. We must confront the hard truth that an event is not significant just because "it happened to me." The event must offer some takeaway value, and the writer who writes about the event must be able to answer the question "so what?" The answer to this question is the primary insight of the autoethnography, or the ultimate point that you are trying to make. Autoethnographies are not just chronological narrations of events; they communicate the event's meaning and

leave readers with a dominant impression of what it might have been like to experience it themselves.

For a model of the kind of writing you are to do, read either “Becoming a Bass Player” or “Studying Music, Studying the Self” in *Music Autoethnographies : Making Autoethnography Sing/Making Music Personal*, edited by Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, and Carolyn Ellis, Australian Academic Press, 2009, pages 136–150, or 153–166 respectively. Note how the authors interweave scholarly citations into a focused personal account of their own music-making experiences and the reflections those experiences inspired.

Writing Assignment #2: Primary Source Show-and-Tell

Much of the scholarship you’ve already read relies heavily on primary sources, which are documents or objects *from the time period being discussed* that help us understand the ideas, disagreements, values, and basic facts of that time. Musicologists routinely draw on a wide variety of primary sources in their work, including manuscripts and scores, recordings, paintings, photographs, musical instruments, financial and government records, and all manner of writing: interviews, letters, theoretical treatises, books, newspaper articles, autobiographical texts, etc.

Finding primary sources is hard enough, but actually *reading* them can prove even more difficult. We have to enter the minds and hearts of the people who produced those documents as well as the minds and hearts of their intended readers. To prepare you to read primary sources and to do more primary source research in future musicology classes, you’ll locate and do a close reading of a primary source relevant to one of the course topics (whether something we’ve already studied or something we will soon study). Here’s how you’ll do it:

- 1) Choose a topic related to something in the syllabus, loosely defined.
- 2) Locate a **written**, primary source document about the topic (but not one we’ve already used in class). Note that only written documents count as primary sources for the purpose of this assignment. While it is possible to argue that images, scores, videos, sound recordings, and physical artifacts are also primary sources, for logistical and pedagogical reasons we won’t be relying on those in this assignment. But you’re welcome to use them for other assignments! If you’re interested in a topic within Western classical music, you might peruse the following collections of primary sources (on reserve in Halvorson) for relevant documents. If you’re looking for something in American music, you might consult one of the primary

source collections in Beth's LibGuide (<http://libraryguides.stolaf.edu/c.php?g=814493&p=5812166>). If you're interested in music outside of Europe or the United States, I'd suggest consulting with Beth or Dr. Kheshgi to explore your best options.

General:

- a) Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, 2nd ed. (Belmont: Schirmer Cengage Learning, 2008). ML160.M865 2008
 - b) Oliver Strunk, *Source Readings in Music History* (New York: Norton, 1998) - note that there are editions that focus specifically on Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque readings, as well as an all-encompassing edition that covers all of music history. ML 160.S89 1998
 - c) Carol MacClintock, *Readings in the History of Music in Performance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979). ML 457.R4
 - d) Ruth Halle Rowen, *Music Through Sources and Documents*. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall, 1979). ML 160.R88
 - e) *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). ML 171.C75 1991
 - f) Charles Burney, *Dr. Burney's Musical Tours in Europe*. (London: Oxford, 1959). 18th Century: vol. 1 covers France and Italy; vol. 2 Central Europe and the Netherlands. ML 195.B92 1959
 - g) Roger North, *Roger North on Music: Being a Selection from his Essays written during the Years c. 1695-1728*. (London: Novello, 1959). (Great Britain only.) ML 160.N62
- 3) Read your primary source document (or the relevant parts) critically. We've already read some primary sources that detail Ancient Greek and early Christian approaches to music, as well as documents about Beethoven's life, so you know something about what they look like and the special challenges they pose. As you read, you'll want to consider the following questions (which might inform your response but which don't *have* to be answered as part of #4 below):
- a) What do we know about the writer and the writer's immediate context? Did they have first-hand knowledge of their subject, or are they writing down something they've heard?
 - b) What are the likely biases, prejudices, or agendas of the person writing? In other words, why bother writing this in the first place? What's in it for them?
- 4) Write a 250-500-word response to your primary source that synthesizes

answers to some or all of the following questions: What kind of useful information does this primary source account provide musicologists? If you've already seen it used by a scholar, how did they use it? If you're encountering the source for the first time, how can you imagine using it yourself? (This would be a good place to make connections to course topics and cite scholars we've all read together.)

- 5) Cite your primary source and any other scholarly sources you used to write the response. (Don't use lay websites to understand your primary source except as a starting place for finding more reputable scholarship.) To cite a primary source reprinted in a recent publication, give the entire primary source citation, then "Reprinted in..." and then the full citation of the more recent publication.
- 6) Attach a scan or photo of your primary source to your post.

You might consider consulting with Siri Lundgren, one of our intrepid TAs, in her capacity as a Writing Tutor. She is available to help you with thinking about and writing essays at the Music Library at the following times:

Sundays, 6-8 p.m.

Mondays, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Thursdays, 6-7 p.m.

Evaluation

Essays will be graded on a six-point scale, with the best essays recognized for selecting an appropriate primary source, persuasively demonstrating the usefulness of the source to a music historian, critiquing the source appropriately, and connecting it to a relevant course topic, method, or approach.

For more resources on reading/responding to primary sources, see the following:

- Excellent: <http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/primaries.htm>
- Solid: <https://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/history/resources/study/primary/>
- Also helpful: <http://www.wm.edu/as/history/undergraduateprogram/historywritingresourcecenter/handouts/primarysources/>
- [http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/lr/PDF/primary%20sources%20\(W\).pdf](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/lr/PDF/primary%20sources%20(W).pdf)
- <http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides/2569>

Writing Assignment #3: Ethnography

As we discussed in class, ethnography is the systematic, immersive study of a culture through the habits, forms of expression, and social structures of its people. While we don't have time to conduct full-fledged ethnographic work (which often takes years), we'll benefit from practicing some ethnographic techniques on a smaller scale. In this assignment, you'll use ethnography to help you think differently about the rituals and social relationships encompassed within a single musical experience, and to help you think about the relationship of that one experience to an entire musical culture.

Prompt

Write a 500-750 word "mini-ethnography" in which you describe and analyze a musical event on- or off-campus. **In short, your essay should answer the question, "What does this musical event reveal about the larger culture in which it is embedded?"** Your essay should connect musical details, social interactions, place, and/or other relevant objects of ethnographic study to each other and to a broader cultural context. While you need not do extensive secondary research before or after the event, as always you should rely in part on course readings and discussions as a theoretical or methodological foundation for your analysis, and you should seek out one or more additional scholarly resources to help you better understand your object of study.

Process

- 1) Identify a fieldwork site. In our case, this will be a musical event - a rehearsal or performance or any other social interaction around music. If it's a performance, it can't be a performance in which you're participating unless you have cleared it with me in advance. Do some preliminary research so that you understand what you're about to experience.
- 2) Consider ethical and logistical challenges before the event. Learn about what constitutes appropriate behavior. Request permission from the leader(s) of the event to conduct your fieldwork there. Plan how you'll record aspects of the experience (pen-and-paper, audio recorder, video clips, some combination of these).
- 3) Participate in the event. Here "participation" means "musicking": audience members at a concert are musicking, as are performers at a rehearsal. Musicking also includes *talking* to people about music, so be sure to speak with several musicking people (performers, listeners, support staff) at the events. Don't forget to take a selfie to document your physical presence at the event!
- 4) Take down "jottings," also known as field notes, related to all the things you

observe or do yourself as part of the event. Think ahead to the kind of essay you'll write, and pay special attention to social interactions between people; unspoken habits or rituals; and any small details that may have significance on a broader, cultural level.

- 5) Immediately after the event, go home and fill out your scattered observations. Consider writing through your jottings in order to create a complete narrative of the event and your observations from beginning to end.
- 6) You'll likely have many more observations and ideas than you can include in a 500-750-word essay. Identify themes or threads running through your notes - especially things that connect well to class topics, readings, and discussions - and make one or two of these themes the focus of your ethnographic essay.

Moodle Submission

You'll copy and paste your ethnography into the appropriate Assignment text box on Moodle. Note that I'm setting a strict word limit of 1,000 words. As always, please copy and paste your ethnography text but not your name, the date, or the class. You may include a title if you choose, but it's not required. In addition to copying and pasting the text of your ethnography, please upload a single file that contains all of your "jottings" or field notes from the "field." This might be a digital file (eg, text document) or a scan of several pages of handwritten notes. Please also upload a selfie of you at the event as a separate file.

Evaluation

The best ethnographies will touch on all five fundamental elements of ethnography (theory, place, people, voices, author) to some extent. They will make clear connections between the event studied and relevant class topics, readings, and discussions. They will show evidence that the author has consulted at least one piece of additional scholarship to help contextualize the experience. And above all, they will draw on specific details of the event to reveal something interesting or compelling about the broader culture in which that event is embedded.

Tips for Writing Ethnographic Essays

Focus On (and then write about a subset of):

- Sounds (instruments, melodies, textures, dynamics, tempo, etc.)
- Sensory Details (dress, light, smells, etc.)
- Actions
- Dialogue (verbal communication)
- Gestures (nonverbal communication)
- Interactions (people in conflict, collaboration)
- Roles (central / peripheral)

Representational strategies in your write-up:

- Depict a scene (vivid snapshot)
- Describe one or two episodes (actions unfolding over time)
- Share dialogue (direct / indirect quotes)
- Engage in scholarly asides (reflections, questions, interpretations)

Finally, consult ethnographic models we've already read to get a clearer sense for the genre. All of the following books are on reserve in Halvorson; you can access Rachel Brashier's article through Moodle.

Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*

Scott Marcus, *Music in Egypt: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture*

Anthony Seeger, *Why Suyas Sing: A musical anthropology of an Amazonian People*

Rachel Brashier, "In Gamelan You Have to Become One 'Feeling': Sensory Embodiment and Transfer of Musical Knowledge"

Bruno Nettl: *Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music*

Kay Kaufman Shelemay, *Let Jasmine Rain Down: Song and Remembrance Among Syrian Jews*

Writing Assignment #4: Program Notes

In this assignment you'll practice producing program notes for an imaginary (or real, upcoming) performance. Although there are no genre restrictions for this assignment, make sure to limit your context to a recital performance setting, for which program notes are normally created and distributed. You'll pick a short piece of music (around 5 minutes long), research the piece's origins, sounds, and meanings, and write an engaging short essay that teaches audience members what to listen for and what to think about during the performance. (The reason for the short piece length is so that you can focus in on specific musical moments in the piece that audience members might listen for.)

Prompt

Write a 750-1000 word program note in which you describe, analyze, and contextualize a piece of music for the benefit of a relatively well-educated audience. Your program note should introduce the composer and/or culture that produced the piece, give the audience particular moments to listen for, and explain the piece's meaning or significance. As always you should rely in part on course readings and discussions as a theoretical or methodological foundation

for your analysis, and you should seek out two or more additional scholarly resources to help you better understand your object of study.

Process

- 1) Choose your “piece.” This could be a piece of classical music that you’ve played or are playing, a piece or performance that we’ve studied in class (other than the Beethoven and Mozart sonatas, which we’ve already addressed), or anything you’re interested in that could plausibly become part of a concert. Any of the popular and folk traditions we’ve studied are eligible; just imagine that the particular piece is being performed as part of a formal concert of popular or folk music and write your program note accordingly.
- 2) Research the music. You’ll need to find at least two scholarly sources (more is better!) that help you understand the who, what, when, where, why, how, and so what of the piece. Program notes often teach audience members about the origins of a piece, its first known performance, the ways it has been interpreted over the years, and what relevance it has for the present day. You might not address all of these things in your program note, but knowing about some or all of them will help you figure out what’s worth writing about. Note that primary and secondary sources are both appropriate here; you can use tertiary sources as a starting place, but they don’t count towards your two required sources. Cite all your sources (including tertiary sources) in a bibliography at the bottom of your essay, and if you quote from them, include a parenthetical citation with author name and page number next to the quote.
- 3) Write the program note in an accessible but not overly familiar style. Find ways to grab your audience’s attention and bring them inside the piece and its context. Do spend time describing how the music sounds and relating those sounds to its history, cultural context, meanings, and/or significance. Avoid overly technical jargon: roman numeral analysis would be out of place. But do use and define select jargon that’s helpful for understanding the music. For example, if you were writing about a balafon concert, you might want to introduce the term “jeli” or “Sundiata epic” to explain the cultural use and history of the instrument. Remember that program notes are part pedagogy, part entertainment.
- 4) A typical structure for a three-paragraph set of programs is 1) an introduction to the author/creator/composer; 2) acknowledgment of the cultural/historical/political/social context; 3) brief analysis of the piece. But what differentiates mediocre, formulaic program notes from truly exciting ones is the writer’s ability to link the introduction, context, and analysis with a unifying theme. That is, the brief composer biography should focus on details that are relevant both to the discussion of context and the analysis; thus the composer biography foreshadows what happens in the rest of the program notes.

Moodle Submission

You'll copy and paste your program notes into the appropriate Assignment text box on Moodle. Note that I'm setting a strict word limit of 1,250 words. As always, please copy and paste your text but not your name, the date, or the class. You may include a title if you choose, but it's not required.

Evaluation

The best program notes will blend musical description with attention to the history, culture, and meaning/significance of the piece. They will be engagingly and stylishly written. They will make clear connections between the piece and relevant class topics, readings, and discussions. They will show evidence that the author has consulted at least two pieces of additional scholarship to learn and transmit knowledge about the piece.

Resources

Model Program Notes

Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5 (New York Philharmonic)

(<https://nyphil.org/~media/pdfs/program-notes/1718/Prokofiev-Symphony-No-5.pdf>)

Debussy's *Sarabande and Dance* (Chicago Symphony Orchestra) - p. 27 of program

(https://cso.org/globalassets/pdfshared/program-notes/2017-18/programnotes_ravel_daphnis_and_chloe.pdf)

Haydn and Beethoven and Schumann, oh my! (Sierra Chamber Society)

(www.sierrachamber.com/08_program5.pdf)

How to Write Program Notes

Prof. J. Michael Allsen, "Writing Concert Program Notes: A Guide for UWW Students"

(<http://www.allsenmusic.com/NOTES/WritingNotes.html>)

Peabody Institute Guidelines for Preparing Program Notes

(<http://musiclibrary.peabody.jhu.edu/home/programnotes>)

(note that they say to avoid footnotes, but that doesn't apply for your assignment)

Final Project Proposal

Goals:

- 1) Develop a plausible, relatively original research idea;
- 2) Conduct preliminary primary and secondary research on your topic;
- 3) Practice a subset of the techniques other musicologists would use to address your topic.

Background:

Ideally, we'd spend the final half of this course developing an extensive, individual research project through which you'd apply what you've learned and forge new paths in musicology. Alas, time constraints make such an assignment impractical. As a compromise, I'd like you to *propose* but not actually complete an extensive, individual research project. Often the hardest part of such a project is getting started, so at least this way you'll work through the hardest part first, then you can always choose to complete the project in another course or on your own if you like.

Prompt:

Write a 1000-1250-word proposal for what would be a 10-15 page paper addressing some topic in music that is related to one of our class topics. Your proposal should include a brief introduction that concludes with a provisional thesis; a short literature review positioning your work within a broader scholarly conversation about your topic; and a prose "outline" of the way your paper would unfold, including analyses you would do, theories or scholarly models you would rely on, and implications of your research. You won't use bullet points in this section, but you may use the first person (I will do w and x to show y, which allows me to segue into a discussion of z, etc.). Your proposal should also include a bibliography in a consistent citation style (Chicago and MLA are the most common in musicology).

Choosing a Topic:

This really is the hardest part. I recommend focusing first on a piece or a musical tradition that interests you (this could be something you've touched on in a previous essay). Then, choose an "angle" or approach based on the preliminary research you do. Is the best way to make sense of your piece or tradition to do music analysis, ethnography, primary source study, or some other method? Is there an issue or a practice related to that music that seems similar to the issues or practices we've discussed in class? Does your topic offer a complicated or contradictory example of a phenomenon described by one of the scholars we've read? Remember that the purpose of this assignment isn't to prove something earth-shattering or come up with the most original topic ever conceived.

It's to practice doing musicology in greater depth and with greater flexibility than each of the previous writing assignments has allowed. If you're having a hard time coming up with a feasible topic, please consult with me or with Beth Christensen.

Research:

- You should locate a minimum of ten scholarly or otherwise reputable sources for this project. Ideally, those will be a blend of primary and secondary sources.
- You may use encyclopedias (including *Grove* and *Wikipedia*) as starting places, but they do not count towards your ten sources.
- You may use up to four popular press sources (that would include print or digital newspapers and magazines) but these must be highly credible (think *New York Times*, but not *Northfield News*) and they can only be used as primary, not secondary sources. If you're not sure why you would use such sources as primary sources, then you probably don't need to use them at all.
- Interviews and field notes count as one primary source each (that is, all interviews combined count as one primary source) and must be included when you submit your proposal.

Submission:

You'll submit your essay by uploading a link to a Google document (which will allow you to use footnotes whenever you're quoting or referring to a source) to Moodle. Your Google doc should include your essay, your bibliography, and any other prose materials you are including (like jottings or interview notes). I'm trusting you to keep your proposal to 1000-1250 words; footnotes, bibliography, and other prose materials don't count towards your total.

How to Write a "Lit Review"

The purpose of a literature review ("lit review" for short) is to summarize trends in the writing on your topic. Rather than going source-by-source, your job is to generalize about what scholars think about your topic. It's common to make a sweeping statement that you cite, with multiple sources in the same citation. Then, in the next sentences, you might unpack the sweeping statement by mentioning a specific source, always moving on to the next source rather quickly. Note that you do not need to mention every source you're using in the lit review, only those that establish the scholarly conversation you're entering. For example, here's a fake lit review including fake scholars and arguments that I would make if I were writing a research paper about *Moana*:

In recent years, scholars have increasingly focused on the way *Moana* reflects changing gender norms in the United States while inauthentically portraying traditional gender roles among Polynesian societies.¹ As Ephraim Hernandez has shown, the film's title character represents a kind of "girl power" ethos, with almost none of the feminine vulnerability of previous Disney princesses. Jones has discussed how the lack of a love interest in *Moana* bucks a trend of Disney films where an antagonist becomes a romantic partner to the main female character (for example, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Princess and the Frog*, *Frozen*). Yet as strong as Moana appears from an American gender-normative perspective, her classically "American" tale of rebellion and self-actualization contrasts sharply with anthropological accounts of femininity in Polynesian culture.²...

Here's a great guide on writing lit reviews from the UNC Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/literature-reviews/>), and here's a synthesis matrix exercise (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxQzWOgr8AurSUEtZjdfTXp0WkpHQ3M2Qmw3c2oxc0dwMlRR/view>) that helps you organize and compare ideas across sources by topic and idea rather than by author.

1. [Insert citations of scholars who discuss this topic.]
2. [Again, insert citations here.]

Appendix D. Pre- and Post-Test Questions

1. What is the genre of the music you're hearing? [audio excerpt is Chinese national anthem]
 - a. National Anthem
 - b. Choral Symphony
 - c. Symphonic Song
 - d. None of these

2. What instruments are you hearing? [audio excerpt is gamelan performance]
 - a. Steel Drum
 - b. Wind Chimes
 - c. Gamelan
 - d. Carillon

3. Which terms or phrases best describe the music you're hearing? Select all that apply. [audio excerpt is Islamic call to prayer]
 - a. *Liber Usualis*
 - b. Call to Prayer
 - c. Half-flat
 - d. Antiphonal
 - e. Gregorian Chant
 - f. Jubilus

4. What was the original purpose of music notation?
 - a. Prescribe/teach performance practice
 - b. Record performance practice
 - c. Enable large-scale composition
 - d. Establish music-theoretical principles

5. What are some examples of primary sources? Select all that apply.
 - a. Instruments
 - b. Richard Taruskin's *Oxford History of Western Music*
 - c. Letters
 - d. Historical dictionaries
 - e. Printing presses
 - f. Music videos
 - g. Concert reviews
 - h. *Oxford Music Online*

6. In which of these cases would it make the most sense to conduct ethnographic work?
 - a. When studying music rituals of the past

- b. When studying non-Western music
 - c. When studying the notated music of the present
 - d. When studying present-day, orally transmitted musical practices
7. Of the following methods, which might be used in studying this excerpt? Choose all that apply. [audio excerpt is Mozart's Piano Sonata in F major, K. 332, mvt. 1]
- a. Manuscript study
 - b. Sonata form analysis
 - c. Harmonic analysis
 - d. Oral transmission study
 - e. Participant-Observation
 - f. Composer interview
 - g. Reception study
8. Which of the following is the most authentic version of the folk spiritual, "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen?"
- a. [Facsimile of 1881 Fisk Jubilee Songbook arrangement]
 - b. [Audio recording of 1909 Tuskegee Institute Singers recording]
 - c. [Audio recording of 1924 Marian Anderson recording]
 - d. [Facsimile of 1867 *Slave Songs of the United States* transcription]
 - e. None of these
9. Explain how you determined your answer to the previous question. [open-ended response]
10. Which of these excerpts represent a repertory of music that has always relied on notational transmission?
- a. [Audio recording of Gamelan Cayala Asri performance]
 - b. [Audio recording of Agnus Dei from Mass for Christmas Day]
 - c. [Audio recording of Comtessa de Dia's *A chantar m'er*]
 - d. [Audio recording of adi tala]
 - e. [Audio recording of Beethoven's *Sonata Pathétique*, mvt. 1]
11. What are some examples of secondary sources? Select all that apply.
- a. Mozart's correspondence
 - b. *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*
 - c. Christopher Small's *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*
 - d. Zora Neale Hurston's "Spirituals and Neo-Spirituals"
 - e. Bruno Nettl's "Traditions: Recorded, Printed, Written, Oral, Virtual"

12. Which of these excerpts represents a repertory of music that originally or traditionally relied on oral transmission? Select all that apply.
- a. [Audio recording of Bach's "Ein Feste Burg ist unser Gott," BWV 80]
 - b. [Audio recording of Sioux Song of the Braves' dance, recorded by Frances Densmore]
 - c. [Audio recording of Comtessa de Dia's *A chantar m'er*]
 - d. [Audio recording of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, mvt. 5]
 - e. [Audio recording of adi tala]
 - f. [Audio recording of Islamic call to prayer]

Appendix E. Self-Reported Musical Experience Survey Questions

Getting to Know You

Thanks for completing this brief survey, which will help me get to to know you more quickly.

Your email address (epstein@stolaf.edu) will be recorded when you submit this form. Not **epstein**? [Sign out](#)

* Required

Here's a picture of a kitten, just because.



1. What would you like me to call you? (Please tell me about any nicknames and/or gender pronouns you prefer.) *

2. Where are you from? *

3. What is your class year? *

Mark only one oval.

- First
- Second
- Third
- Fourth

4. What is your student ID number? *

5. Do you have a phone, tablet, or laptop you can bring with you to class? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

6. Do you sing/play or have you ever sung/played an instrument? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Other: _____

7. How many years of experience do you have playing/performing music? *

8. Do you read music? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Other: _____

9. List any instruments or voice parts that are part of your musical past or present. *

10. **Everyone in class will sing in a large group, but would you be willing to perform as a soloist or in a small group in class? ***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

11. **What else are you taking this semester? ***

12. **Are you a music major? (Includes double majors) ***

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

13. **If you're a double major or a non-major, what is your non-music major, or what are you thinking of majoring in? (The word "major" starts looking really weird when you type it over and over again. Major major major major major...)** *

14. **How many music courses have you already taken at St. Olaf? Lessons and ensembles count as 1 "course" per semester. ***

Puppy Break



15. What do you hope to get out of this class? *

16. Do you have any dietary restrictions?
(Sometimes I bring cookies to class.)

17. What are your favorite kinds of music? *

18. Anything else you'd like me to know?

19. Do you consent to allowing your survey information to be analyzed confidentially as part of an ongoing research study? See the consent form for the study here: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BxQzWogr8AurNjZUTFJrLXIWU1U> The research team at St. Olaf College is the only party that will be allowed to see the survey data. You will not be identified in any publications resulting from this study. I will discuss the study in great detail in class. *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No

Send me a copy of my responses.

Appendix F. Interview Questions

Participant

Major:

Year:

Ensemble:

How do you think the class is going so far? Do you feel challenged, overwhelmed, bored, something else?

How does the class environment feel?

What areas of the course material do you feel most confident in? Least confident?

Are there any areas of the course material, class discussions, or conversations that you've found alienating or that you've disagreed with?

Are there any areas of the course material, class discussions, or conversations that have resonated with you?

How do you think you're doing in these areas?

- a.) Understanding terminology posted on Moodle
- b.) Understanding scholarly readings and lectures
- c.) Distinguishing musical examples in terms of genre

Do you think that any of your prior experiences, training, knowledge, etc. (musical or non-musical) have helped you in the course so far? If so, how and which experiences?

Do you think that you lack any prior experiences, training, knowledge, etc. (musical or non-musical) that would have helped you in the course so far?

Since starting this class, have you thought about music differently at all? How so?

Self Rated Musical Sophistication:

Anything else to add?

A Faculty Learning Community for Contingent Music Appreciation Instructors: Purpose, Structure, Outcomes

ESTHER M. MORGAN-ELLIS, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA

During 2018, I organized and facilitated a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) for our music appreciation instructors at the University of North Georgia. I am the coordinator of music appreciation and am responsible for the content and learning outcomes of forty sections taught by nineteen faculty members across four campuses and online. Before 2018 I had done little more than issue general guidelines. I resisted taking an active approach to the role for a number of reasons, including my own heavy teaching load. Above all, however, I wanted to respect the autonomy and individual expertise of our instructors, who brought to the role a variety of skills, experiences, and interests. Those who were performers had backgrounds in symphonic music, opera, jazz, and military music, while the roster of instructors also included composers, conductors, music theorists, and music historians. Most significantly, the instructors held a variety of statuses within the academy, ranging from part-time to tenured. Of the nineteen music appreciation instructors, twelve (63%) were contingent. Furthermore, these twelve faculty members taught 72.5% of the sections; most of the tenure-track instructors taught only one section during the year. Nearly three-quarters of all music appreciation classes were taught by faculty who were geographically isolated, did not attend department meetings, and had little or no access to professional development opportunities. For the most part, the instructors had not even met one another. Although I considered it best to grant maximum freedom to each instructor to teach the course as they saw fit, I lamented our lack of community and periodically wondered how it might be possible to bring the instructors into conversation with one another. I founded this FLC with the object of connecting and empowering the instructors, improving the instructors' teaching skills, and unifying the curriculum without unilaterally imposing my own values on an already largely disenfranchised teaching staff.

Although the FLC included both part-time and tenure-track faculty, I designed it with the needs of our contingent instructors foremost in my mind. The activities of the FLC included an opening day-long retreat and regular, ongoing online communication, including discussions about pedagogical resources and the sharing of syllabi and other course materials. Four of the thirteen participants also attended the 2018 Teaching Music History Conference and afterwards shared what they had learned with their colleagues in the FLC. At the end of the year, I sought to determine how participation in the FLC had impacted course content and delivery by examining responses to an open-ended questionnaire and quantifying participation in the various activities of the FLC. While a great deal of research on the effectiveness of FLCs has been published in the last fifteen years, few studies have investigated the impact of FLC participation on contingent faculty and none have described or examined a topic-based FLC in the field of music history. In this article, I will introduce the relevant literature on FLCs, describe my particular FLC for music appreciation instructors, and examine the impact of FLC participation at my institution.

Faculty Learning Communities

Milton D. Cox, founder of the Center for the Enhancement of Learning, Teaching, & University Assessment at Miami University, was the first to study FLCs. His definitions and descriptions were based on the faculty development programs that had been in place at his institution since 1979, when they were first funded by the Lilly Endowment as part of the Lilly Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellows Program. After the funding period had concluded, support from the Miami administration and faculty allowed the program—rechristened the Alumni Teaching Scholars Program—to persevere and grow.¹ It became a model for other institutions when Cox secured regional and national grants to fund the implementation of FLCs across the country over the following two decades.² By 2004, at least 308 FLCs flourished at institutions in thirty-three states and four Canadian provinces.³ Cox's analysis of the characteristics, goals, and outcomes of the various faculty communities that he had founded, led, and

1. Milton D. Cox, "The Role of Community in Learning: Making Connections for Your Classroom and Campus, Your Students and Colleagues," in *Teaching & Learning in College: A Resource for Educators*, ed. Gary S. Wheeler, 4th ed. (Elyria, OH: Info-Tec, 2002), 13.

2. Laurie Richlin and Amy Essington, "Overview of Faculty Learning Communities," *New Directions in Teaching and Learning* 97 (2004): 25.

3. Richlin and Essington, "Overview of Faculty Learning Communities," 28–30. Savita Kumari Malik, "Engaging in the Beautiful Struggle: Influence of Faculty Learning Communities on Teaching" (Ed.D. diss., San Francisco State University, 2012), 9.

observed over this period resulted in his formal description of Faculty Learning Communities.⁴

The FLC model is intended to address concerns about isolation in the academy, a problem that is most pronounced in the realm of teaching. Research from the 1930s to the present has documented the tendency of college faculty to teach in isolation, even when their research relies on collaboration and networking.⁵ Whatever else an FLC might accomplish, it should focus primarily “on the social aspects of building community” and it must count the formation of relationships among its desired outcomes.⁶ FLCs are therefore most likely to benefit populations that tend to feel the most isolated, including new faculty and adjunct faculty.⁷ Cox describes the power of FLCs to improve outcomes for faculty cohorts that have been “particularly affected by the isolation, fragmentation, stress, neglect, or chilly climate in the academy.”⁸ Although Cox is writing primarily about early-career faculty members on the tenure track, contingent faculty are most frequently subjected to these conditions and, therefore, should be included in FLC programs.

Cox recommends that an FLC constitute a cross-disciplinary team of eight to twelve faculty and staff members. These participants must “engage in an active, collaborative, yearlong program with a curriculum about enhancing teaching and learning.” In order to accomplish their goals, the members meet frequently and engage in a variety of activities that support professional/pedagogical development and “community building.”⁹ He goes on to describe two types of FLCs: cohort-based, in which members share a given status within the academy, and topic-based, in which learning revolves around a predetermined theme.¹⁰

FLCs are examples of *communities of practice*, defined as “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.”¹¹ All communities of practice have

4. Cox, “The Role of Community in Learning,” 13–14.

5. Milton D. Cox, “Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities,” *New Directions in Teaching and Learning* 97 (2004): 6; Malik, “Engaging in the Beautiful Struggle,” 8.

6. Malik, “Engaging in the Beautiful Struggle,” 9; Martha C. Petrone and Leslie Ortkvist-Ahrens, “Facilitating Faculty Learning Communities: A Compact Guide to Creating Change and Inspiring Community,” *New Directions in Teaching and Learning* 97 (2004): 64.

7. MaryJo D. Banasik and Jennifer L. Dean, “Non-Tenure Track Faculty and Learning Communities: Bridging the Divide to Enhance Teaching Quality,” *Innovative Higher Education* 41, no. 4 (2016): 335.

8. Cox, “The Role of Community in Learning,” 15.

9. Cox, “Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities,” 8.

10. Cox, “Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities,” 8–9.

11. Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Etienne Wenger-Trayner and Beverly Wenger-Trayner, “Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction,” 1, Wenger-Trayner, last

certain elements in common. These include decentralized leadership, reliance on informal and self-directed learning, and high levels of motivation among the participants.¹² Faculty developers describe the individuals who direct FLCs as “facilitators” instead of “leaders,” and their roles—which have been categorized by Martha C. Petrone and Leslie Ortquist-Ahrens as those of “champion,” “coordinator,” and “energizer”¹³—are more collaborative than directive.¹⁴ Furthermore, the goal of a facilitator is not to lead but rather to encourage FLC participants to take on the three facilitating roles themselves.¹⁵ The roles are not discreet jobs that need to be done, but should instead be understood as complementary approaches to supporting and directing the work of the FLC. For this reason, each role can be filled by any number of FLC members, and an individual member can take on more than one role. Participants work together to establish the goals of the FLC, steer progress towards those goals, and, in many cases, complete a clearly defined project of mutual interest.¹⁶

Although the positive impact of FLCs has been thoroughly documented,¹⁷ the impact of FLCs on contingent faculty specifically has not yet been adequately researched. However, two studies point to promising results. First, Nathan Bond’s study of a cohort-based FLC for contingent faculty found that it was successful in building community, decreasing feelings of isolation, introducing participants to new pedagogical approaches, increasing participants’ confidence as teachers, stimulating their willingness to experiment in the classroom, and raising levels of workplace satisfaction.¹⁸ Bond concluded that inviting contingent faculty to participate in existing FLCs is not adequate, and that instead “universities need to offer professional development specifically tailored to non-tenure track faculty.”¹⁹ Second, Haleh Azimi examined a topic-based FLC for contingent faculty at a community college, and likewise concluded that it was successful in building social capital for participants and facilitating curriculum reform.²⁰

updated April 15, 2015, <http://wenger-trayner.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/07-Brief-introduction-to-communities-of-practice.pdf>.

12. Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2.

13. Petrone and Ortquist-Ahrens, “Facilitating Faculty Learning Communities,” 65–66.

14. Cox, “Four Positions of Leadership in Planning, Implementing, and Sustaining Faculty Learning Community Programs,” *New Directions in Teaching and Learning* 148 (2016): 86.

15. Petrone and Ortquist-Ahrens, “Facilitating Faculty Learning Communities,” 64.

16. Cox, “Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities,” 9.

17. For an overview, see Cox, “Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities,” 10–12.

18. Nathan Bond, “Developing a Faculty Learning Community for Non-Tenure Track Professors,” *International Journal of Higher Education* 4/4 (2015): 8–9.

19. Bond, “Developing a Faculty Learning Community for Non-Tenure Track Professors,” 9.

20. Haleh Azimi, “Improving Adjunct Faculty Experiences: Implementing a Topics-Based Learning Community at a Community College” (Ed.D. diss., Drexel University, 2016), 122–4.

Most topic-based FLCs revolve around approaches to teaching or assessment and involve an interdisciplinary team of participants, so it is perhaps not surprising that my study of our FLC organized around topics in music appears to be a first.²¹ Although course-based FLCs might in some cases lack interdisciplinarity—a key component of the FLC philosophy²²—an FLC for music appreciation instructors will almost certainly be an interdisciplinary team, insofar as performance, conducting, music education, musicology, and music theory are to be considered separate disciplines. I argue that a course-based FLC can empower faculty to transform curriculum and pedagogy in ways that benefit both instructors and students. This model can be applied to any course that is taught by at least five faculty members, and is probably most applicable to high-enrollment general education and introductory courses.

The community that I describe below satisfies the essential requirements of an FLC: its primary purpose was to build relationships, its curriculum concerned the enhancement of teaching and learning, it engaged participants for a full year, and the participants steered the activities of the community and established its goals. At the same time, this FLC deviated from the model in three important ways. First, due to geographical concerns we interacted most often online, and as a result I have chosen to describe this as a convergent on- and offline FLC—a designation I have borrowed from music educator Janice Waldron.²³ Our online interactions took place via an Outlook Group that gave participants access to shared materials and a discussion platform. All participants could receive email notifications of discussion contributions. Although it is typical for FLC participants to engage in regular face-to-face meetings, according to a study by Norman Vaughn, 90% of FLCs use an online platform to facilitate discussion.²⁴ Vaughn's study of the effects of computer-mediated communication on FLCs revealed a number of advantages. Participants reported that online discussion was more systematic, more reflective, and more attentive to the perspectives of others than in-person discussion. The investigator hypothesized that asynchronous communication encouraged participants to

21. Reeves Shulstad wrote about her experience developing a plan to improve student engagement in Introduction to World Music for this *Journal*, but the FLC in which he participated was focused on scholarly teaching, not music. See “Student Engagement through Faculty Engagement: Faculty Learning Communities as Professional Development,” this *Journal* 4/2 (2014): 276. <http://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/126>

22. Cox, “Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities,” 8.

23. Janice Waldron, “YouTube, Fanvids, Forums, Vlogs and Blogs: Informal Music Learning in a Convergent On- and Offline Music Community,” *International Journal of Music Education* 31/1 (2013): 102.

24. Norman Vaughn, “Technology in Support of Faculty Learning Communities,” *New Directions in Teaching and Learning* 97 (2004): 105.

reflect at greater length, while the semi-permanency of online communication led them to consider their contributions carefully.²⁵

Second, in addition to our geographical limitations, concern for the rights and autonomy of participants, especially the participating contingent faculty, led me to develop a looser structure for the FLC than is typical. Because contingent faculty are not remunerated for faculty development and could not expect any benefits from participation in terms of raises or promotions, I offered them maximum freedom in deciding when and how to engage with the activities of the FLC. Although on-campus professional development programs are sometimes available for contingent faculty, they report a number of circumstances that prevent their participation, including the lack of online options.²⁶ The Outlook Group helped facilitate this freedom as the group activities online were asynchronous and participants could choose when or if to participate. They were invited—but not required—to attend the retreat and conference. This open structure was unusual, but it served the instructors well. A core group of enthusiastic participants attended the in-person events and drove the online discussion, and others took part intermittently based on interest and availability.

Third, I was disinclined to provide specific goals for the FLC to accomplish. I leveraged my position as coordinator (and as a tenure-track faculty member with access to institutional funding) to bring the FLC into existence, but I sought to decentralize my role and grant as much steering authority as possible to the participants. Although the desired outcomes for most FLCs are clearly articulated before the community is formed, I trusted that a sense of purpose would emerge from our conversation.

This approach—enlisting a flexible community of participants to engage in loosely-defined work—could have resulted in stagnation and collapse, but it did not. Instead, sustained and active participation from FLC members produced extraordinary transformations across the curriculum and set our music appreciation program on a new path.

25. *Ibid.*

26. Other impediments to participating in on-campus professional development include the difficulty of making a year-long commitment, inconvenient scheduling, failure to provide sufficient notice, the fact that food is not provided at meetings, the absence of remuneration or other recognition, and having to pay for parking (Buch, McCullough, and Tamberelli, “Understanding and Responding to the Unique Needs and Challenges Facing Adjunct Faculty,” 31; Azimi, “Improving Adjunct Faculty Experiences,” 124–5). The director of the University of North Georgia Center for Teaching, Learning, and Leadership reports that, while contingent faculty of all types are invited to participate in Faculty Academies (institution-wide FLCs focused on scholarly productivity and teaching), very few do so (Mary Carney, “Question,” email to author, January 21, 2019). Faculty Academies at the University of North Georgia include High-Impact Practices, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Write Now, New Faculty Institute, Research-Based Teaching, and Teaching Conversations.

An FLC for Contingent Music Appreciation Instructors

For several years before undertaking this initiative, I was concerned about the quality and consistency of our music appreciation curriculum and course delivery. My apprehensions did not stem from any doubts about the capabilities of the instructors. They are all highly qualified (most have terminal degrees in music), experienced, and committed. All the same, these instructors faced two significant challenges. First, they were dispersed geographically across four campuses, the two most distant of which are separated by nearly seventy miles. Second, most were part-time employees, a status that impacted their abilities to build and participate in institutional communities, pursue faculty development opportunities, and improve their teaching.

Like other institutions, UNG relies heavily on adjunct faculty, and the needs of the contingent faculty I was supervising were my highest concern.²⁷ Despite the vital services they provide, contingent faculty often find themselves in an unsupportive work environment. Survey and interview data indicate that lack of access to community is the most significant challenge these faculty face.²⁸ One team of investigators reported that “a sense of isolation and disconnect- edness from their departments and colleagues” was prevalent, affecting 32% of study participants.²⁹ Irregular and heavy teaching schedules, frequent com- muting, exclusion from department activities, and social marginalization due to status make it difficult for contingent faculty to make social connections.³⁰

Many of these conditions affect the contingent faculty teaching music appreciation in the University of North Georgia Music Department. To begin with, they have few formal opportunities to interact with their colleagues. Part- time faculty are permitted to attend meetings and retreats, but they cannot vote and are not included in communications about voting items. Most of our contingent faculty have studio instruction responsibilities and therefore a large

27. Currently, contingent faculty make up the majority of the workforce, with estimates ranging from 70% to 79%, and they often teach the introductory courses that determine whether or not a student will pursue a given major (Kimberly Buch, Heather McCullough, and Laura Tamberelli, “Understanding and Responding to the Unique Needs and Challenges Facing Adjunct Faculty: A Longitudinal Study,” *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 16/10 (2017): 27; Bond, “Developing a Faculty Learning Community for Non-Tenure Track Professors,” 1; Roger G. Baldwin and Matthew R. Wawrzynski, “Contingent Faculty as Teachers: What We Know; What We Need to Know,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 55/11 (2011): 1486).

28. Azimi, “Improving Adjunct Faculty Experiences,” 122.

29. Buch, McCullough, and Tamberelli, “Understanding and Responding to the Unique Needs and Challenges Facing Adjunct Faculty,” 30.

30. Buch, McCullough, and Tamberelli, “Understanding and Responding to the Unique Needs and Challenges Facing Adjunct Faculty,” 30–31; Azimi, “Improving Adjunct Faculty Experiences,” 122.

number of irregularly scheduled classes—and many teach on more than one campus. As a result, few part-time faculty members attend the annual retreat or come to monthly meetings. Their opportunities to pursue community and professional development outside of the music department are also limited.

My goal in creating this FLC was to build community around the music appreciation course for the purpose of improving the experience of both instructors and students (although I did not investigate student-centered outcomes in this particular study). Given my hands-off approach to the role of coordinator, there is a great deal of variation between sections. Because I believe that music appreciation courses are best when the instructor teaches the material about which they are passionate, the standards I have put in place allow instructors (myself included) to choose their own texts and craft their own curricula. With this FLC, I wanted to establish a structure within which instructors could build relationships with one another, communicate, reflect on their practices, and develop as educators. I also wanted to provide support in the form of remuneration, development funding, pedagogical resources, and mentorship.

It is important to demonstrate need before implementing an FLC, as faculty tend to flout what they perceive as meaningless administrative structures.³¹ I began by assessing the needs of the faculty; after establishing that there was widespread interest in an FLC, I applied for internal funding. My institution offers competitive support for projects that “promote innovative institutional practices that support the University of North Georgia mission and the priorities established in the Strategic Plan,” with a special emphasis on “improved unit performance” and “learning communities.”³² Through this program, I was able to secure \$5,000. I used this money to provide stipends to instructors who participated in the retreat, fund conference travel, and facilitate several concerts for music appreciation students.³³

Next, I created an online platform using Outlook Groups. I added all music appreciation instructors to the Group and have not restricted access to the activities of the FLC at any point—another unusual characteristic of this FLC. (It is typical for participants to apply for membership, which is then fixed for

31. Gary M. Shulman, Milton D. Cox, and Laurie Richlin Dear, “Institutional Considerations in Developing a Faculty Learning Community Program,” *New Directions in Teaching and Learning* 97 (2004): 42.

32. “Presidential Incentive Awards,” *University of North Georgia*, accessed April 18, 2019, <https://ung.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-awards/presidential-awards.php>.

33. While confirming that the instructors were interested in participating in an FLC, I also asked what other materials or opportunities they would like to be made available for their students. The instructors agreed that their students had inadequate access to live performances. Specifically, they noted a lack on non-Western concert opportunities across campuses and the absence of any live music on the peripheral campuses. The balance of the grant, therefore, funded a chamber music concert on the Oconee campus and performances by a group from the Atlanta Korean Cultural Center on the Dahlonega and Gainesville campuses.

the duration of the FLC.³⁴) However, I wanted to encourage maximum participation, respect the various levels at which members desired to participate, and foster a community that would respond easily to changes in membership as new faculty were hired over the course of the year.

Once funding had been secured, I scheduled our retreat and began curating a library of pedagogical resources. These included seven articles from this *Journal*, three articles from *Journal of Research in Music Education*, three articles from *Music Educators Journal*, and three chapters from Mary Natvig's collection *Teaching Music History* (see Appendix 1 for a complete list). I made these readings available and encouraged participants to peruse them before our retreat. I also collected syllabi and assignments from instructors and made these available online.

The retreat took place in early February on the central campus, and all participants who attended were paid \$100. Six faculty members attended the retreat, all of whom continued to participate for the remainder of the year. (I also met independently with two faculty members who had wanted to attend the retreat but were unable due to conflicts.) During our five-hour meeting we discussed the objectives of a music appreciation course, drafted a list of learning outcomes, shared our concert report assignments, gave brief presentations on specific teaching tools, and reflected on the advantages and disadvantages of various textbooks. I kept careful notes that I later shared via the Outlook Group so that all participants could contribute to the discussion. FLC specialists advise facilitators to regularly communicate their vision by engaging stakeholders in conversation, while at the same time maintaining flexibility and allowing participants to determine the direction in which the FLC develops.³⁵ The retreat allowed me to implement these practices and served to set the tone for our ongoing activities.

In June of 2018, I used grant funds to bring three part-time instructors with me to the Teaching Music History Conference (TMHC). The four of us attended presentations and chatted informally, but I did not provide structure outside of the conference schedule. Following the conference, each of us wrote an account of what we had learned to share with the other participants via the Outlook Group.

The Outlook Group replaced face-to-face meetings and even video conferencing due to the complexity of participant schedules and locations. Instead, we used it to communicate throughout the year, thereby establishing our identity as a convergent on- and offline community. I strongly encouraged participants

34. Cox, "Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities," 8–9.

35. Shulman, Cox, and Dear, "Institutional Considerations in Developing a Faculty Learning Community Program," 43–44; Petrone and Ortquist-Ahrens, "Facilitating Faculty Learning Communities," 68.

to share questions, concerns, ideas, and resources, and I periodically started conversations on relevant topics, especially following our in-person interactions at the retreat and conference. However, I did not lay out a formal program of discussion topics, and I did not participate personally in every discussion. In fact, I did little more than create a space in which instructors could consult one another and then provide periodic reminders that the space was available. These discussions—which I will describe in greater detail below—constituted the primary activity of our FLC.

Outcomes

The outcomes of this FLC were significant. I will address them from three angles. First, I will provide data concerning participation in the online discussions. Second, I will share the results of a questionnaire-based study that I conducted at the end of the year. Finally, I will outline the current activities of the FLC, which themselves provide meaningful insight into what was accomplished in the first year. I have chosen not to discuss evidence from course evaluations because our institution uses an instrument that has not been normed and therefore cannot be assumed to provide meaningful data.³⁶

Over the course of 2018, members of the FLC made eighty-one contributions to fifteen discussion threads. Of these threads, eight were started by me, one was started by another tenure-track faculty member, and six were started by part-time faculty members. While all nineteen instructors were included in the Outlook Group and therefore might have read any or all of the contributions, thirteen members actively participated in online discussion. These included five tenure-track faculty members and eight part-time faculty members. Naturally, I was the most active participant, with twenty-three contributions. The other tenure-track participants made an average of 4.5 contributions each, while the part-time participants made an average of 5 contributions each. These numbers are skewed, however, by the four part-time faculty members who participated in only one or two discussions. The remaining four part-time participants were responsible for 56.9% of the 58 contributions that did not originate from me, and made an average of 8.25 contributions each. The second-, fourth-, fifth-, and sixth- most active participants were all part-time faculty members. In short, part-time faculty members were on average the most active in the discussion, and some engaged with great enthusiasm.

Discussion topics included course objectives, popular music examples for demonstrating music fundamentals, topical source readings to assign in class,

36. Satish Nargundkar and Milind Shrikhande, "Norming of Student Evaluations of Instruction: Impact of Noninstructional Factors," *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education* 12, no. 1 (2014): 55–56.

the concert review assignment, the Teaching Music History Conference, how to structure a course schedule, Reba Wissner's gallery walk exercise,³⁷ pedagogical technology, cover versions of classical repertoire, and the creation of a new textbook. I also used the Outlook Group to schedule the retreat, promote the resource library, share information about the Teaching Music History Conference, and advertise concerts that I had organized for music appreciation students. None of these communications are included in the above statistics.

Interestingly, the contents of these discussions closely aligned with the types of activities characteristically pursued by any community of practice, which can be viewed in Appendix 2.³⁸ These included documenting projects ("Can someone compile all the links in a folder on the team site?"), seeking experience ("This week I am doing a section on concert etiquette... Any [...] suggestions, success stories, sources I can add to my collection?"), reusing assets ("I can also share the PowerPoint files if anyone wants to use these"; "I'm sending my course outline again, but with added links to my Prezi slideshows"), discussing developments ("I've been wanting to create a writing assignment in which students compare settings [musical interpretations] of the same text by multiple composers"), and mapping knowledge/identifying gaps ("I'm wanting to revamp my approach to Music App next semester. Do you know of any textbooks or sources that organize music into 'moods' [for lack of a better term]?"). Many of these quotations also exemplify the activity of growing confidence, which I believed to be particularly significant. This last question, for example, came from an instructor who ended up abandoning his textbook and redesigning his course from scratch. His work and enthusiasm in turn inspired the ongoing textbook project. Overall, participants engaged in a variety of meaningful exchanges that apparently helped them to improve their own teaching and thinking, evidence of which came from their end-of-year reports.

At the end of the fall semester I asked participants to complete an open-ended questionnaire containing ten items (included as Appendix 3). This study was undertaken with the approval of my Institutional Review Board. I had initially intended to conduct a focus group, but this was impractical due to the same circumstances that prevented us from meeting regularly in person or via teleconference. I received six responses, for a response rate of 32%. Two responses were from tenure-track faculty members and four were from part-time faculty members. I coded the open-ended responses using descriptive

37. Reba Wissner, "Using Gallery Walks for Engagement in the Music History Classroom," *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy*, vol. 6, accessed January 22, 2019, <http://flipcamp.org/engagingstudents6/essays/wissner.html>.

38. Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, "Communities of Practice," 3.

and values methods, and I took note of significant trends as they emerged.³⁹ All of the responses came from participants whom I would describe as heavily involved in the activities of the FLC, although not all were involved in the same ways; for example, four were frequent discussion participants, averaging 13.25 contributions each, while two were not, averaging 2.5 contributions each. In general, however, the data represents a particular faculty type: the individual who is eager to participate in professional development and to take on the accompanying challenges. These individuals are also likely to have been the most impacted by their participation in the FLC. We must take into account, therefore, the fact that these responses tend to represent one extreme, and that other participants probably had less meaningful experiences with the FLC.

Although only two respondents had participated in every activity of the FLC, all had engaged with multiple aspects. Three respondents had attended the retreat and three had attended the conference. Five reported participating in online discussions (although all six did in fact participate), four mentioned reading articles, and four mentioned reading other instructors' syllabi. One had also engaged with other instructors using social media, which was not a formal component of the FLC. While the respondents reported a diversity of experiences, it was clear that they found the retreat and the conference to be the most valuable. Four wrote about how important it was to talk about teaching in person. Other studies have also documented the value of face-to-face communication in FLCs, which has been observed to foster relationships and promote a sense of community.⁴⁰

Participation in the FLC had minimal impact on course delivery in the spring semester, but dramatic impact in the fall. Four respondents completely redesigned their courses in response to new ideas they had encountered as FLC participants. All four abandoned the chronological approach, ceased to use a textbook, and created their own course materials, including slides, listening resources, and assessments. One respondent did not teach in the fall, and one made only minor changes to lectures and content. Respondents also reported integrating new teaching technologies, soliciting regular feedback from students, favoring depth over breadth, and integrating new modes of assessment. FLCs have been previously demonstrated to serve as effective vehicles for the improvement of curriculum and the development of new pedagogical approaches, and the survey results bear out these findings.⁴¹

39. Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 70–71, 89–90.

40. Vaughan, "Technology in Support of Faculty Learning Communities," 105.

41. Cox, "Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities," 12; Jennifer Loertscher, "Cooperative Learning for Faculty: Building Communities of Practice," *Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Education* 39, no. 5 (2011): 391.

Interestingly, participation in the FLC had no impact on the respondents' opinions regarding the purpose of a music appreciation class, which were variously "reinforced" or "reaffirmed." One respondent was "still confused" about the course's purpose. Cox advises that FLC participants "embrace ambiguity,"⁴² and I made no effort during the course of our activities to establish a single theory of music appreciation pedagogy. Participation had varying impact on respondents' enthusiasm for teaching music appreciation. Three reported an increase, while three indicated that they had always been enthusiastic and remained so. Finally, the respondents requested that all facets of the FLC be continued, with a special emphasis on in-person opportunities such as the retreat and conference.

In 2019, the FLC continues to flourish. Seven faculty members attended a second retreat in early January, despite the fact that I was unable to offer stipends this year,⁴³ and during the first two weeks of classes six faculty participated in three online discussions. Informal reports suggest that many of the instructors have adopted teaching tools that they learned about at the retreat (e.g. music visualization videos created by YouTube user Smalin) and conference (e.g. the polling software Mentimeter⁴⁴), and I secured a second Presidential Innovation Incentive Award to fund our continued activities. Part of this award will go to the purchase of ukuleles for use in music appreciation classrooms—another idea we took away from the conference.⁴⁵

One of our early 2019 discussions launched a spin-off book study group. An instructor was seeking advice on how to handle classroom discussions and was interested in identifying a good text on the subject. During 2018, we had read articles about the pedagogical benefits of discussion and been encouraged to incorporate discussion by conference presenters, so this topic was a direct outgrowth of FLC activities. I posted his question to the AMS Pedagogy Study Group Facebook page and shared the recommendations that I received with the FLC. Several instructors were interested in reading one or other of the books and asked for assistance in purchasing them. I applied for and received a \$250 Teaching Circle grant from our Center for Teaching, Learning, and Leadership,

42. Cox, "Introduction to Faculty Learning Communities," 10.

43. Although I secured a second grant, the award schedule changed, and our retreat took place before funding decisions were announced.

44. This tool was presented by Alisha Nypaver in her talk "Engineering Immersive Listening Experiences for Students," which can be viewed here: <https://indstate.yuja.com/Library/a2c2292a-c765-4423-a4d9-ddf53c4a1d51/WatchVideo/1530294>

45. This tool was presented by Paula Bishop in her talk "The Mighty Uke to the Rescue," which can be viewed here: <https://indstate.yuja.com/Library/a2c2292a-c765-4423-a4d9-ddf53c4a1d51/WatchVideo/1530295>

which allowed me to purchase two copies each of four books.⁴⁶ I created a separate Outlook Group for the seven book study participants (all part-time instructors, other than myself) to share their reflections as we read the books in pairs.

Finally, our FLC activities have been significantly more structured as we take on a major collaborative project: the creation of a new textbook to be published under a Creative Commons license and made freely available to students. The idea for this textbook emerged from an online discussion in late March of 2018. It quickly gained support and a number of contingent faculty expressed their interest in being involved in its creation. To this end, I have secured a \$30,000 Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant. This grant will provide stipends ranging from \$2,250 to \$5,000 to each contributor and cover all costs related to the peer review and publication of our textbook by UNG Press. We are using a series of Google Docs to develop an outline, draft text, provide feedback, and accumulate audiovisual materials. While we continue to discuss general pedagogical concerns using the Outlook Group, nine FLC participants (myself included) are also at work on this project.

Conclusion

My objectives for this FLC were to connect and empower the instructors, improve the instructors' teaching skills, and unify the curriculum. However, I could not possibly have foreseen the dramatic ways in which progress toward these goals was to be made. I had been concerned about trespassing on contingent instructors' time and asking them to perform uncompensated labor, but they have demonstrated continued eagerness to engage in a variety of enrichment activities. Many participants gave me the impression that they had been waiting for permission to transform their courses. Before participating in the FLC they had felt disempowered and cautious, but the opportunity to engage in conversation and steer curriculum development left them confident and inspired. As a result, students across sections likely benefitted from a revised curriculum, up-to-date teaching tools, and revitalized instruction. Although further research would be required to fully understand the impact of the FLC on students, I am happy to report that one of our contingent instructors recently won an institution-wide teaching award. While I don't credit this

46. Based on instructor interest, I purchased Stephen Brookfield's *Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms*, Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana's *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions*, Jose Antonio Bowen's *Teaching Naked: How Moving Technology Out of Your College Classroom Will Improve Student Learning*, and Jennifer H. Herman and Linda B. Nilson's *Creating Engaging Discussions: Strategies for "Avoiding Crickets" in Any Size Classroom and Online*.

instructor's success to his active participation in the FLC, the experience must have strengthened his application. We have certainly begun to develop a culture in which pedagogical growth is supported, encouraged, and rewarded by a network of engaged teachers.

The current activities of the FLC promise to further benefit instructors, who will have the opportunity to shape a new textbook for use in their courses, and students, who will have access to a no-cost text. The textbook—although not part of my initial vision for the FLC—will achieve my goal of standardizing the curriculum through a collaborative process. In addition, it has provided a significant source of additional income to contributors. The book study group—another initiative that did not originate with me—has also proved valuable and inspiring as we take on the challenge of improving classroom discussion as a teaching community. Students are again poised to profit from the incorporation of improved discussion techniques in many of our music appreciation classrooms.

I also could not have anticipated the impact of this FLC on my own teaching and academic work. I had not imagined at the outset that I would so fundamentally reconceive the purpose and structure of my own sections of the course. Following two redesigns (one in the spring and one in the fall), I settled on a sequence of non-chronological topics, incorporated about 50% new material drawn from popular and non-Western repertoires, reweighted my assessment schema to favor online discussions over knowledge exams, placed discussion at the center of my class meetings, incorporated regular in-class polling, and shifted the focus of the course from knowledge acquisition to critical listening and thinking skills. My course evaluations have improved markedly. Unlike the other participants in the FLC, who responded most strongly to in-person conversation, I was primarily influenced by the readings I completed, especially the 2013 collection of essays titled “Current Trends in Teaching Music Appreciation: A Roundtable” that appeared in this *Journal*.⁴⁷ However, it was the community in which I was participating that inspired me to take on this substantial project, and I derived support from my frequent interactions with enthusiastic colleagues and from the knowledge that I was not alone in tackling a conceptual redesign.

I was surprised to discover—both by means of the questionnaire-based study and informal conversation—that instructors valued opportunities for

47. The individual essays I supplied to FLC participants included: Steven Cornelius and Mary Natvig, “Teaching Music Appreciation: A Cultural Approach,” this *Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013): 139–150, <http://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/104>; Thomas Forrest Kelly, “Music Then and Now,” this *Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013): 151–156, <http://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/115>; and Robin Wallace, “In Favor of a Skills-Based Approach to Music Appreciation: Pedagogy and Personal History,” this *Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013): 157–164, <http://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/117>.

in-person interaction so highly. I had initially designed the FLC with a minimal emphasis on face-to-face meetings, hesitant to demand additional time and labor from our contingent instructors. Those same instructors, however, have requested more face-to-face discussion time. It is clear that they place a high value on community not only in the sense of connection and communication but also as an act of physical copresence. In the future, therefore, I plan to schedule a retreat at the beginning of each semester (instead of each calendar year), and I will be experimenting with video conferencing. While our convergent on- and offline model was successful, it seems that online, text-based discussion cannot replace face-to-face conversation and that in-person meetings are worth the additional effort.

The loose structure of the FLC paid significant dividends. A discussion thread started by one of our contingent instructors sparked the idea that is becoming our open-access music appreciation textbook—a project that will have a major impact at our institution and hopefully beyond. The book study group also grew out of a discussion thread started by a contingent instructor. At the same time, the loose structure brought challenges. Discussion activity was not consistent throughout the year. As might be expected, participation has been enthusiastic at the beginning of each semester, but has flagged in the final month. Perhaps this is not a problem—there is no question that our instructors are overloaded with academic and performance responsibilities in December and April, and it might be best to allow the activities of the FLC to take a natural hiatus. However, a formal schedule of discussion topics or deadlines would address this concern. Greater structure might also heighten the participation of instructors who prefer assignments and deadlines. It is likely that some of the FLC members were inclined to prioritize concrete tasks over engagement with the fluid and low-stakes activities of the FLC, with the result of missed opportunities for them and their colleagues.

The results of this study are preliminary, and might be strengthened by the use of focus groups, student surveys, or analysis of retention and performance data. There are also a number of additional questions that might be pursued. It is clear that some FLC participants changed their approaches to teaching music appreciation, but how did those changes impact students? I will be seeking to answer this question in part next year when I work with a colleague to determine the effect of our new textbook on student learning outcomes. While this FLC was successful in promoting community and pedagogical growth, what impact might it have on participants' careers in the long term? It will be interesting to see whether contingent members are retained at a higher rate, or whether they have greater success in securing full-time employment, whether at the University of North Georgia or at other institutions.

Despite unanswered questions, the present results clearly indicate that a topic-based FLC for contingent instructors can produce significant positive outcomes. I strongly encourage tenure-track faculty to leverage their access to institutional resources for the purpose of establishing similar FLCs at institutions that exhibit need. This can be done by individuals or by teaching centers, and can be successful with minimal support; 37% of topic-based FLCs nationwide operate successfully on a budget under \$2000, although FLCs with higher budgets can incorporate more conferences and retreats.⁴⁸ Cox notes that course releases and conference travel constitute the greatest part of FLC budgets across institutions. He concludes, however, that these expenditures are not necessary to the success of an FLC, since treating participants with dignity and respect “earns their generous time commitment, appreciation, and long-term support.”⁴⁹ Likewise, the most important characteristics of an FLC such as I have described here must be respect for contingent faculty as scholars and teachers and the intent to facilitate genuine empowerment.

48. Richlin and Essington, “Overview of Faculty Learning Communities,” 32.

49. Cox, “The Role of Community in Learning” 16.

Appendix 1. Pedagogical Readings Supplied to FLC Participants

- Archetto, Maria. "Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Introduction to Music Course." In *Teaching Music History*, edited by Mary Natvig, 69–76. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.
- Bisson, Noël. "First Nights: Awakening Students' Critical Skills in a Large Lecture Course." In *Teaching Music History*, edited by Mary Natvig, 95–107. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.
- Coolen, Michael T. "Appreciation as If It Mattered." *Music Educators Journal* 69, no. 3 (1982): 29–30, 49.
- Cornelius, Steven and Mary Natvig. "Teaching Music Appreciation: A Cultural Approach." *This Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013): 139–150.
- Dirkse, Scott. "Encouraging Empirical Research: Findings from the Music Appreciation Classroom." *This Journal* 2, no. 1 (2011): 25–35.
- Freeman, Robert. "Music Appreciation Because the Future Depends on It." *Music Educators Journal* 70, no. 3 (1983): 62–64.
- Halpern, Jessica. "Effects of Historical and Analytical Teaching Approaches on Music Appreciation." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 40, no. 1 (1992): 39–46.
- Hafer, Edward. "A Pedagogy of the Pedagogy of Music Appreciation." *This Journal* 3, no. 1 (2012): 57–75.
- Huang, Hao. "Music Appreciation Class Broadening Perspectives." *Music Educators Journal* 84, no. 2 (1997): 29–33.
- Hund, Jennifer L. "What Is the Discipline of Music Appreciation? Reconsidering the Concert Report." *This Journal* 4, no. 2 (2014): 255–272.
- . "Writing about Music in Large Music Appreciation Classrooms Using Active Learning, Discipline-Specific Skills, and Peer Review." *This Journal* 2, no. 2 (2012): 117–132.
- Kelly, Thomas Forrest. "Music Then and Now." *This Journal* 4, no.1 (2013): 151–156.
- Roth, Marjorie. "The 'Why' of Music: Variations on a Cosmic Theme." In *Teaching Music History*, edited by Mary Natvig, 77–94. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002.
- Smialek, Thomas and Renee Reiter Boburka. "The Effect of Cooperative Listening Exercises on the Critical Listening Skills of College Music-Appreciation Students." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 54, no. 1 (2006): 57–72.

- Wallace, Robin. "In Favor of a Skills-Based Approach to Music Appreciation: Pedagogy and Personal History." *This Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013): 157–164.
- Zalanowski, Annette H. "Music Appreciation and Hemisphere Orientation: Visual versus Verbal Involvement." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 38, no. 3 (1990): 197–205.

Appendix 2: Typical activities of a community of practice (from Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015).

Activity	Example
Problem solving	“Can we work on this design and brainstorm some ideas; I’m stuck.”
Requests for information	“Where can I find the code to connect to the server?”
Seeking experience	“Has anyone dealt with a customer in this situation?”
Reusing assets	“I have a proposal for a local area network I wrote for a client last year. I can send it to you and you can easily tweak it for this new client.”
Coordination and synergy	“Can we combine our purchases of solvent to achieve bulk discounts?”
Building an argument	“How do people in other countries do this? Armed with this information it will be easier to convince my Ministry to make some changes.”
Growing confidence	“Before I do it, I’ll run it through my community first to see what they think.”
Discussing developments	“What do you think of the new CAD system? Does it really help?”
Documenting projects	“We have faced this problem five times now. Let us write it down once and for all.”
Visits	“Can we come and see your after-school program? We need to establish one in our city.”
Mapping knowledge and identifying gaps	“Who knows what, and what are we missing? What other groups should we connect with?”

Appendix 3: Items included in the questionnaire.

1. Which training opportunities did you engage in? Please provide details about how you engaged. [Training opportunities included: reading articles shared to the Outlook Group, reading other instructors' syllabi or assignments, sharing your own syllabi or assignments, participating in discussion, attending the retreat, and attending the conference]
2. Which training opportunities did you find to be valuable? Why?
3. How did the training impact your course delivery in the Spring semester?
4. How did the training impact your opinion about the purpose(s) of a Music Appreciation class?
5. How did the training impact your plans for course delivery in the Fall semester?
6. Have you developed any new assignments or lectures in response to the training?
7. How did the training impact your enthusiasm for teaching Music Appreciation?
8. How (if at all) has your course content changed in response to the training?
9. How (if at all) has your text choice(s) changed in response to the training?
10. What (if any) training opportunities would you like to see provided in future semesters?

Remaking the Canon in their Own Images: Creative-Writing Projects in the Music History Classroom¹

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Many students who take my courses on Western “classical” music come to the classroom aware of (and even espousing) a common assumption: that a music history course will teach them a single, authoritative, “right” way to hear and interpret musical works, one that stems primarily from the composer. This view is particularly prominent among my students who have had experience as performers of classical music. When discussing performance aesthetics, I ask how many have heard a private teacher or conductor enjoin them to respect the “composer’s intentions”—virtually all who have studied piano, voice, or an orchestral instrument raise their hands. Moreover, those who come to class with prior music history or theory coursework are accustomed to analyzing works in order to explicate a composer’s strategies. Of course, exploring a composer’s decision-making and aesthetics can be highly rewarding in the classroom and in scholarship. At the same time, I also hope to instill a broader perspective in my students: I hope that they will appreciate how meaning can be shaped not just by composers’ designs, but by performers’ decisions and, perhaps most importantly, by the perspectives that listeners bring to a work.

In this essay, I explore two creative writing assignments that I have designed and implemented to help students cultivate this perspective. These assignments ask students to radically reinterpret canonic musical works, offering vivid, open-ended (and admittedly exaggerated) experiments that at once require close engagement with the “original” text and demonstrate how historical context and performer decisions can shape the manifold ways in which we experience and understand musical works. In the first, students develop programmatic narratives for the first movement of Beethoven’s “Eroica” Symphony, following in the footsteps of nineteenth-century music critics but steering clear of Napoleonic readings. In the second, students design alternative productions

1. I would like to thank Beth Fisher and Meg Gregory of Washington University in Saint Louis’s Teaching Center for their guidance and feedback while I was writing this article.

of operas (specifically Mozart and Da Ponte's *Così fan tutte* and Bizet, Meilhac, and Halévy's *Carmen*), free to rework setting, characterization, and even plot in response to the original works' cultural politics (particularly their representations of gender and/or race). I developed these projects for three courses that do not require any previous musical experience and are open to both majors and non-majors at my institution: the "Eroica" project in a 100-level course on Beethoven, the *Così* project in a 100-level course on Mozart, and the *Carmen* project in a 300-level course on Romanticism. One could easily design comparable projects, though, for other works, repertoires, and kinds of courses. Depending on the size and format of the class, I have assigned creative writing as individual or small-group projects.

Such assignments might seem to digress from the kind of inquiry we most often pursue in music-history courses. As instructors, we rigorously situate music within specific historical and cultural contexts, and we model analytical and interpretive approaches bolstered by historically appropriate terminologies and methodologies. The assignments I am discussing here, by contrast, encourage freewheeling anachronism and highly individual responses. But I propose that creative reinterpretation assignments can contribute to some of our most important objectives as teachers of music history. They encourage students to embrace a multifaceted view of musical works, one that extends from the score to the stage and audience and that foregrounds both musical detail and broader cultural, aesthetic, political, and ethical issues. More broadly, these assignments can nudge students' growth as musicians and listeners who are empowered to think creatively, even opinionatedly, about their own engagement with music.

Creative Writing across the Disciplines

Music history and theory instructors often incorporate creative work into their courses. Model composition and recomposition are common in the classroom as well as in research.² My own symphonic and operatic assignments resemble projects about which other music history instructors have written and in which students produce prose rather than original music. Aaron Ziegel, for example, teaches program music through activities in which students articulate what they believe a programmatic work depicts or evaluate how vividly it conveys

2. See, for example, Shersten Johnson, "Recomposition as Low-Stakes Analysis," *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy*, 2 (2014), <http://flipcamp.org/engagingstudents2/essays/johnson.html>; Matthew L. BaileyShea, "Filletted Mignon: A New Recipe for Analysis and Recomposition," *Music Theory Online* 13, no. 4 (2007), <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.07.13.4/mto.07.13.4.baileyshea.html>; Stephen Rodgers, "Fanny Hensel's Lied Aesthetic," *Journal of Musicological Research* 30, no. 3 (2011): 190–92.

an image.³ Kassandra L. Hartford, exploring the teaching of operas that depict sexual violence, describes an activity in which students imagine how they might stage a work “that raises thorny issues of contemporary relevance” and thereby “develop an interest in the work and its performance” while contending with “the ethical issues such operas raise.”⁴ She has used the assignment for operas that depict antisemitism, colonialism, or racism and argues that it would lend itself well to operas that depict sexual violence, such as *Don Giovanni* or *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Hartford writes that the project involves extensive score study and is most appropriate for upper-level music major courses—her recommendation implies that the assignment requires students to develop a staging that one could actually put into practice.

By comparison, the assignments I have developed give the students considerably more freedom and more fully inhabit the realm of creative writing (even revisionist fan fiction). The “Eroica” assignment asks students to develop original narratives rather than a plausible account of how Beethoven or his early nineteenth-century audiences heard the work. The operatic assignment allows students to defy the physical realities of singing and staging and to stretch the work beyond what most audiences would consider its breaking point. Both kinds of projects are accessible to students who cannot read a score (though an instructor could adapt them to require this skill).

Instructors in fields as varied as astronomy and art appreciation have shown how creative writing assignments further their discipline-specific pedagogical goals. In a study of creative writing in economics courses, for example, Ophelia D. Goma notes that professional economists routinely use narrative and metaphor when communicating with non-specialist audiences. Willis L. Kirkland observes that creative writing can defuse students’ anxieties about a subject—biology, in his case.⁵ More broadly, Goma and other instructors have pointed out that creative writing pushes students toward modes of inquiry that do not necessarily entail a quest for definitive, “right” answers.⁶

Instructors of history and English literature have described two benefits of creative writing that particularly reflect the multifaceted perspective that I

3. Aaron Ziegel, “Active Listening, Aural Imagination, and 19th-Century Program Music: An In-Class ‘Experiment,’” *Engaging Students: Essays in Music Pedagogy* 2 (2014), <http://flip-camp.org/engagingstudents2/essays/ziegel.html>.

4. Kassandra L. Hartford, “Beyond the Trigger Warning: Teaching Operas That Depict Sexual Violence,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 1 (2016): 32.

5. Ophelia D. Goma, “Creative Writing in Economics,” *College Teaching* 49, no. 4 (2001): 150; Willis L. Kirkland, “Teaching Biology Through Creative Writing: Integrating Abstract Biological Concepts into Narrative Contexts Makes Science Come Alive for Apprehensive Nonmajors,” *Journal of College Science Teaching* 26, no. 4 (1997): 277.

6. Goma, “Creative Writing in Economics,” 150; Art Young, Patricia Connor-Greene, Jerry Waldvogel, and Catherine Paul, “Poetry Across the Curriculum: Four Disciplinary Perspectives,” *Language & Learning Across the Disciplines* 6, no. 2 (2003): 16.

hope my assignments nurture. First, creative writing can foster close reading and listening. Indeed, as Peter Parisi points out, the close reading required to write creatively based on preexistent literary texts sensitizes students to the range of ways in which authors can handle larger themes, “delineate[ing] the independent contours of both the assigned text and each student’s exercise on the theme.”⁷ Second, these creative reinterpretation assignments require what Janine Larmon Peterson and Lea Graham describe as a “centrifugal” mode of reading and analysis.⁸ Peterson and Graham metaphorically call assignments that challenge students to inhabit a historically distant place or literary genre while avoiding anachronism (a fictional memoir, or a medieval romance, for example) “centripetal,” imagining a force that pulls students into a central historical context. By contrast, just as centrifugal force pushes one away from a spinning center, Peterson and Graham’s centrifugal assignments require students to begin with a text or context but engage in cross-historical translation and comparison: updating Voltaire’s *Candide* to satirize twenty-first-century society, for example. These assignments, Peterson and Graham argue, ask students to “discover points of reference in which the concerns or values of the past resonate with those of the present” and to “illuminate dissonances between specific manifestations of [enduring cultural] paradigms.”⁹ By reinterpreting symphonies and operas, students measure the cultural distance between their world and Mozart’s, Beethoven’s, or Bizet’s while considering how this music speaks to them as twenty-first century listeners.

With these interrelated benefits in mind, I have designed my creative reinterpretation assignments with the following objectives in mind. The students will:

- Produce and share creative writing that reflects a detailed understanding of the work in question.
- Respond to course content that explores style, structure, and historical context.
- Illustrate how details of the original work have significant implications for the way we understand its larger narrative and message.
- Demonstrate the contingency of musical meaning (e.g., how audiences engage with musical works through their own listening habits, tastes, and cultural filters, and how performers can make decisions that have significant implications for the meanings a work can convey).
- Recognize themselves as creatively empowered, (re)interpretive performers and listeners in their own right.

7. Peter Parisi, “Close Reading, Creative Writing, and Cognitive Development,” *College English* 41, no. 1 (1979): 62.

8. Janine Larmon Peterson and Lea Graham, “Teaching Historical Analysis through Creative Writing Assignments,” *College Teaching* 63, no. 4 (2015): 154.

9. Peterson and Graham, “Teaching Historical Analysis,” 153, 156.

From “Beethoven’s Hero” to Undergraduates’ Heroes

The creative writing projects that I have developed build upon class sessions that delve into the music and its historical context. Our “Eroica” project follows a session that explores two topics crucial to the symphony and its reception. First, we discuss six important junctures or structural features of the first movement, working to articulate how they convey tension or resolution:

1. The opening several measures which combine bold, “heroic” gestures with adumbrations of suspense and tension: the powerful initial chords, the triadic primary theme’s surprising descent to C-sharp, and, in m. 18, the move to F minor, for example.
2. The start of the development, and the development’s extraordinary length in comparison with the other sections of the sonata form.
3. The buildup of harmonically and metrically dissonant chords in mm. 248–280 and the lyrical, seemingly new theme that emerges in their wake.
4. The horn’s seemingly premature intimation of the opening motive at m. 394, immediately before the recapitulation.
5. Measure 408, in which the horn presents a new version of the primary theme that ends on a high, sustained note.
6. The peroration coda.¹⁰

Second, I introduce students to Beethoven’s planned but retracted dedication to Napoleon Bonaparte and survey the long critical and scholarly tradition of spinning heroic, in some cases Napoleonic, narratives that hinged upon several of these key passages and features. This aspect of my presentation draws upon scholarship by Scott Burnham and Thomas Sipe, both of whom have analyzed nineteenth- and early twentieth-century programmatic readings of the symphony.¹¹ My goal, then, is for students to approach the creative assign-

10. My choices are indebted to Scott Burnham, *Beethoven Hero* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), and J. Peter Burkholder’s discussion of the “Eroica” in his edition of the textbook *A History of Western Music*. Burkholder, in fact, continues the tradition of giving the “Eroica” a narrative reading, encouraging readers to hear a “story of challenge, struggle, and victory” in the first movement, including “protagonist” and “antagonist” themes. J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 9th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014), 570–73; J. Peter Burkholder and Claude Palisca, eds., *Norton Anthology of Western Music*, 6th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010) 2:315–16.

Although Burnham and Burkholder address readers with considerable prior music study, I have found that students without such background readily hear and grasp these six junctures or features. Introduced previously to syncopation, for example, they perceive it throughout the movement—particularly when trying to clap or move to the beat. They also they have no difficulty hearing recurrences of the primary theme in the development and coda.

11. Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, for example, 3–28; Thomas Sipe, “Interpreting Beethoven: History, Aesthetics, and Critical Reception” (PhD. diss, University of Pennsylvania, 1992) and

ment not as blank slates, but with a shared awareness of the first movement's structure and the symphony's reception history.

The students' assignment for the next class session is to develop their own programmatic narratives. Their options are completely open: they may choose any real or fictional setting other than Napoleonic warfare. Their narratives should incorporate all six key moments we discussed in class, though they are welcome to add more. I ask students to make clear how their narratives line up with the music. Some opt to explain the connection in prose—"At the start of the development, X happens"—or through parenthetical references to timings. Students thereby engage not only in a mode of writing typical of nineteenth-century music critics but also in a mode of music analysis. Burnham, urging readers to take the programmatic readings he explores seriously as objects of scholarly inquiry, points out that their writers were capable of describing the "Eroica" first movement "in terms of form, thematic structure, and harmony" but that they chose to use programmatic narrative as an "analytical metalanguage" to describe the movement's thematic development. Critics, he argues, turned to "anthropomorphic metaphor" in order to capture aspects of the symphony that appealed vividly to their imaginations.¹² Although some critics and scholars have presented particular narrative readings of the symphony as authoritative, I stress to my students that we should read these narratives not to discover what Beethoven "really" meant, but to appreciate how writers made sense of this music. I point out, too, the long tradition of narrative or imagistic descriptions that stem from listeners, performers, or publishers rather than composers: Hans von Bülow's descriptions of Chopin's preludes, for example, the "Moonlight" title of Beethoven's Sonata quasi una fantasia, Op. 27, no. 2, and listeners' experiments with putting descriptive headings and lyrics to Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*. For my students, as for their historical forebears, writing programmatic narratives gives them a language for articulating how individual moments and the larger arc of the movement stimulate their imaginations.

The prompt explicitly advises students that they should be prepared to share their work and that our objective will be to understand how programmatic narratives for this movement converge and diverge—both within our class and in comparison to selected nineteenth-century narratives that I summarize. Burnham and Sipe cite numerous programmatic descriptions of the first movement and the symphony as a whole, most of which are available in English translation. I often choose to include examples by A. B. Marx and Richard

Beethoven: Eroica Symphony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 54–67, and 94–116 (in which Sipe himself argues for reading the symphony as grounded in Homer and Schiller).

12. Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, 8.

Wagner. Wagner's is shorter than many other nineteenth-century "Eroica" programs and discusses few specific passages, but his and Marx's make an illustrative pairing in that they contrast clearly and revealingly. Marx describes a clash of armies and refers to Napoleon, whereas Wagner explicitly argues against viewing the symphony as a series of historic or military episodes and instead offers a psychological reading.¹³

As Aaron Ziegel does in his program music activities, I frame the projects and our follow-up discussion as an "experiment."¹⁴ The term communicates to students that our discussion will provide not only an enjoyable chance to admire one another's work but also an occasion to draw larger conclusions from our different programmatic narratives. Students share their work in small groups, and each group nominates one person to share with the entire class. This practice gives all students the chance to share with at least some classmates and maximizes the number of approaches each student encounters. I summarize their narratives (as well as Marx's and Wagner's) in a spreadsheet projected onto the screen, which can be saved and distributed to the class. Having laid an array of contrasting reinterpretations side by side, I pose such questions as "Have any of your classmates made similar decisions?" "Do any of your classmates seem to have radically different approaches to the music or drama?" and "What do you feel you've learned from reading these narratives?"

I have found that two practices cultivate productive discussions of creative writing. First, as with any class discussion, I prepare questions (of varying degrees of open-endedness) ahead of time to guide the discussion toward particular points, and I also create questions on the spot in response to the often unpredictable student creative work. Second, I strive to follow, when introducing the assignment and in the follow-up discussion, Parisi's recommendation that instructors model an "appreciative, positive, and...uncritical reception of student [creative] writing."¹⁵ My experience bears out Parisi's point that this attitude encourages students to take one another's work seriously, as well as Art Young and his coauthors' observation that students who feel safe sharing their creative work are more likely to express fresh perspectives.¹⁶ (Indeed, I

13. For English translations see "Ludwig van Beethoven: *Life and Works: Selected Excerpts*," in A. B. Marx, *Musical Form in the Age of Beethoven: Selected Writings on Theory and Method*, ed. and trans. Scott Burnham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 158–74 and "Beethoven's 'Heroic Symphony,'" in *Richard Wagner's Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (New York: Boude Brothers, 1966; reprint, London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1894) 3:221–24. For the German texts, see A. B. Marx, *Ludwig van Beethoven: Leben und Schaffen*, 3rd ed., ed. Gustav Behncke (Berlin: Otto Janke, 1875), 245–57; Richard Wagner, *Dichtungen und Schriften: Jubiläumsausgabe in zehn Bänden*, ed. Dieter Borchmeyer (Frankfurt: Insel, 1983) 9:29–30.

14. Ziegel, "Active Listening."

15. Parisi uses "uncritical" in the sense of being non-judgmental. "Close Reading," 66.

16. Parisi, "Close Reading," 66; Young et. al, "Poetry Across the Curriculum," 40.

have observed that many students choose to make themselves vulnerable to some extent in their creative writing for my courses by sharing their interests, tastes in books and movies, and cultural backgrounds.) I take pains to treat students' creative reinterpretations as insightful commentary. For example, I might preface a question by volunteering, "This 'Eroica' program is quirky, but I think the author is also offering a really interesting way of hearing the development." Or, when discussing opera reinterpretations, I might add in response to a student comment, "What I think you're saying is that this group developed a very different way of representing class in *Carmen*." Such rhetoric is by no means patronizing or disingenuous; indeed, students often surprise me and one another with the originality and thoughtfulness of their work.

When I ask students to consider how their "Eroica" programs differ from one another, their first observations are often that our chart includes widely contrasting concepts of heroism. Every time I have assigned this project, at least one or two students write sports narratives. One, for example, invented fictional football teams for a titanic Super Bowl, while another fit the movement to a real event in Olympic swimming: a victory by the US men's relay team. Students who do write about war or combat most often turn not to real wars but to fantasy settings, comic book superheroes, and plots redolent of action-adventure films.¹⁷ One student wrote a narrative about playing a video game called *Eroica*. Other students shy away from epic struggle and interpret "heroism" more loosely. One, for example, wrote about two friends struggling to maintain their friendship in the face of interpersonal conflict, while another wrote about a protagonist contending with social anxiety.

Mapping this range of conceits leads us far afield of the real historical contexts and primary sources most germane to a music history course. But it supports an objective central to my course and indeed to many Beethoven scholars: understanding how generations of musicians and audiences have reinterpreted Beethoven's music and image to represent manifold cultural and political meanings.¹⁸ Generating and comparing narratives vividly illustrates for my students that listeners—both contemporaneous and across historical distances—refract the music they hear through own cultural preoccupations and fields of

17. Here and elsewhere in this article, I have refrained from quoting directly from any student work or providing any identifying information (including gendered pronouns).

18. Burnham opens his discussion of "Beethoven's Hero" by acknowledging that writers have related this "myth" in numerous ways. *Beethoven Hero*, 3. The scholarly literature on Beethoven's changing image and cultural meaning is substantial. To cite but four examples: Michael Broyles, *Beethoven in America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011); Esteban Buch, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History*, trans. Richard Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Alessandra Comini, *The Changing Image of Beethoven: A Study in Mythmaking* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987); Alexander Rehding, *Beethoven's Symphony no. 9* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

experience, even when they share some basic assumptions about what a work of music represents or which moments are particularly noteworthy. They find that all of the “Eroica” narratives, contemporary as well as historical, reflect radically different views of what constitutes heroism, and different assumptions about whose struggles are worthy of portrayal in such monumental music. Nineteenth-century audiences were fascinated with Napoleon’s rise to power, and Sipe has argued for reading the “Eroica” in light of Beethoven’s familiarity with Homeric epics.¹⁹ By contrast, my students’ most familiar scripts for heroic deeds and adventures did not exist as we know them in Beethoven’s time—professional sports, superhero comics and movies, or video gaming, for example. One of my students gave the first movement a particularly contemporary spin that subverted a tradition of straightforwardly triumphal “Eroica” narratives. Taking a cue from the gritty antiheroes who populate the film and television their classmates consume, the student revealed at the end of their essay that their courageous, determined protagonist would be better described as a villain than as a hero. My student concluded by pointing out that many villains are heroes in their own minds. When Beethoven invites twenty-first century undergraduates to imagine “heroism”—or, perhaps better said, when an instructor explicitly asks them to think creatively and intently about heroism while engaging with the music and without attempting to situate themselves in Beethoven’s world—the stories and images that come to their minds differ substantially from those of nineteenth-century listeners. Their creative writing articulates their historical and cultural difference from the “Eroica,” even as it emerges from close, engaged listening.

Comparing programmatic narratives also illustrates for students that the structure of the “Eroica” first movement (and, by extension, other works of music) admits subtly different hearings and analyses. Writing a narrative requires students to express, for example, when and to what extent they feel a sense of closure, and how particular moments satisfy or defy their expectations. My students frequently present differing views about when they feel the movement’s tension resolving. Some identify the horn’s version of the main theme at m. 408 as the decisive moment of closure that the coda extravagantly confirms. The student who wrote of the fictional Super Bowl, for example, identified m. 408 as a field goal that sealed the team’s victory, the recapitulation as the clock running down, and the coda as the award ceremony and press conference. (This narrative, I pointed out, shared some features with one by nineteenth-century writer Wilhelm von Lenz, who described the entire recapitulation as the hero’s posthumous renown.²⁰) Other students, by contrast, identify the recapitulation as a glimmer of hope but consider the coda as the moment when struggle truly

19. Sipe, *Beethoven: Eroica Symphony*, 76–96.

20. Burnham, *Beethoven Hero*, 18.

becomes victory. The student who wrote about Olympic swimming, for example, had one of the U. S. swimmers pull ahead at the beginning of the recapitulation and only win the gold medal in the coda. Although both of these students had only been aware of sonata form for a matter of weeks, they used narrative and metaphor to offer subtly contrasting readings of the movement's form. In different ways, they made decisions about how to weigh the recapitulation and coda as significant moments of arrival, and how much tension and suspense to hear in the recapitulation's harmonic and metric dissonances.

More broadly, our follow-up discussions reveal students taking conceptually different approaches to the music. For example, while some describe a protagonist defeating an external adversary, others imagine a wholly internal drama. The student who shared a narrative about a protagonist's experience with social anxiety compared the movement's harmonic and metric dissonances to the character's feelings of dread. In their account, the development's buildup of dissonant chords represented a particularly intense anxiety attack that pushes the protagonist to seek help. The subsequent "new" theme and the passages that followed (in which the primary theme seems to reassert itself and build to the retransition) represented a montage of therapy. With the horn call at m. 394, the protagonist remembered that they could enter familiar situations—the recapitulation—with new skills. Other students imagined that the movement culminated not with the defeat of an adversary, but with reconciliation and harmony. The student who wrote about two friends settling an argument, for example, imagined the coda as a renewal of friendship. Identifying these differences does not relate to historical or analytical topics as closely as do other aspects of our discussion. Even so, it invites students to ask important, even fundamental, questions about their listening experiences: for example, whether they hear the symphony's intense dissonances as adrenaline boosting or painful, whether they found it more engaging to imagine a drama with discrete characters or a flow of individual emotions, or whether the coda suggested to them a return to wholeness and harmony or the feeling of vanquishing a rival.

Of course, listeners who encounter the "Eroica" and other instrumental works (evocative titles or not) need not develop such detailed, original programmatic narratives. Listeners are free to imagine narratives in vague, general terms, or to embrace the symphony's Napoleonic resonance. Other listeners might find that programs or extra-musical images are peripheral or irrelevant to their enjoyment of the varied orchestral colors, intense dissonances, and memorable themes. My assignment creates an admittedly artificial situation and requires students to play along. Even so, it asks students to think and write about important aspects of the piece, from its overall structure to the cultural resonance of its "heroic" title. The assignment invites them to broaden our discussion beyond what the "Eroica" meant for Beethoven and

his nineteenth-century audiences and to consider what it might mean for them as twenty-first-century listeners (albeit listeners equipped with a detailed understanding of the first movement's form and Beethoven's context). My students' work on this assignment bears out an insight about creative writing that Richard Gebhardt and Parisi share: in these writings and discussions, students often articulate sophisticated, subtle, critical insights.²¹ By developing personal, creative responses within the framework of our earlier historical and analytical discussion, students solidify a detailed understanding of Beethoven's score and become aware of how this music passes through listeners' cultural and conceptual filters.

Revising Canonic Operas

Like the "Eroica" assignment, my operatic reinterpretation projects build upon class sessions that explore text and context. In my Mozart course, students encounter *Così fan tutte* around mid-semester, by which point they are familiar with the conventions of opera buffa and have explored characterization and cultural meaning in other works; in the Romanticism course, *Carmen* forms the centerpiece of a series of sessions on exoticism. Whereas the "Eroica" assignment asks students to become nineteenth-century music critics with twenty-first-century perspectives, the opera assignments ask them to step into a different tradition: directors who radically reinterpret canonic operas, often in ways that resonate with contemporary issues. In preparation for the experiment, I introduce students to examples: for Mozart, Peter Sellars's productions and, more recently, LA Opera's *Figaro!* (90210) (which presents the iconic barber as an undocumented immigrant and includes a completely rewritten libretto); and, for *Carmen*, the reinterpreted productions that Susan McClary describes in her study of the opera, film versions such as *Carmen Jones* and *Carmen: A Hip Hopera*, and Dmitri Tcherniakov's production of *Carmen* for the Aix Festival (which frames the entire plot as a role-playing exercise within a male protagonist's psychotherapy session).²²

21. Richard C. Gebhardt, "Fiction Writing in Literature Classes," *Rhetoric Review* 7, no. 1 (1988): 154; Parisi, "Close Reading," 62.

22. Susan McClary, *Georges Bizet, Carmen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 123–25, 131–46; *Figaro!* (90210) <https://www.laopera.org/season/1415-Season-at-a-Glance/Figaro90210/>; Micaela Baranello, "Review: 'Carmen,' Boldly Rewritten as Therapy for a Modern Man," *New York Times* (July 5, 2017 (<https://mobile.nytimes.com/2017/07/05/arts/music/review-carmen-boldly-rewritten-as-therapy-for-a-modern-man.html>)). For recent studies of *Carmen Jones*, see Melinda Boyd, "The Politics of Color in Oscar Hammerstein's *Carmen Jones*," in *Blackness in Opera*, ed. Naomi André, Karen M. Bryan, and Eric Saylor (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 212–35 and Naomi André, *Black Opera: History, Power,*

Given these extravagant models, my students receive even greater power to reshape the operas, with no regard for budget or practicality. For their creative retellings, students must retain the characters and avoid omitting music. But they must find a setting other than nineteenth-century Spain for *Carmen* or eighteenth-century Italy for *Così*. “The whole of time and space,” the prompt reads, “is your oyster.” Changing the setting means changing the identities of characters (their class statuses and occupations, for example), and students are even welcome to change characters’ genders and ages. (Indeed, many of my students’ creative retellings are not producible in any realistic sense. Bizet’s exotic “Spanish” music, for example, would seem incongruous in many of the settings they choose. Many of my students also defy the practicalities of operatic performance. For example, some switch the genders in *Così* so that two women deceive their boyfriends, a change that would likely require some radical transpositions of music.) Even though the music remains largely intact, students are free to change what characters say or do in particular arias or ensembles, even to alter important aspects of the plot.

I ask students not only to describe their productions in terms of setting, character, and plot but also to focus on designated arias or ensembles. In *Carmen*, students describe how the Act I Seguidilla unfolds in their versions: what is Carmen trying to persuade Don Jose to do, and how does she enlist his aid? (Carmen might be under arrest and attempting to escape, as in the original, or she might be in a different kind of trouble.) Students need not write new libretti to fit Bizet’s melodies, but they do need to describe the substance of the conversation throughout the duet. In *Così*, students focus on two numbers. First, they describe their versions of the Act I sextet, in which Ferrando and Guglielmo burst in wearing “Albanian” attire. In their alternative productions, I ask, “How have the men disguised themselves and attempted to captivate Fiordiligi and Dorabella?” (Students may attempt to make the disguises plausible or embrace the silliness of the original.) Second, in Ferrando and Fiordiligi’s Act II duet, “How does Fiordiligi plan to flee the situation? Where does she believe she will rejoin Guglielmo?” And, “How does Ferrando persuade (or, more accurately, emotionally blackmail) her to remain with him?”

Through their creative writing and the follow-up discussion, students present what amounts to sensitive analyses of the original work. The *Carmen* and *Così* experiments ask students to consider how details of characterization, plot, and operatic convention carry weight and to recognize the different historical and cultural filters through which they, their classmates, and early audiences viewed these operas. Most importantly, the operatic assignments ask students to engage with the original works’ representations of gender and/

Engagement (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018), 120–66, which also explores *Carmen: A Hip Opera* and a South African version, *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*.

or race—representations they often find dated at best and noxious at worst—while leaving open how exactly they might do so. I want to stress that I am not claiming that any of my students’ productions perfectly “redeem” these operas, creating representations of race or gender that are beyond critique. (Nor am I necessary insisting to my students that, if these operas are to be performed, they must be radically altered.²³) My aim is not to produce perfect operas but for students to recognize that the subtle and sweeping decisions of (re)composers, librettists, directors, and performers have real implications for an opera’s broader message and cultural politics.

As we build toward the creative projects, I assign readings that highlight issues of race and/or gender. While watching and discussing *Così*, students read excerpts from Kristi Brown-Montesano’s book on Mozart’s female characters, in which she analyzes Don Alfonso’s misogynistic pedagogy. In keeping with a Rousseauist, male-centered concept of education, Don Alfonso uses experience and reason to teach Guglielmo and Ferrando but assumes that women are governed by their passions and incapable of reason. While the “school for lovers” teaches the men to understand the supposed nature of women, it only manipulates Dorabella and Fiordiligi into substantiating Don Alfonso’s stereotypes. They learn, Brown-Montesano writes, “humiliation, shame, and doubt of their own feelings, judgments, and friends.”²⁴

The prompt for the *Così* project explicitly asks students to respond to this reading. In an earlier class session on Act II, I point out that some productions end with the mismatched lovers together, not the original pairings, perhaps on the grounds that Guglielmo/Dorabella and Ferrando/Fiordiligi seem better matched given their behavior during the opera, or that the original pairings would seem incongruous after a tale of deception and infidelity. Several of my students go even farther in expressing discomfort or incredulity with a return to the original pairings: they reject any kind of *lieto fine* in which characters remain coupled. Even upon hearing a short summary of the plot, many students readily recognize that the women have more than ample grounds for dumping their boyfriends—some look visibly shocked when I explain that Guglielmo and Ferrando readily agree to a bet involving outright lying and cruel emotional manipulation. Especially after reading Brown-Montesano’s work, many show in their projects that they cannot imagine the women reuniting with the men

23. I strive to take an approach that Hartford describes: exploring the troubling issues that these works raise, while also “leav[ing] room for students to enjoy opera,” allowing them “to engage with difficult operas—even to love them—without becoming apologists” for the way they present violence, gender, race, and other issues. Hartford, “Beyond the Trigger Warning,” 29.

24. Kristi Brown-Montesano, *Understanding the Women of Mozart’s Operas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 257–58. Brown-Montesano argues against a commonly held view that *Così* presents a message of reconciliation.

as a happy or even believable ending. These students end *Così* with the women publicly (and scathingly) breaking up with the men—the curtain falls on two female friends liberated from dysfunctional relationships, and two newly single (and perhaps chastened) men. As I prod students to recognize in the class discussion, such choices vividly illustrate their distance from the conventions of opera buffa. Whereas Mozart and his audiences regarded the *lieto fine* as an essential fixture of the genre, my twenty-first-century undergraduates find that, in this case, the convention stretches their senses of justice and plausibility too far.

Other aspects of my students' historical reinterpretations shed light on how the "original" *Così* conveys a message about gender and, at the same time, say just as much about the social and historical perspectives from which they approach this opera. For example, several students converted *Così* into a college or high-school drama. Whereas high schools and college campuses do not figure in eighteenth-century opera, dramas and comedies set in these locations saturate my students' media landscapes and inform their views about dating and relationships. One student volunteered that their high-school setting not only made characters' immaturity seem more believable; it also changed what they considered one of the opera's more troubling aspects. As this student pointed out, the original marriage ending shackled the women to men who had deceived and humiliated them. Instead, my student's high-school drama turned the opera into a painful adolescent learning experience that would inform the characters' future relationships. In their reinterpretations of the Act I sextet, several of my students have suggested a different way in which *Così* resonates with their contemporary worlds: they have the men's disguises begin (or exist wholly) online through false social media profiles. On the one hand, these productions attempt to make the opera more verisimilar, concocting disguises that are at least initially plausible. On the other hand, they also suggest one way in which the opera's themes of deception and surveillance—not to mention bad behavior facilitated through disguise—speak to students' digitally mediated lives. Like "Eroica" narratives about professional sports, these productions illustrate for my students how they bring their own cultural frameworks to the opera, frameworks that differ from those its creators and early audiences.

Reworking *Carmen* requires students to grapple creatively not only with gender but also with intersecting issues of class and race. Students read writings on the opera by Susan McClary and Ralph Locke that not only explore Bizet's borrowings from and evocations of popular Spanish music, but also analyze how stereotypes about the Roma—often misleadingly and offensively referred to as "Gypsies"—informed *Carmen's* character, particularly her criminality, promiscuity, and defiance of authority. They also read a chapter from Jonathan Bellman's monograph on the *style hongrois*, which provides an account of these

stereotypes and their historical context that many students find eye-opening.²⁵ In addition, by this point in the course, students have encountered a narrative trope common in nineteenth-century opera, in which the main female character asserts independence but ultimately suffers and dies to provide the opera's musical and emotional climax.

As with the *Così* project, the *Carmen* prompt open-endedly asks students to respond to these readings. One of the most striking patterns I have noticed in their projects is that many avoid making Carmen a member of an oppressed minority, or indeed explicitly assigning her a racial or ethnic identity. This pattern could represent a deliberate response to how the opera others and stereotypes Carmen or, perhaps, students' discomfort with representing race in creative work that they will share with the class. One group, for example, set the opera on Wall Street, with Carmen part of a ring of insider traders and Don Jose a lawman investigating them. (In their version of the Seguidilla, Carmen turns the tables on Don Jose's interrogation by promising him a life of hedonistic luxury.) The students clarified that they wanted to keep Carmen within a criminal element but without using a trope rooted in racist stereotypes. In their view, they avoided this pitfall by invoking a different character type: the white-collar criminal who uses wealth and privilege as a shield. Many of my students also reacted to a different aspect of the opera, one rooted in its stereotyping of Carmen. They showed in their productions that they found Carmen's fatalistic acceptance of her own death an incomprehensible choice for a resourceful character so fiercely committed to her own freedom and survival. I remind them during our discussion that, as Locke shows in an analysis of the Act III "Card Aria," Carmen's fatalism reflects a stereotype of "Gypsies" as superstitious and irrational.²⁶ Several students concocted endings in which Carmen acts on warnings about the danger she is in and ultimately defends

25. Because many Roma consider the word "Gypsy" a slur, I use the word sparingly in this essay. When I do, it is to refer to often defamatory stereotypes constructed in literature, music, and cultural products, not the actual Roma people. My admittedly imperfect approach is indebted to Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Reflections and Images* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 137.

For our class sessions on *Carmen*, I assign students McClary, *Georges Bizet, Carmen*, 51–58; 62–110; Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 154–56, 160–69; and Jonathan Bellman, *The style hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 69–92. Of course, the scholarly literature on exoticism in *Carmen* and its reinterpretations is substantial, and my aim here is not to survey or summarize it. For two recent examples that consider different issues, see Ralph Locke, "Spanish Local Color in Bizet's *Carmen*: Unexplored Borrowings and Transformations," in *Music, Theater, and Cultural Transfer: Paris, 1830–1914*, ed. Annegret Fauser and Mark Everist (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 316–60, and Samuel Llano, *Whose Spain? Negotiating "Spanish Music" in Paris, 1908–1929* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 161–91.

26. Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, 172–74.

herself, instead leaving Don Jose's corpse on the stage. One group, for example, set the opera in Prohibition-era Chicago and turned the smugglers into bootleggers: their Carmen shot Don Jose during the final scene.²⁷

Students' *Carmen* productions also articulate a stark gap between the way they understand the opera's characters and the way its early audiences did. In a previous class session on Act IV, I ask students to identify the opera's tragic victim or victims. They unanimously include Carmen. And no wonder, given that Don Jose perfectly embodies a figure all-too familiar to them: the possessive male who stalks, assaults, and even murders his former partner. My students are often shocked to then read early reviews of the opera that describe Carmen as a threatening or repulsive character who bears the blame for corrupting Don Jose and whose death is satisfying, even deserved—indeed, McClary notes, the “traditionally dominant reading” of the opera casts “Carmen as *femme fatale*, Don Jose as victim.”²⁸ My students' *Carmen* reinterpretations suggest that they respond differently to these characters (guided, perhaps, by our readings). They readily name Don Jose as possessive or as a murderer. Through their wording, rhetoric, and tone of voice when reading, many students make clear that they find Don Jose a contemptible character and do not believe that Carmen's death represents justice served. Rather, they explicitly or implicitly recognize her as a tragic victim (or, for those who allow her to survive, a potential victim).

My students' revisionist productions of *Così* and *Carmen* open a mode of discussion within which they feel empowered to critique, or at least express deeply held opinions about, canonic musical works. Although I have yet to systematically study how a student's awareness of canonicity affects their critical stance, some of my students reveal at the beginning of the semester that “classical” music has been part of their educations since early childhood. And, in most classes, I have one or two students whose essays uncritically allude to Mozart or Beethoven as a “great composer” or “genius.” Such students, I believe, might find critiquing canonic repertoire sacrilegious—or, at least, contrary to an ideology that sees performing this music as a valuable educational achievement.²⁹ Students who approach “classical” music as newcomers might feel their own inhibitions about forming opinions: for them, operas and symphonies are

27. If these students' visions of organized crime during the Prohibition Era drew upon popular representations, they might well have imagined Carmen occupying a particular class or ethnic category. Even so, their project made no mention of it, focusing instead on tailoring the plot and characters to the new milieu and setting up Carmen to survive.

28. McClary, *Georges Bizet, Carmen*, 111–13, 119–20, 125.

29. For one essay on how notions of a composer's or works' greatness or “genius” can disempower listeners—those who do not see their gender or ethnicity represented in the canon, and those who do not believe that they know “enough” about music—see Sara Haefeli, “The Problem with Geniuses,” *The Avid Listener*, <https://www.theavidlistener.com/2015/04/the-problem-with-geniuses.html>.

initially strange, unfamiliar forms of entertainment. Writing creatively about this music, however, pushes students beyond a mode of discussion that centers on right and wrong answers, or appropriate or inappropriate methodologies, giving them a path of less resistance toward engaging personally and insightfully with the works at hand. Rather than approaching the composer as an authority to be grasped on his own terms, creative writing gives the students a chance to assume authority by freely reinterpreting and altering.

Indeed, some of my students present their creative projects as explicit or implicit critiques of the cultural politics of *Così* and *Carmen*, whether with humor or in deadly earnest. One example of the former is a student who wrote a gender-swapped *Così*, presented as a reality show in which the women seduce one another's boyfriends. Their version offered multiple levels of wry, insightful commentary. The setting translated the opera to a present-day genre in which audiences expect interpersonal intrigue and contrived dramatic scenarios. At the same time, the student gleefully turned the tables on Don Alfonso's stereotyping of the opera's women, presenting the men as easily duped and in thrall to their desires. Although my student stopped short of openly criticizing Mozart and Da Ponte, they do suggest that the composer and librettist could have just as easily produced an opera called *Thus do all Men*. One of my students struck a more serious tone when reinterpreting *Carmen*, which they based on the 2012 David Petraeus scandal. The student pointed out that some press discourse about the scandal had fixated on the clothing and physical appearance of Paula Broadwell, the female biographer with whom the general had had an affair and shared classified information—some accounts had portrayed Broadwell as a temptress whom Petraeus had been powerless to resist.³⁰ My student identified *Carmen* (or, at least, the reactions of its early audiences) as part of a larger practice of scapegoating women for men's bad behavior. Of course, my students might well have made similar points within more conventional discussions or essays. But a creative-writing project provides a moderated forum that allows both seriousness and irreverence and, by its nature, invites personal responses.

Assessing Creative Projects

Grading creative projects, of course, differs in many ways from grading more conventional assignments. In the former, one does not necessarily expect a thesis-driven structure or footnotes, for example, and would likely welcome language that might seem too colloquial in a formal research paper. Instructors who have written about creative writing across the disciplines often recommend

30. For one critique of this way of reporting on the scandal, see Frank Bruni, "The Siren and the Spook," *New York Times* (Nov. 12, 2012). https://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/13/opinion/bruni-the-siren-and-the-spook.html?_r=0.

making these assignments low-stakes, generously graded parts of the course. Not only is formal instruction in creative writing usually beyond the scope of our courses, but, in these assignments, “literary merit” is often less important than engagement with the material.³¹ My own approach has been to advise students that, to receive an “A” on the project, they should engage with details of the work highlighted in the prompt, clearly respond to our previous class discussion and reading, use well-edited prose, and be ready to share if called upon.

My assessment of other aspects of the courses suggests, that creative writing assignments deepen and solidify students’ engagement with the course material. For example, students in the Beethoven and Mozart courses tend to write particularly strong, detailed answers to exam questions about the “Eroica” and *Così*, respectively. Writing creative essays on these topics, I believe, encourages them to read and listen closely, and it shores up their grasp of what we had covered in previous class sessions.

I also find that these assignments engage my students in ways that numerical grades do not easily capture. The vast majority of my students invest enthusiastically in these assignments. Our follow-up discussions are often lively, with no shortage of students willing to participate. Students readily grasp the larger lesson about the importance of listeners and performers. I have also observed that sharing creative writing enriches the classroom community and leads to more varied participation. These projects invite students to take on roles different than those they might usually fill in class, and to leverage personal and intellectual characteristics different than those they display in more conventional assignments. Students who usually seem concerned about always getting “right” answers, for example, sometimes reveal subversive, playful senses of humor. Or, students who generally present themselves as reserved or laconic sometimes share expansive, richly detailed stories.

Adaptation and Implications for the Broader Curriculum

Instructors can easily adapt these creative writing assignments for variety of repertoire and courses. My decision to use the “Eroica,” *Così fan tutte*, and *Carmen* was based on the needs of the course at hand, not the belief that these works were better suited for creative reinterpretation than others. The Beethoven course, for example, explores the “Eroica” early in the semester as an introduction to the composer’s symphonies. The creative project not only requires students to immerse themselves in the first movement, it also aims to encourage students to listen observantly and talk about their perceptions—practices that I hope

31. For example, Young et al., “Poetry Across the Curriculum,” 15; Kirkland, “Teaching Biology Through Creative Writing,” 26; Peterson and Graham, “Teaching Historical Analysis,” 157.

they bring to other music we explore. The “Eroica” is in some ways ideal for a creative reinterpretation assignment. It does not include obvious portrayals of extra-musical phenomena. (By contrast, students might be hard-pressed to find alternative interpretations for the bird-calls and thunderclaps in the “Pastoral” Symphony.) The “Eroica,” too, already comes with an extensive tradition of varied narrative readings into which students can step. But other instrumental works also lend themselves well to writing original, anachronistic narratives. Students could imagine Liszt’s symphonic poem *Prometheus* representing the struggles and achievements of a different creator or discoverer, or Robert Schumann’s *Carnaval* representing scenes from a twenty-first century costume party. (The latter offers particularly complex options: *Carnaval* includes some movements whose titles refer to characters, and others that refer to actions one might take at a ball. The assignment could challenge students to articulate how the motives and figurational patterns that define each movement evoke moods or images and, at a larger level, to make sense of the digressive, fragmentary aspects of the cycle.) The operatic canon offers any number of works that would allow students to creatively and critically engage with representations of race, gender, and other kinds of identity.

Although I initially designed these creative writing projects to enrich students’ engagement with particular works, I believe that they can also play a part in nudging and enticing them along longer intellectual journeys, within both their musical and wider educations. Most broadly, creative reinterpretation activities foster skills and perspectives that Amanda Hiner has identified as essential to the literary analysis central to the humanities and the critical thinking prized across the disciplines. Hiner argues that teachers of literary analysis serve not only their discipline-specific pedagogical goals but also help students grow into critical thinkers. Literary analysis, for example, requires us to recognize multiple layers of meaning, to interrelate details and larger structures, to revise our readings in response to others’, and to consider how readers’ cultural filters shape their engagement with texts. Creative reinterpretations and follow-up discussions require such analysis, asking students to weigh the implications of musical and dramatic details and to consider musical works from multiple cultural, aesthetic, and political perspectives. Such skills, Hiner points out, support widely recognized criteria of critical thinking: the ability to understand and assess multiple viewpoints, for example, and to contend with intricate, multifaceted problems.³²

32. Amanda Hiner, “Critical Thinking in the Literature Classroom, Part I: Making Critical Thinking Visible,” *INQUIRY: Critical Thinking across the Disciplines* 28, no. 1 (2013): 27–28; 30–31. Hiner’s discussion of critical thinking draws upon Gerald Nosich, *Learning to Think Things Through: A Guide to Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines*, 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2012), and Richard Paul and Linda Elder, *Critical Thinking: Tools*

I also propose that creative writing about canonic musical works can help build two perspectives that we often seek to cultivate in music studies specifically. First, these assignments offer one way of making the course's analytical and historical discussions meaningful. Students imagine how they might narrate the "Eroica" informed by our discussion of the first movement's structure, genesis, and reception, or how they might rework *Carmen* and *Così fan tutte* given what they have learned about these operas' representations of race and gender from McClary, Locke, and Bellman, or from Brown-Montesano. Even as this creative writing calls for open-ended, personal responses, it also facilitates a dialogue between the student as an imaginative listener or performer and as a scholar in the music history classroom—and, I hope, it encourages students to keep considering how the study of music history can enrich their own music-making and listening.

Second, at the end of each follow-up discussion, I urge students to take from their work a widened understanding of how performers and listeners have the power to shape and even transform musical works. Admittedly, our creative writing experiments create exaggerated, contrived situations. Not all of us weave programs as we listen to instrumental music, and musicians and directors involved in opera productions do not usually receive the creative freedom my assignments permit. But I close our class discussions by invoking the last of my learning objectives: I suggest to my students that, when they perform or listen to music, they are constantly making decisions and inhabiting perspectives that shape what the music means. If performers of opera or musical theatre, they make decisions about how to portray a character (even how to stage a production) that engage with the work's larger themes and can raise cultural and ethical issues. If instrumentalists, they make decisions about how to pace a performance, articulate a structure, and handle ensemble interactions that shape how their audiences experience a work. And, as audiences, they filter music through their own preoccupations and paradigms. In this way, I hope that creative writing assignments play a small role in helping my students become at once more self-aware and more liberated as listeners and musicians: encouraging them to listen observantly and sensitize themselves to historical contexts—but also to ask what the music means to them in the twenty-first century or, given an imaginative leap, could mean.

Retracing the Roots of Bluegrass Music through an Affrilachian Aesthetic¹

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In recent years, schools of music in North America have begun to diversify and differentiate their curricula by offering performance programs in folk and bluegrass music—musical traditions that have long been considered unfit for (or at least outside of) academia. The objectives behind the creation of these programs align with efforts to make postsecondary music schools more relevant to the contemporary cultural landscape and to help music students navigate career paths beyond the conventional boundaries of classical and jazz. However, the popular misconception of bluegrass music as a *white* American folk tradition makes it appear as if these programs would offer yet another arena in which white students can excel, leaving young black and brown students behind. As bluegrass music goes to college—without much support from critical studies—the music history curriculum needs to bring its rich, multi-cultural history to our attention. In addressing the origins of bluegrass and its predecessor old-time music within the undergraduate music history sequence, we have an opportunity not only to correct misconceptions about the tradition and its associations with whiteness, but also to learn how people of color have been written out of the story and how we can rewrite it, and why we need to, as informed musicians and educators.

In 2017, the University of Northern Colorado—where I teach the one-year (two semester) music survey course—began to offer a Folk and Bluegrass Music Studies major. For the majority of the classically-trained music majors, bluegrass seems foreign, and, to a certain extent, its traditions of oral transmission, aural acquisition, and casual performance style seem contradictory to their music literacy training and their belief in notation. Jazz majors share some attitudes and experiences with those who play folk and bluegrass. They learn with little to no written music, regularly work with complex rhythmic layers, develop acute aural skills, and rely heavily on improvisation in composition and performance. These students believe, however, that jazz has already departed from its origins

1. My sincere thanks go to Sara Haefeli and my peer reviewers for giving comments on drafts of this article. Also, I would like to thank Lyle Nordstrom for helping discover my passion and love for teaching music history while a graduate student at the University of North Texas.

as “folk” and “popular” music in North America and has taken a position as “learned” music—as lofty as classical music. In our school of music, especially reputed for its longstanding history and highly lauded jazz program,² bluegrass music can appear relatively “trivial.” For both jazz and classical majors, it is an “Other.”³

Although the ensembles formed to support the bluegrass major have to date attracted about ten students from the classical and jazz areas (barely two percent of our music student population), the presence of the Folk and Bluegrass Studies degree has enriched our students’ performance opportunities and diversified the concert culture, helping foster an inclusive learning environment across the campus. Simultaneously, this program provides an opportunity for students whose musical interests and training have not prepared them to be either classical or jazz majors. Charlie Stevens, the first graduate of the program, represents a whole group of student-musicians who are passionate about music but do not have the fundamental skills required for admittance to a conservatory-style performance degree program.⁴ Despite their differences, many of these non-traditional music students, including our first banjo performance major, are in effect viable candidates for postsecondary music education and eligible for careers in music.

I believe that bluegrass music deserves attention in the music history and theory classrooms, not just for this new demographic but also for the existing body of classical and jazz students. As they learn about the diverse roots of bluegrass music, students can realize that multiculturalism is not a latter-day invention but an inherent trait of this country and its culture. Folk and bluegrass styles can help teach important aural skills and improvisational techniques. Through these folk styles alongside their classical and jazz counterparts, students can expand their musical vocabularies and expressive responses. Above all, bluegrass is an important part of our roots-music cultural history and has value for students who study and experience life in this country. It should be viewed as a topic that inspires inquiry into the vastly changing definition of

2. The program has won more than 100 *Downbeat Magazine* Awards over its thirty-year history. “Jazz Studies,” <https://arts.unco.edu/music/jazz-studies/> (accessed May 21, 2019).

3. Reba Wissner has pointed out a similar problem in students’ perception of Jewish music in the music history survey courses. See Reba Wissner, “Teaching Christian Chant in a Jewish Music Context,” this *Journal* 8, no. 2 (2018), 74–75.

4. Charlie Stevens, interview by author, Fort Collins, CO, April 7, 2019. Stevens was homeschooled or, as he candidly put it, “unschooled.” He learned the rock guitar under the influence of his campfire-guitarist father, and after getting basic lessons in class piano, theory, and aural skills at community colleges and freelancing in rock bands, took an eventual route to our university. He graduated in Spring 2019 with a Bachelor of Music: Instrumental Performance with dual emphasis on classical and folk/bluegrass guitar.

what it means to be an American (and an American musician) in our time and place.

In teaching the early history of bluegrass music, however, it is vital that we address how it has been perceived as a homogeneously white tradition, and students are just as likely to hold this misconception as the rest of the American public. Without a correct understanding of the roots of bluegrass music, we run the risk of perpetuating the popular definition of it as music that belongs to rural, working-class, and white Americans, further distorting the history of America's music. Theresa L. Burriss and Patricia M. Gantt, in their study *Appalachia in the Classroom: Teaching the Region*, claim that the multicultural history and the importance of African American contributions to the region and its culture are primarily unknown, not only to my students in the Rocky Mountain West, but also to students in Appalachian states.⁵ This is why I chose to teach bluegrass music, with an emphasis on its heterogeneous history.

Bluegrass Music in the Conventional Narrative of the Undergraduate Music History Sequence

Bluegrass music, and country music more generally, is typically a topic outside of the conventional narrative of the undergraduate music history sequence. Most music history textbooks do not address its foundational genres. Even if the textbook does acknowledge country music as a style stemming from many different sources and traditions—a significant one of which is African American—the limited length and scope of the text cause it to be explained rather briefly and sparsely, reinforcing the narrative that country music belongs to the Southern rural white.

Mark Evan Bonds's textbook, though it is the most inclusive among the standard texts available in my opinion, identifies Anglo-American folksong, hymnody, and traditional dance tunes as the origins of country music.⁶ While describing white music of the rural South as "decidedly uncultivated," "energetic and sometimes rough-edged," and thereby "emotionally authentic," Bonds

5. Theresa L. Burriss and Patricia M. Gantt, eds., *Appalachia in the Classroom: Teaching the Region* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2013). In the collection, Emily Satterwhite has in particular diagnosed that even students in Appalachian states have unexamined assumptions and romantic views on the region. See her article, "Intro to Appalachian Studies: Navigating Myths of Appalachian Exceptionalism," 3–32. With regard to the issue of resistance to acknowledging African Americans as "originators" of the cultural products of America, see Erika Brady, "Contested Origins: Arnold Shultz and the Music of Western Kentucky," in *Hidden in the Mix: The African American Presence in Country Music*, ed. Diane Pecknold (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 100–118.

6. Mark Evan Bonds, *A History of Music in Western Culture*, 4th ed. (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education Inc., 2013), 619 and 622.

relegates what would have originated with black musicians of the same region to secondary, outside “influences.” He acknowledges to an extent the similarity between white and black performance styles and yet, in keeping with a 1920s commercially-motivated point of view, he locates them in separate social and cultural settings of the past. More problematically, despite the banjo’s African heritage and its considerable impact upon American folk music, Bonds discusses this instrument with the traditions of early American art music and introduces it in the chapters on white American minstrel song, piano music, and small-ensemble music.⁷ In his accounts of old-time and bluegrass, he fails to recognize the significance of African Americans’ foundational and creative achievements. Instead, he singles out three-finger banjo picking as a technical feat of bluegrass music, along with “Foggy Mountain Breakdown” as a representation of the genre, performed, of course, by white musicians.

Similarly, the Burkholder-Grout-Palisca textbook associates country music primarily with white southerners, downplaying African American traditions, again, as “influences,” suggesting that they came from outside of, and chronologically later than, (Euro-)American traditions.⁸ By using Thomas Hart Benton’s mural *The Sources of Country Music* (1975) as a visual representation, just as in the Bonds, Burkholder underscores the abundance and diversity of influences on country music; however, the only recognizable black figure in the mural is a lone banjo player pushed far to the back.⁹ Though likely reflecting his chronological distance from contemporary country-and-western musical scenes, Benton’s depiction seems to reduce his historical significance altogether in contrast to the white female dulcimer player on the left and the white cowboy guitarist on the right, both standing up front strikingly tall and large in size.¹⁰

In addition to emphasizing the importance of white Appalachia in the early history of country music, the conventional music history narrative views “Appalachia” as a distinctively American trope with overtly positive, white connotations. The backdrop of Aaron Copland’s *Appalachian Spring* (1944), and Hollywood’s continuous appropriation of it as a pastoral trope, set a marked tone in portraying the region as an idyllic and spiritual place.¹¹ Despite the

7. See Bonds, *A History of Music in Western Culture*, 413, 428, and 466.

8. J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, ninth ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010), 910.

9. Beyond him, on the other side of the railroad tracks, a group of black women dances on the distant riverbank, which is however too small to be detected without the artist’s, or an expert’s, explanation.

10. Benton was conscious of African American contributions to American industrial life, as found in the two panels “City Building” and “Deep South” of *America Today* (1930–31), on which the black workers loom larger; however, it is not the case in *The Sources of Country Music*.

11. See Neil Lerner, “Copland’s Music of Wide Open Spaces: Surveying the Pastoral Trope in Hollywood,” *The Musical Quarterly* 85, no. 3 (Autumn 2001): 477–515.

likely representations of “the clichéd image of white geezers in overalls picking banjos on the front porch”¹² and the negative connotations that might follow, Appalachia remains a repository of “pure white,” Anglo-American folk song and dance traditions. Saturated with outsider’s nostalgic sentiments that often cause the reality of the region and its people to be unseen, Appalachia has become “the Other” giving rise to what Emily Satterwhite calls “myths of Appalachian exceptionalism.”¹³

Although this distinction reflects the music’s history to an extent, it begs a scholarly and pedagogical intervention. The institutionalization of “Appalachia” as “white,” “pure,” and thereby “distinctively American” has a long and dense political and cultural history.¹⁴ If we fail to correct this prevailing misrepresentation, Appalachian music’s diverse history in terms of race, class, gender, and style would remain concealed, further hindering the diversification of its practitioners. In my view, when folk and bluegrass music studies in college are denaturalized and decentralized from their own white, hillbilly canon, the field will become more accommodating to all practitioners—regardless of gender, class, or race—without losing the music’s character.¹⁵ Questioning the myths of country, bluegrass, and Appalachian music—created by the accumulation of commercial interests, cultural segregation, and public assumptions since the 1920s—can help broaden the range of makers and consumers of this music, as well as invite to this field student-musicians of all cultural and racial backgrounds.

Redefining Bluegrass Music in College

Ted Lehmann, a well-known columnist for bluegrass music and the bluegrass experience, has been a skeptic of bluegrass performance studies programs in higher education. In the opening statement of his 2017 column “Bluegrass Goes to College, But Should It?,” he firmly defines bluegrass as “a musical genre that

12. Elizabeth A. Carlson, “Preface” to *North Carolina String Music Masters: Old-Time and Bluegrass Legends* (Charleston: The History Press, 2016), 10.

13. See Elizabeth Catte, *What You Are Getting Wrong about Appalachia* (Cleveland: Belt Publishing, 2018), 35–38; and Emily Satterwhite, “Intro to Appalachian Studies: Navigating Myths of Appalachian Exceptionalism,” in *Appalachia in the Classroom: Teaching the Region*, 3–32.

14. This view of Appalachia dates back to the 1700s when Thomas Jefferson succeeded in making the “Agrarian Myth” by associating Appalachia with the American dream of freedom and equality. For more details, see Satterwhite, “Intro to Appalachian Studies.”

15. George E. Lewis sees black and white musical practices as “historically emergent rather than ethnically essential, thereby accounting for the reality of transcultural and transracial communication” between performers of different ethnic backgrounds. See Lewis, “Improvvised Music after 1950: Afrological and Eurological Perspectives,” *Black Music Research Journal* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1996), 93.

grew out of white working-class America.”¹⁶ Especially drawing on the portrait of the region from J. D. Vance’s best-selling memoir *Hillbilly Elegy* (2016), he idealizes the struggles of the people as the source of their strength and conflates the people of Appalachia with the essence of American values. Lehmann views postsecondary schools’ engagement with bluegrass as an elitist challenge to its perceived authenticity and essentialism. For some of his readers, bluegrass will likely remain white, “tribal” music rather than “popular” music for all, but Lehmann’s opinions are in effect outmoded to the mission of the bluegrass community represented by the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA),¹⁷ an institution that promotes diversity and closer engagement with the public educational system.

Rather than a “white” and “tribal” tradition, bluegrass is, according to Robert Cantwell, “a musical synthesis in which diverse folk and popular traditions, sacred and secular, black and white, and urban and rural, combined to form an altogether new strain of American music.”¹⁸ In this process of amalgamation, black musicians were not, and are not, mere “influences” on their white peers—and thereby obscured from view and aesthetically suspect—but have had, and continue to have, a vital role in creating the music’s unique sound and style.¹⁹ In restoring this view in both scholarship and pedagogy, the paucity of information on the diverse history of bluegrass becomes a challenge. Much of black bluegrass music was neither culturally institutionalized nor amply documented due to the commercially-motivated association of bluegrass with whiteness and its oral transmission.

The poetic concept of “Affrilachian” (a portmanteau of Appalachian, African, and American) provides a guiding light for teaching black old-time and bluegrass music in a historico-cultural context. Using the concept for a discussion of the music in tandem with poetry helps students assess African American old-time and bluegrass music’s different sound and style on its own

16. Ted Lehmann, “Bluegrass Goes to College, But Should It?” *The Journal of Roots Music: No Depression* (July 5, 2017), <https://www.nodepression.com/bluegrass-goes-to-college-but-should-it/>. Several authors, including Nick Roll and Jocelyn Neal, have since released their thoughtful responses. See Nick Roll, “Examining Bluegrass’s Move from Hollers to University Halls,” *Insider Higher ED* (July 13, 2017), <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/07/13/examining-bluegrass%E2%80%99s-move-hollers-university-halls>; and Jocelyn Neal, “Should Bluegrass Go to College? Yes,” OUP Blog (September 17, 2017), <https://blog.oup.com/2017/09/reflections-on-country-and-bluegrass/>.

17. IBMA lists “diversity and inclusiveness” as one of its seven key values. For more information, see the website of International Bluegrass Music Association, <https://ibma.org/about>.

18. Robert Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown: The Making of the Old Southern Sound* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), xi.

19. Pamela Foster, *My Country: The African Diaspora’s Country Music Heritage* (Nashville: My Country, 1998), quoted in “Introduction: Country Music and Racial Formation,” in *Hidden in the Mix*, 1.

terms and according to its own musical logic and value system. In so doing, the students can not only learn about Appalachian African American music but also help find it a better place in our historical narrative. With these goals, I have drawn from Affrilachian history, literature, and music and, following Douglass Seaton's primary mode of presentation,²⁰ formed my pedagogical strategy around the notion that we must understand the concerned music's own motivating set of ideas and values. Below I summarize the Affrilachian aesthetic and the key elements of Affrilachian music, and then describe how I teach Affrilachian music in the music history survey.

The Affrilachian Aesthetic

The term "Affrilachian" was coined by the Kentucky native and writer Frank X Walker and has become a style marker for a poetics that gives writers of African descent from Appalachia (and many others) voice, identity, and a meaningful place in literature.²¹ Struck by the absence of African Americans in the old dictionary definition of "Appalachian," Walker's coinage of the term has been a constructive contribution to his community. Indeed, Affrilachia has emerged as a compelling cultural consciousness and arts movement similar to the 1920s Harlem Renaissance and the 1960s Black Arts Movement. It serves a significant backdrop for reconstructing African American literature, history, social studies, and music of the Southern mountain region. Especially given that there were no "good old days" in American history for African Americans, as there are for whites, Affrilachia offers an alternative to the folk revivals in white counterculture since World War II.²² The Affrilachian aesthetic teaches, as Walker puts it, "a collective commitment to make the invisible visible, to redefine the literary landscape of the region as one that is more diverse than mass media portrays it as."²³ It helps illuminate individual experiences and the regional culture and history in Appalachia. Simultaneously, it inspires many

20. Douglass Seaton, *Ideas and Styles in the Western Musical Tradition*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), xv.

21. Frank X Walker, *Affrilachia* (Lexington: Old Cover Press, 2000). For more details about Walker's experiences as a writer of the Appalachian region, as well as his writing community, see "The Affrilachian Poets," <http://www.theaffrilachianpoets.com> (accessed April 14, 2019). *New Oxford American Dictionary*, 3rd ed., defines "Affrilachian" as "An African American who is native to or resides in Appalachia." See <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/affrilachian> (accessed April 14, 2019).

22. Tony Thomas, "Why Black Folks Don't Fiddle," Bluegrass West! Blog, entry posted January 29, 2007, https://www.bluegrasswest.com/ideas/why_black.htm (accessed May 12, 2019).

23. Walker's email message to Theresa L. Burriss on March 17, 2003. See Burriss, "From Harlem Home to Affrilachia: Teaching the Literary Journey," in *Appalachia in the Classroom: Teaching the Region*, 213.

others to define themselves, their families, and their communities, using their own philosophical and aesthetic lenses, and to document their stories and cultural traditions with a sense of responsibility.²⁴

In music history courses, especially under the current political climate since the 2016 election, the concept of Affrilachia can help spark and guide discussions on reevaluating the region, its people, and their realities. This inclusive mode of presentation provides an important point of departure from conventional, “Western” standards. Demanding continuous interpretation and negotiation between questions of cultural and political equalities in history, literature, and music,²⁵ the Affrilachian aesthetic in music history pedagogy inspires us to refuse a nostalgia for the past and the constant justification of it within an ideal of “refinement”: that is, the removal of unwanted elements from what is claimed to be “music” or “art” by a select few. Delivering itself from the norm, “the space of whiteness” in George E. Lewis’s term,²⁶ the Affrilachian aesthetic leads us to see “raw” and “uncut” as a powerful, valuable sound, voice, and identity. It encourages us to teach topics that have been left out of Western or pan-European music history, such as folk song and dance, amateur music making, performance, improvisation, unwritten tradition, and music of non-European descent. Beginning to learn folk song alongside art song, social dance alongside ballet, and jazz improvisation alongside indeterminacy, our students will have a fuller understanding of music history, its affective and socializing power, and will have more influences for their own creative music making.

Key Elements of Affrilachian Music

The signature hard-driving sound of bluegrass music owes much to its instrumentation, of which I discuss here the banjo, guitar, and fiddle, as well as their playing styles, with particular reference to Affrilachian styles. The five-string banjo often symbolizes Appalachia and its people, and is overwhelmingly associated with whiteness in modern public consciousness. To the surprise of many students, however, the banjo itself, with four strings, originated in Africa, most likely West Africa. Cecelia Conway’s article “Black Banjo Songsters in Appalachia” and her earlier monograph, *African Banjo Echoes in Appalachia: A Study for Folk Traditions*, detail the history of the banjo, its arrival in North America no later than 1740, and its subsequent dissemination through the

24. Burriss, “From Harlem Home to Affrilachia,” 214.

25. See Shauna M. Morgan, *Preface: “25 Years of Revolutionary Art: Cultural Cartography and the Expanding Landscape of Affrilachian Poetics” to Black Bone: 25 Years of the Affrilachian Poets*, ed. Bianca Lynne Spriggs and Jeremy Paden (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2018).

26. Lewis, “Improvised Music after 1950,” 100.

Upland South, including Tennessee, West Virginia, and western Kentucky, as well as travelling further down to New Orleans's Congo Square in the late 1820s.²⁷ Until about 1830, when whites began to adopt and popularize it in the minstrel show, blacks were the only ones who played the banjo for their family, friends, and white audiences on plantations, primarily for occasions that involved dancing.²⁸

Most of my students regard the banjo as a string instrument equivalent to the ukulele, mandolin, and guitar. Multi-instrumentalists in Folk and Bluegrass Studies often can play them all or at least have tried all as if they were of the same family. Much of what they know as the sound of the banjo (its twangy, bright, metallic timbre and the rolling texture it creates) is from the five-string banjo adapted by white players during the development of minstrelsy. In white tradition, the banjo is a string, melodic instrument, but Robert Cantwell takes issue with this white adaptation of the instrument and insists that the banjo is visibly a drum, a drum with strings, without much capability of sustaining a tone. The top, fifth-thumb string, though known as "short-drone," does not function as a drone string in black tradition; it does not drone, but it rather "chimes," "tolls," "peals," or "rings like a bell."²⁹ This sound of chiming, along with that of beating the body of the instrument and its lower strings, was meant to provide a rhythmic, percussive background for music, dance, and song, resonating far more with an African than a European character.³⁰

Although most African American banjo pickers play the five-string banjo today, the downstroking playing-style, also known as "thumping," "knocking," "mountain frailing," "rapping," or "clawhammer," originated with players from Africa and continues to remain a distinctively Affrilachian style.³¹ This picking style, combining a percussive melody with syncopated or "off-beat phrasing" layers, articulates the underlying principles of African, more precisely West African music.³²

27. Cecelia Conway, "Black Banjo Songsters in Appalachia," *Black Music Research Journal* 23, no. 1/2 (2003): 149–66; and see idem., *African Banjo Echoes in Appalachia: A Study for Folk Traditions* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995). E. P. Christy, a banjo player and leader of one of the most famous minstrel troupes, heard the banjo in New Orleans's Congo Square. See Robert Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 91.

28. "Cecelia Conway: A Brief History of the African Banjo/Black Fiddle Players," YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YF4cjGIV2OM> (accessed April 14 2019).

29. Robert Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 103. See also Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, "The (Mis)Representation of African American Music: The Role of the Fiddle," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 10, no. 1 (2016), 25.

30. A. M. Jones, *Studies in African Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 206, quoted in Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 103.

31. Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 93.

32. Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 93–95. The African American musicologist and composer Olly Wilson sees that West African and Afro-American musical cultures share a number

In demonstrating the difference between black and white banjo-picking styles—or in other words between clawhammer style and three-finger, Scruggs style—three different renditions of the popular ballad “John Henry”³³ would serve as good examples: Joe and Odell Thompson’s old-time string band, Bill Monroe’s bluegrass, and Snuffy Jenkins’s banjo solo without vocal.³⁴ Each version is distinctive not only in the picking style but also in the treatment of the melody and the rhythm and texture created by improvisation. The Thompsons’ Affrilachian old-time banjo-fiddle string band version has an unpolished sound with a constantly pounding banjo, a wailing fiddle, and a casually added vocal line hovering over the two instruments. Students find the resulting syncopated rhythm, heterophonic texture, and unconstrained manner of expression unique and intriguing. Monroe’s bluegrass version, on the other hand, produces a still unassuming but more organized pairing of banjo and fiddle alongside the other instruments of the ensemble. The Monroe version is melodically rolling and rhythmically syncopated, but emotionally smoothed-up and in a much faster tempo. Unlike these two, Jenkins, an early proponent of the three-finger style predating Earl Scruggs and a white practitioner of the clawhammer style, focuses on the interworking of the tune itself rather than the narration of the story. Combining the ringing quality of the instrument with melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic possibilities created by his fluid technique, this performance features the banjo as an independent instrument. Jenkins’s integration of melody and countermelody, and pinging and rolling, demonstrates the interconnectedness of Affrilachian and Appalachian music.

of common musical characteristics. See Olly Wilson, “The Significance of the Relationship between Afro-American Music and West African Music,” *Black Perspective in Music* 2, no. 1 (1974), 16, quoted in Tony Thomas, “Why African Americans Put the Banjo Down,” in *Hidden in the Mix*, 146. The “off-beat phrasing” is DjéDjé’s words. See, Jacqueline Cogdell DjéDjé, “The (Mis)Representation of African American Music,” 25.

33. John Henry was a young Virginia convict who came to be a steel-driver on the Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) railway and died working on one of the most dangerous enterprises of the time, the first rail route, one-mile Lewis Tunnel through the Appalachian Mountains. He must have been a hero of trackliners, in that there are dozens of versions of the ballad and two hundred recorded versions of the song of John Henry, ranging from blues, through country and bluegrass, to folk. His death remains a mystery, but the symbolic representation of Henry as a hard worker with notable sexual prowess has been important politically, socially, and musically in both white and black cultures throughout American history. For more details, see Scott Reynolds Nelson, *Steel Drivin’ Man: John Henry, the Untold Story of an American Legend* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

34. *Old Time Music from the North Carolina Piedmont: Joe and Odell Thompson*, CD, released on October 1, 1995 (Global Village Music, 2007); *The Music of Bill Monroe: from 1936 to 1994*, CD Box Set, released on July 19, 1994 (MCA Nashville Records, 1994); and *American Banjo: Three-Finger and Scruggs*, CD, released in 1957 and 1990 (Smithsonian Folkways Records, 1990). In the last recording, Jenkins features two versions of “John Henry” on Tracks 12 and 15. Both are similar in style and sound, but my focused reference is the second version on Track 15.

The guitar's better resonance and chordal quality had replaced the banjo in black folk culture by the late nineteenth century, and the clawhammer style gradually shaped the thumbpicking style of the guitar.³⁵ Against the myth that folk/country guitar belongs to white, American, cowboy culture, this thumb-picking or thumb style is credited to the African American multi-instrumentalist Arnold Shultz (1886–1931). His thumb-style influenced a long lineage of modern guitarists from Ike Everly, through Kennedy Jones, Mose Rager, and Merle Travis (with his “Travis” picking style), to Chet Atkins.³⁶ Additionally, Shultz played with the Monroe brothers for square dances in the 1920s, and Shultz's sound and musicianship served as a crucial model during Bill Monroe's formative years.³⁷

As a counterpart to the black banjo and picking style, black fiddling also presents students with an alternative sound and playing style. Different from white fiddling, which is frequently described as “smooth,” “clear,” or “notey,” black fiddling tends to involve “rough,” “scraping,” “sawing,” and “jerky” sounds and playing techniques.³⁸ R. P. Christeson describes the style of Bill Driver (1881–1985) with the words such as “rough” and “vigorous.” With regard to the fiddle playing of Joe and Odell Thompson, the folklorist Alan Jabbour and the banjo player Tommy Thompson, in their conversations with Conway, agree that black fiddling incorporates seemingly less organized rhythmic patterns with “moaned and wailing notes” in a heterogeneously interwoven texture.³⁹ Black fiddling displays a particular sense of timing and disposition of rhythmic forces originating from African dances that are under “separate laws of motion from white music,” according to the banjo scholar Tony Thomas.⁴⁰

35. Robert Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 93–95.

36. Erika Brady, “Contested Origins: Arnold Shultz and the Music of Western Kentucky,” in *Hidden in the Mix*, 106–7.

37. Charles Wolfe, “Rural Black String Band Music,” *Black Music Research Journal* 10, no. 1 (1990), 32, quoted in Jim Rooney, *Rossmen: Bill Monroe and Muddy Waters* (New York: Dial Press, 1971).

38. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, “The (Mis)Representation of African American Music,” 13. For more details about black fiddling, see also Alan Jabbour, “Fiddle Music,” in *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jan Harold Brunvand (New York: Garland, 1996); Paul F. Wells, “Fiddling as an Avenue of Black-White Musical Interchange,” *Black Music Research Journal* 23, no. 1/2 (Spring-Autumn, 2003): 135–47; and Charles Wolfe, “Rural Black String Band Music,” *Black Music Research Journal* 10 (1990): 32–35. For Bill Livers's music, see Guthrie T. Meade, John Harrod, and Mark Wilson, *Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky, vol. 2: Along the Kentucky River*, Rounder CD 0377, 1997.

39. Cecelia Conway, *African Banjo Echoes in Appalachia*, 13–15, 11n. According to Conway, the information was gathered from her conversations with Alan Jabbour and Tommy Thompson.

40. Tony Thomas, “Why African Americans Put the Banjo Down,” in *Hidden in the Mix*, 146.

The instructor must be careful not to oversimplify Blackness as a distinction between Africanness and Europeanness located in a few specific elements or traits, however. As Sule Greg Wilson, Olly Wilson, and Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje warn, the conventional binary belief that “Africa contributed rhythm and Europe melody to what became known as ‘American’ fiddle music” is misleading: “there are many musical traditions in Africa that can be described as melodic just as European culture is not completely devoid of musicking that emphasizes rhythm.”⁴¹ As DjeDje has pointed out, this simplistic view is one of the repercussions resulting from cultural practices and music marketing strategies set in place during the time of slavery that played up the difference between black and white music in America. The segregation of black and white styles has continued because of its convenience, and we have failed to embrace the actual syncretic stylistic history of black and white practices, nor have we updated information about America’s diverse musical history in public education.⁴²

Teaching Narrative, Repertoire, and Class Application

I have explored the early history of bluegrass music in courses for both music majors and non-music majors with a particular sensitivity to similarities as well as differences between black and white musical practices. This bluegrass/Affrilachian unit primarily takes two 75-minute or three 50-minute class sessions. While the scope and depth are slightly different in the courses for music majors and non-music majors, the multidisciplinary nature and contemporariness of the topic—involving music, literature, and political and social issues—create a broad range of discussions, participatory activities, and various learning points from music-historical facts to moral responsibility in both groups of students. At the completion of the unit, previously unexamined assumptions about the Appalachian region and its music, whether based on negative stereotypes or positive romantic views, are reexamined. Our roles as musicians, listeners, and consumers in current music history can be reflected on in light of this study.

The basic outline of the three 50-minute class sessions is as follows: first, I assess the students’ perceptions about country, bluegrass, and Appalachian music followed by an overview of bluegrass music and its stylistic characteristics; second, I introduce the concept of Affrilachia and the Affrilachian aesthetic

41. Sule Greg Wilson, Review of *African Banjo Echoes in Appalachia: A Study in Folk Tradition* by Cecelia Conway (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995), *Banjo Newsletter* 23, no. 1 (August 1996): 7–10, quoted in Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, “The (Mis)Representation of African American Music,” 15.

42. Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje, “The (Mis)Representation of African American Music,” 24.

in literature and music; and third, we study the key elements of Appalachian music with a focus on repertoire identification.

As an introductory activity on the first day of the unit, I hand out a short questionnaire that asks the students to define “country,” “bluegrass,” and “Appalachian” music, according to their own knowledge and experiences. Following J. Peter Burkholder, I ask the students throughout the semester to define each musical style we study by:

- the people who created, performed, heard, and paid for this music,
- the choices they made and why they made them,
- what they valued most in the music, and
- how these choices reflect both tradition and innovation.⁴³

This schema helps students avoid profiling each musical style immediately in terms of race, class, and gender; however, we soon discover that our definitions do primarily come from conventional, commercially-motivated and racially-charged associations with these musics.

In response, most of the students frankly say that they do not know much about country, bluegrass, or Appalachian music, or have not had time to explore them either inside or outside an academic setting. They do, however, often point out that Appalachian music seems to belong to a white, rural, lower working-class community in the Southern Mountain region and thus that it is folk music and one kind of authentic music in America. Some students who are from that region or involved in folk and bluegrass ensembles bring up the commercial labeling of the regional music (“hillbilly”), candidly commenting that in reality “pillbilly” is a better term, pointing to the ongoing issue of opioid/substance addiction in the community. Other students who focus their studies primarily on classical music naively remark that Appalachia seems like a peaceful and uncontaminated place, defined by the values of family, hard work, Christianity, and patriotism. These views are influenced by representations of the region in mass media.

After sharing what they know about country, bluegrass, and Appalachian music, the students examine stylistic characteristics and varieties of bluegrass by watching video clips of a tribute concert to the late “Father of Bluegrass Music,” which was held at the Raymond Auditorium, the home of the Grand Ole Opry, Nashville, Tennessee, forty-seven hours after Bill Monroe died on

43. J. Peter Burkholder, “Changing the Stories We Tell: Repertoires, Narratives, Materials, Goals, and Strategies in Teaching Music History,” *College Music Symposium* 49/50 (2009/2010), 121; see also Burkholder’s article “The Value of a Music History Survey,” this *Journal* 5, no. 2 (2015), 63.

September 9, 1996.⁴⁴ Bluegrass music traditionally involves five acoustic string instruments (fiddle, banjo, mandolin, guitar, and double bass), high-pitched vocals, a primarily happy-go-lucky affect, a breakneck tempo, and melodies borrowed from spirituals, the blues, and folk music. In the video, the musicians attempt to demonstrate with their prowess bluegrass's great evolution and diversification since its inception in the 1940s, retracing the pathway from traditional story-telling with a high lonesome voice in a family-like group setting, through varied ensemble types, to a purely instrumental solo with dazzling virtuosity and improvisation comparable to that of jazz. The students note, nevertheless, that based on the evidence in the video it is still apparently white music: the musicians on the stage and the fans in the audience were almost all white. Before the students can come to the conclusion that whiteness is part of its tradition, I point out that country music on the whole has been artificially marketed as white music and that it has been culturally constructed and normalized as such, and therefore we have an intellectual and moral responsibility to challenge this divisive construct.

The second lesson begins with reading Walker's poem "Affrilachia"⁴⁵ in class and answering questions on the likely time, place, and theme of the poem.⁴⁶ As the students share their findings from the poem, they understand that the protagonist of "Affrilachia" directs our attention to Blackness in Appalachia that is hidden in modern consciousness. The protagonist candidly opens the poem with his personal struggles with public images of his home, Kentucky, as homogeneously white—images that ignore the presence of African Americans, including himself. Walker notes, "thoroughbred racing and hee haw are burdensome images for kentucky sons venturing beyond the mason-dixon." The students are perhaps too young to recognize all the metaphorically embedded titles of the long-running television series (such as *Hee Haw*, *The Dukes of Hazzard*, and *The Beverly Hillbillies*) that portrayed stereotypes of rural white folk as awkward in manner and backward in time. In fact, the theme songs of the latter two—the country-sounding "Good Ol' Boys" and the bluegrass-style

44. *The Legend Lives On: A Tribute to Bill Monroe*, DVD, produced and directed by Robert Swope (Nashville: A Sunrise International Production for Audium Records/KOCH Vision, 2003).

45. Frank X Walker, "Affrilachia," in *Affrilachia* (Lexington: Old Cover Press, 2000), 92–3.

46. As J. Peter Burkholder suggests, I provide a questionnaire sheet at the beginning of each class that asks about a piece of music, a short reading excerpt—taken from a historical document, recent article, or biography of musician—a list of musical terms, or political and cultural events and their approximate dates. Arriving at the class at least five minutes early, the students grab the sheet and start to answer the questions. They are encouraged to chat with their classmates or google terms, events, or dates they are not sure about. In so doing, they get their mind ready for the class topic and have their answers written for later class discussion. This daily activity has been effective in helping the students discipline themselves and engage in class discussion. See Burkholder, "Changing the Stories We Tell," 124–25.

“The Ballad of Jed Clampett,” respectively—reaffirmed the union of white mountaineers and country music in public consciousness. Taking issue with this type of longstanding media representation, Walker brings it to our attention that “some of the bluegrass is black,” pointing to the existence of Affrilachia and its people and culture in the Mountain region.

The interdisciplinary nature of Walker’s poetry—each poem is, I find, as musical as it is cultural and historical—leads the students to see that music is an important part of Affrilachian identity, through which the communities are identified, distinguished, and contested. Walker’s poem “Amazin’ Grace”⁴⁷ provides an eye-opening experience for my students, and they finally understand why Affrilachian identity matters in a study of American music. The sweet melody the slave-ship captain heard is neither the sound Walker wants to share with us, nor is it John Newton’s belated apology, but the noise of cracking, popping, and breaking bodies and souls of the hundreds of unidentified Africans under the deck. It is not the melody tuned to God’s grace but the outcry of human misery once real to too many in America’s past. It is not Newton’s “Amazing Grace,” but the enslaved blacks’ and now Walker’s “Amazin’ Grace.”

As I steer our discussion to the stylistic components of Affrilachian music, Walker’s poem “A Wake” beautifully summarizes what is distinctively Black and African American in the Mountain music. Pointing to a common reaction to grief in his community that is more personalized and directly expressed, Walker describes that black music is not “just quiet respectful organized sobbing” but “to moan and wail,” not “nice passive latin chanting” but “to reach deep inside,” “scream,” and “get up and fight.”⁴⁸ Walker’s sensitive choice of the verb forms used for black mourners leads us to differentiate the quality, sentiment, and spirit of black music, commonly located in the present, in reality, and in action, and expressed in a direct, often blunt manner. The resulting improvised sound and heterogeneous action resist being measured by the reticence of European Western music.

The last lesson of the unit focuses on the participatory experience of Affrilachian music by listening to, humming, and tapping along. The questionaire of the day asks about Joe and Odell Thompson’s fiddle-banjo string band rendition of “John Henry,” which plays as they enter the classroom.⁴⁹ Without giving the students a song title or genre designation, students exercise their active listening skills to identify the performing force(s), manner of delivery, timbre, texture, rhythm/meter, melody, harmony, form, content, affect, and venue. They are also expected to write down any other findings or reactions to

47. Frank X Walker, “Amazin’ Grace,” in *Affrilachia*, 59–61.

48. Frank X Walker, “A Wake,” in *Affrilachia*, 62–64.

49. *Old Time Music from the North Carolina Piedmont: Joe and Odell Thompson*, CD, released on October 1, 1995 (Global Village Music, 2007).

the music. After more than five minutes of repeated listening, we go through our answers, review most of the key elements of Affrilachian music—including clawhammer-style banjo picking, black fiddling, and syncopation—and discuss in particular how the song relates to the examination of Walker’s musical poems from the previous lesson.

The unusual sound of banjo, fiddle, and voice encourages the students to find out more about the music. They quickly detect the heterogeneous timbre of the three forces working together under the principles of percussiveness and rawness, and the heterophonically interwoven and highly syncopated layers. As for the music’s dominating lively dance affect, we investigate more about an African American’s sense of syncopation and linear approach to it. Instructor resources, and possible reading assignments, include Robert Cantwell’s chapter “Banjo: African Rhythms and the Bluegrass Beat” in *Bluegrass Breakdown* and Paul F. Wells’s article “Fiddling as an Avenue of Black-White Musical Interchange.” Both readings provide thorough information about African American syncopation and fiddling with their close relationship to the steps of “patting juba.”⁵⁰ Alan Lomax’s examination of black traits in fiddling and their association with Tommy Jarrell’s playing style in the film *Appalachian Journey* is also a good source for a visual demonstration.⁵¹ Knowing about this different approach to syncopation can help dissuade students from attempting to listen for a vertical synchronization of rhythm. Rather, they find that each of the performers has his or her own off-beat phrasing, resulting in the grouping of three and two notes, respectively, in a likely duple metrical framework: ♪♪♪ ♪♪. This basic rhythmic figure has survived from indigenous African practice, heard in whole or part throughout the Americas, particularly in the Caribbean.⁵² In North American black music, it has become the characteristic form of syncopation underlying blues, old-time fiddle, minstrel banjo, cakewalk, piano ragtime, and jazz styles.⁵³

By translating this pattern into the rhythmic solmization syllables “taka-mi tadi,”⁵⁴ we sing and clap this rhythm repeatedly before listening to the music

50. Robert Cantwell, “Banjo: African Rhythms and the Bluegrass Beat,” in *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 110–13; and Paul F. Wells, “Fiddling as an Avenue of Black-White Musical Interchange,” *Black Music Research Journal* 23, no. 1/2 (Spring-Autumn, 2003): 135–47.

51. *Appalachian Journey* is one of five films made from footage that Alan Lomax shot between 1978 and 1985 for the PBS American Patchwork series (1991). Narrated by Lomax himself, it offers songs, dances, stories, and religious rituals of the Southern Appalachians. For more details and the transcript of the film, see “Folkstreams,” www.folkstream.net.

52. John Storm Roberts, *Black Music of Two Worlds: African, Caribbean, Latin, and African American Traditions* (New York: William Morrow, 1972), 164, quoted in Robert Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 102.

53. Robert Cantwell, *Bluegrass Breakdown*, 102.

54. Richard Hoffman, William Pelto, and John W. White, “Takadimi: A Beat-Oriented System of Rhythm Pedagogy,” *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* 10 (1996): 7–30.

again. As the students swing through the simultaneous process of tension and release, they internalize the African American syncopation, and the classroom fills with an old-time, square dance vibe. For further listening (and as examples for later writing assignments), I recommend the Thompsons' other fiddle-banjo tunes, including "Georgia Buck," "Pumpkin Pie," and "Donna Got a Rambling Mind." The Carolina Chocolate Drops' rendition of "John Henry"⁵⁵ is another example that uses this rhythmic pattern, but at a breakneck speed and with improvisation typical of bluegrass music. They also have their own vocal style and explores a contemporary, upbeat rock-and-roll feel with the addition of a resonator guitar.

As we finish up our week-long journey of old-time music, I include the Carolina Chocolate Drops as an exemplary model of contemporary musician-ship. The group is a banjo-fiddle based string band that demonstrates old-time music's African roots through a modern interpretation. Mentored by the late Joe Thompson, this group revived the black string-band tradition, while incorporating blues, jazz, and folk balladry. Although each of the founding members now actively pursues a solo career, the group's mission has been to demonstrate "the central role African-Americans played in shaping our nation's popular music from its beginnings more than a century ago."⁵⁶ The Carolina Chocolate Drops' presence in the music history classroom inspires the students, regardless of their racial and cultural backgrounds. Upon listening to the Carolina Chocolate Drops' lively rendition of "Don't Get Trouble in Your Mind,"⁵⁷ the students realize that the old-time music conceived centuries ago can sound as cool as the most recent favorites of their playlists.

55. *Carolina Chocolate Drops & Joe Thompson*, CD, released on May 26, 2009 (Music Maker, 2009).

56. Michael Hill, "The Carolina Chocolate Drops," <http://www.carolinachocolatedrops.com/band/about.html> (accessed April 14, 2019). For more details about each member's current pursuit and mission, see "Rhiannon Giddens and What Folk Music Means," *The New Yorker*, May 13, 2019, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/05/20/rhiannon-giddens-and-what-folk-music-means>; about Dom Flemons, interview by Ann Powers, NPR World Café Nashville, April 12, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2019/01/05/682318409/dom-flemons-presents-a-new-image-of-the-american-cowboy>; and about Justin Robinson, <http://first-avenue.com/performer/justin-robinson>.

57. About the tune, Rhiannon Giddens writes, "Justin [Robinson] learned this from the Old Hat Records' release 'Music from the Lost Provinces.' The Lost Provinces are a very isolated plateau in North Carolina's far northwestern corner, west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, with easier access to Virginia and Tennessee than to the rest of the state. This region nurtured a great wealth of local talent, including White fiddler Frank Blevins and his guitar-playing brother Edd who formed the Tar Heel Ramblers with neighbor Fred Miller on banjo, and recorded this song for Columbia in the spring of 1928. Barely 17 at the time, Frank Blevins borrowed this melody from a popular folk song, 'Mollie and Tenbrooks.'" See the liner notes to *Carolina Chocolate Drops: Heritage* (Dixiefrog Records, 2007), 9.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the unit on Affrilachian/Appalachian music, just as with other units of the survey, I expect that the students will have a base of knowledge and skills with which to approach the music and to continue to develop outside the classroom. However, what I really expect from them through this case study is that they challenge themselves to constantly interrogate the ways we tell our stories, and how we categorize, represent and misrepresent objects and figures in music history. As I often remind the students, as we teach, learn, compose, perform, and listen to music, we *write* history together. Music history should no longer be a single first-person story of the visible, vocal, and powerful, but should be a collection of many stories that grant places not only to the dominant but also to the seemingly invisible, silent, and powerless. Music history should neither be filled with museum pieces sitting in a textbook nor be crafted by a single glorious theme of “the experimental.” Music history should involve many music makers and buyers from many spheres of music, if not all, through a diverse range of repertoires and approaches.⁵⁸ This way, we can narrow the gap between people’s lived (and living) repertoires and the historical canon, and between an ever-changing musical world and postsecondary music education.

As I introduce Walker’s poetry and the Carolina Chocolate Drops’ music to my students, moreover, I hope that these two models will motivate them to find their future niche. The goal that I have for my students is larger and more expansive than simply equipping them with knowledge and skills for employment; I find that the purpose of higher education lies in building good character and depth of understanding. As Bethany Zecher Sutton argues, skepticism of higher education often causes us to lose sight of the higher goals of postsecondary school as “preparation for citizenship, civic engagement, contributions to society, and community leadership.” We focus instead on “employability” and look for “a tangible ‘return on investment.’”⁵⁹ Sutton argues that education is “more than knowledge of a particular field, training in a discipline, or even achievement of certain learning outcomes and critical skills.” As Johnnetta Cole puts it, the purpose of higher education is to learn “scholarship,” “service,” “creativity,” “matters of the mind,” and “matters of the heart and the soul.”⁶⁰

58. As an example of the recent scholarly efforts to expand the boundaries of music history with relevancy, see John J. Sheinbaum, *Good Music: What It Is & Who Gets to Decide* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019).

59. Bethany Zecher Sutton, “Higher Education’s Public Purpose,” *Association of American Colleges & Universities* (June 20, 2016), <https://www.aacu.org/leap/liberal-education-nation-blog/higher-educations-public-purpose> (accessed April 14, 2019).

60. Johnnetta Cole, “What’s the Value of Higher Education?” *Yale Insights* (April 11, 2018), <https://insights.som.yale.edu/insights/what-s-the-value-of-higher-education> (accessed April 14, 2019).

In pursuit of these goals, music-major students should think outside of their own self-interests and be aware of issues that matter for others. With a better awareness of marginalized sectors of America's music and its history, the students will ideally seek to find ways to contribute to making a better world, while reminding themselves, again, that their purpose as music students in higher education is not limited to establishing themselves as competent, working individuals, but nurturing themselves to be successful members of a society that creates music, or anything, in harmony with their peers.

Conclusion

In teaching the undergraduate music history sequence, our job is to make it more current and relevant to our students' time and place, and to the changing culture of their own postsecondary music school. Reflecting our musical world, the music history classroom should embrace diverse musical spheres and voices. As bluegrass music enters higher education, we not only have a responsibility to teach technical performance skills, but we also have an ethical and intellectual responsibility to teach the music's history accurately and inclusively. This effort is not meant to diminish the history of European art-music traditions, but to make the whole curriculum richer and fuller for our students who no longer identify themselves as European descendants but as "Americans" with more diverse ethnic and cultural heritages, experiences, and influences than ever before. In this intellectual and pedagogical framework, American music is neither an outsider nor a late-comer to "Western," European art music but, with its pluralistic styles and forms, plays a central role in a new narrative of music history for future generations.

Conference Report: Pedagogy into Practice: Teaching Music Theory in the Twenty-First Century (Santa Barbara, California, May 23–25, 2019)

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On May 23–25, 2019, the second “Pedagogy into Practice: Teaching Music Theory in the Twenty-First Century” conference took place in Santa Barbara, California. Sponsored by the Gail Boyd de Stwolinski Center for Music Theory Pedagogy (home of the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*), this conference was a follow-up to the inaugural 2017 program at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee. With the recent postponement of the annual Teaching Music History Conference, it was encouraging to see the vitality of pedagogy research and discourse from our sister discipline. Chaired by Rebecca Jemian, the program committee (Timothy Chenette, Bryn Hughes, Rachel Mitchell, Susan Piagentini, Derek Remeš, and Jena Root) reviewed almost one hundred proposals and curated a vibrant program featuring thirty papers, ten workshops, two panels, twenty-seven posters, and three keynote presentations.

The papers covered a wide range of topics and were grouped into the following panels: Pedagogy and Extensions of Music Theory, Aural Skills, Diversifying the Curriculum, Global Pedagogy, Writing, Addressing the Range of Students, Fundamentals and Inclusivity, Expanding Our Approach, and Models for Learning.¹ While a full review of the papers is not possible here, several themes permeated the discussions, including assessment, inclusivity, and relevance.

Many papers proposed new strategies for accommodating a changing student population that is not only entering college with a different set of musical skills and cultural experiences than previous generations, but also requiring different collegiate instruction to succeed as twenty-first-century musicians. For example, in “From Design to Implementation: Creating Inclusive Assessments within the Music Theory Classroom,” Stefanie Bilidas and Zachary Lloyd explained how language, syntax, and semantic choices on assessments may unintentionally privilege certain students, and they showed how educators

1. See <https://jmtpp.appstate.edu/conference/conference-abstracts> for abstracts of all conference presentations.

can better construct questions to reflect the diversity of experiences present in the classroom. Jane Piper Clendinning discussed the Mathematics and Music Theory Project at Florida State University in “Mathematics and Music Theory: Assisting Music Theory Students with Math-Related Learning Disabilities.” She and her music and psychology colleagues (Nancy Rogers, Colleen Ganley, and Sara Hart) investigated the relationship between mathematical and musical abilities in an effort to develop a predictive screening tool that may provide early identification of students likely to struggle with music theory.

Conference attendees had the opportunity to engage more deeply with the presented material in a set of ten interactive workshop sessions. Several of these workshops focused on strategies for teaching particular skills in the aural skills classroom, such as Jana Millar’s sketching technique for melodic analysis and Nathan Baker’s use of galant schemas to teach counterpoint, harmony, and voice leading. Other workshops addressed more general pedagogical concerns: Leigh VanHandel provided strategies for assisting students with memory deficits, and Elizabeth West Marvin, Molly Murdock, and Jane Piper Clendinning showed how to find and include more music by women in the theory classroom.

Both of the panel sessions offered at the conference focused on redesigning core theory requirements to offer more flexibility and choice to undergraduates. In “Diversifying the Theory Curriculum: How to Open Multiple Pathways through the Theory Core,” Andrew Gades, Megan Lavengood, and Crystal Peebles discussed the merits of a modular approach to theory course selection from the perspectives of a state institution, liberal arts college, and conservatory, respectively. Greg McCandless, Jennifer Sondgrass, and Andrew Hannon showed how their new curricular approach at Appalachian State University allows students to select theory coursework based on their future professional needs in “From Core to Cores: Curricular Reform toward Degree- and Student-Specific Theory Coursework.”

One highlight of the conference was the Friday poster session, featuring twenty-seven posters on the topics of technology, performance skills, theory games, curriculum and learning, and musical design. Conference organizers gave this session its own featured time slot, with no competing concurrent activities. As a result, the session was well attended and full of vibrant dialogue.

Each day of the conference featured a keynote address. In “Public Music Theory and Pedagogy,” J. Daniel Jenkins highlighted his work bringing music theory instruction to inmates at Lee Correctional Institution, South Carolina’s largest maximum-security prison. Attendees of Daniel B. Stevens’s “Never Twice the Same: Listening and Improvisation” exercised their creativity in a series of small group improvisational challenges. Cynthia I. Gonzales showed how she applies music learning software in her aural skills classroom in “SmartMusic: Removing the ‘Fear Factor’ from Sight Singing and Aural Skills.”

Attendees convened for a final “Coda” session at the conclusion of the conference. Program chair Rebecca Jemian first asked everyone to reflect on their conference experience and discuss takeaways for their classrooms. Participants tossed a Catchbox throwable microphone around the auditorium, sharing the many valuable ideas and strategies they gleaned from their time in Santa Barbara. Jemian also asked attendees to identify any overlooked areas of music theory pedagogy discourse that were missing from the conference. This final query elicited several important topics to which we as music history pedagogues could also devote more attention, including entrance exam objectives, graduate student pedagogy, and community college outreach.

Thanks to the efforts of directors Steve Laitz and Jenny Snodgrass at the Center for Music Theory Pedagogy, hosts Ben Levy and Janet Bourne at UC Santa Barbara, and the conference program committee, the second biennial Pedagogy into Practice conference offered a welcoming and collaborative venue for the advancement of research and dialogue in the field of music theory pedagogy. After experiencing three days of stimulating pedagogical discourse on a variety of musical topics, it is clear that the fields of music theory pedagogy and music history pedagogy have a lot to offer each other. One way to promote a greater interchange of ideas and collaboration would be a future joint pedagogy conference for teachers of both history and theory. Pedagogues in both areas care deeply about two central issues—listening and learning—and greater dialogue between our disciplines would undoubtedly be mutually beneficial.