

COURSE SYLLABUS

HUMA 1100 | Music of the World

3 Credits | Fall 2026

Class	L1 Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30-5:50 PM
Location	LTL, CYT Building (354)
Instructor	Dr. YiFan SHAO yfshao@ust.hk
Instructional Assistant	Alvin TAM hmalvintam@ust.hk
Office Hours	By appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to a range of folk and traditional musics from around the world through an ethnomusicological perspective. It examines how music is created, performed, transmitted, and experienced within specific cultural, social, and historical contexts. Individual music cultures will be studied in turn, while maintaining a cross-cultural and cross-regional perspective to identify shared themes and processes, as well as the distinctive features that give each tradition its unique character.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

On successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. develop an informed appreciation of diverse world music traditions through active listening and engagement;
2. explain the relationships between music and cultural, social, and historical contexts;
3. demonstrate knowledge of basic ethnomusicological concepts, terminology, and relevant background information about the music cultures studied; and
4. identify and describe key musical characteristics of the traditions studied through listening and musical analysis.

Course Materials

- Most course materials, including lecture slides, listening examples, and supplementary readings, will be available on Canvas.
- **Textbook:** Titon, Jeff Todd. *Worlds of Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World's Peoples*. Cengage Learning, 6th edition. ISBN-13: 978-1305855540.
- The 5th edition may also be used as an alternative reference.

Assessment Overview

Assessment	Weight
Attendance	10%
Class Participation and Discussion	5%
In-class Online Quizzes (5)	15%
Midterm Test	20%
Final Test	25%
Case Study Project Checkpoint	1%
Case Study Video Essay	24%
Total	100%

Key Assessment Dates

Date	Assessment
Tue, 22 September	Quiz 1
Tue, 29 September	Quiz 2
Thu, 15 October	Quiz 3
Thu, 22 October	Midterm Test
Tue, 3 November	Case Study Project Checkpoint
Tue, 3 November	Quiz 4
Tue, 17 November	Quiz 5
Tue, 24 November	Case Study Video Essay
Thu, 26 November	Final Test

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Alignment

Intended Learning Outcome	Measured by
Develop an informed appreciation of diverse world music traditions through active listening and engagement.	Attendance and Participation (15%)
Explain the relationships between music and cultural, social, and historical contexts.	Case Study Video Essay (24%) and Participation and Discussion (5%)
Demonstrate knowledge of basic ethnomusicological concepts, terminology, and relevant background information about the music cultures studied.	In-class Online Quizzes (15%), Midterm Test (20%), and Final Test (25%)
Identify and describe key musical characteristics of the traditions studied through listening and musical analysis.	In-class Online Quizzes (15%), Midterm Test (20%), Final Test (25%), and Case Study Video Essay (24%)

Assessment Details

Attendance and Participation (15%)

Attendance accounts for 10% of the final course grade. Attendance will be recorded at 13 unannounced class meetings throughout the semester. Students may miss up to three attendance checks without penalty. Beginning with the fourth missed check, 1% will be deducted from the final course grade for each additional missed check, up to a maximum deduction of 10%.

For any recorded lectures, viewership may be monitored as part of attendance verification. Students should not request attendance confirmation from instructional assistants if they are absent from class.

Participation accounts for 5% of the final course grade. Students are expected to actively engage in lectures, listening activities, and class discussions. Participation may include answering or asking questions, contributing observations during listening exercises, participating in group activities, and engaging with assigned readings and listening materials.

To foster an interactive learning environment, the instructor may invite individual students to respond to questions during class. Participation will be evaluated based on students' overall engagement and contribution throughout the semester.

In-class Online Quizzes (15%)

Five in-class online quizzes will be conducted through Canvas on the dates listed under Key Assessment Dates. The quizzes will consist primarily of multiple-choice and listening-based questions. They are designed to assess students' understanding of recent lecture content, assigned readings, and listening examples discussed in class, and to prepare students for the Midterm and Final Tests.

All quizzes will be completed independently during the scheduled class period through Canvas. Students are encouraged to review lecture slides, assigned readings, and listening materials before each quiz.

Midterm and Final Tests (45%)

The Midterm Test (20%) will take place in class on Thursday, **22 October**. The Final Test (25%) will take place in class on Thursday, **26 November**.

- No make-up tests or examinations will be offered except in documented exceptional circumstances approved under University policies. Students who miss a test or examination without an approved reason will receive a score of zero for that assessment.
- If a student misses the Midterm Test due to an approved absence, the 20% weight of the Midterm will be transferred to the Final Test; the Final Test will then count for 45% of the final course grade.

Case Study (25%)

The Case Study consists of two components:

1. Case Study Project Checkpoint (1%)

On Tuesday, **3 November**, students are required to submit a draft script or detailed project outline (minimum 1,000 words) that explains the content, structure, and research direction of the Case Study Video Essay. The exact details will be posted on Canvas and explained in class.

2. Case Study Video Essay (24%)

Students will produce a Video Essay presenting their case study based on their research and project development. The submission deadline is Tuesday, **24 November**. Further details will be announced on Canvas.

The Video Essay should demonstrate an understanding of the selected musical tradition and its cultural context, as well as thoughtful musical analysis supported by appropriate listening examples and scholarly sources. Students should focus on musical analysis rather than solely presenting historical or descriptive information.

Detailed instructions and grading criteria will be posted on Canvas and explained in class.

Indicative Course Content

Music, Culture, and the Concept of 'World Music'

Definitions of music, traditional music, and 'world music'; music cultures; and music as an embodiment of ways of life.

Elements of Music

Systems of organizing sound, including pitch, scales, rhythm, texture, form, and notation.

Africa

West African musical traditions and musical connections between Africa and the Americas.

North America: African American Traditions

Spirituals, Gospel, Blues, Jazz, and Hip Hop.

The Middle East and the Arab World

Key terminology and the relationships among music, religion, poetry, and Bedouin cultural values.

South Asia

The aesthetics of Indian music; raga and tala; and musical traditions of North and South India.

East and Southeast Asia

Selected musical traditions of East and Southeast Asia, including Chinese jingju and Suzhou tanci.

Academic Integrity

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential component of university learning. Students are expected to complete all assessments honestly and independently unless collaboration has been explicitly authorized, and to acknowledge properly all sources of information and materials used.

Academic misconduct, including cheating, plagiarism, submitting another person's work as one's own, or misrepresenting sources, will be handled in accordance with University regulations and may result in serious academic consequences.

Examples of academic misconduct include:

- using unauthorized materials, devices, or assistance during quizzes, tests, or examinations. In closed-book assessments, this includes using generative AI tools, translation tools, search engines, or other online resources unless explicitly permitted by the instructor;
- submitting work completed by another person or claiming credit for another person's contribution; and
- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without proper citation.

Use of Generative AI Tools

Generative AI tools may be used for limited purposes such as brainstorming ideas or improving language expression. However, students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, and intellectual content of all submitted work. Musical analysis, listening observations, interpretations, and arguments presented in assignments must reflect students' own understanding. Undisclosed or inappropriate use of AI-generated content may be considered academic misconduct.