

Division of Humanities
Tentative Course Syllabus

Course Code: HUMA 2108
Course Title: Music of China
Course Offered in: Spring 2025
Course Instructor: Dr. Mercedes Dujunco

Course Description: This course will look at various forms of Chinese music, focusing in particular on instrumental genres. Although the aim is not to present the history of Chinese music per se, the topical organization of the course will follow a more or less chronological framework as attention is drawn to certain issues and prominent characteristics of music and musical life in China from ancient times to the present. The ability to read music or knowledge of musical notation would be helpful, but not required.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

	Course ILOs
1	Recognize and define/identify major Chinese musical terms, genres and styles
2	Intelligently talk & write about the historical development, distinct features, performance contexts and sociocultural issues pertaining to some, if not all, of the Chinese music genres and styles studied in class
3	Appreciate some, if not all, of the Chinese music genres and styles studied in class
4	Understand the significance of music within Chinese culture

Course Outline:

Week	Topics	Briefly outline what this topic will cover
1	The Chinese Music System	Music's relationship to numerology, weights and measures, acoustical computations, ethics, rites and ceremonies, etc. in early China; the pentatonic framework of Chinese music.
2	Chinese Music Aesthetics	The function of music and what is considered "beautiful" or "good" music in China since ancient times and the persistence of these notions through the present.
3	Music of the Literati, Part 1	The music of the <i>qin</i> zither – the influence of Taoism; the amateur ideal; the <i>qin</i> tablature notation; the mechanics of <i>qin</i> performance.
4	Music of the Literati, Part 2	The Art of <i>Kunqu</i> Opera – historical development; Kun tunes, the reform of <i>Kunqu</i> and its accompanying instrumental ensemble; <i>The Peony Pavilion</i>
5	Music of the People, Part 1a	<i>Sizhu</i> Musics of South China: <i>Jiangnan sizhu</i>
6	Music of the People, Part 1b	<i>Sizhu</i> Musics of South China: <i>Chaozhou xianshi</i> and <i>Kejia hanyue</i>
7	Music of the People, Part 1c	<i>Sizhu</i> Music of South China: <i>Fujian nanyin</i> and <i>Guangdong yinyue</i>

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8	Music of the People, Part 2a	<i>Guchui/Chuida</i> Music: <i>Sunan chuida</i> and Henan <i>shengguan</i> music
9	Music of the People, Part 2b	<i>Luogu</i> Music: <i>Chaozhou daluogu</i> and <i>Jiangnan shifan luogu</i>
10	“National” Music/ <i>Guoyue/ Minyue</i> , Part 1	Solo music for the <i>guzheng</i> , <i>erhu</i> , <i>dizi</i> and <i>pipa</i>
11	“National” Music/ <i>Guoyue/ Minyue</i> , Part 2	Music for the Modern Chinese Orchestra and Modern Chinese Ensembles (e.g. <i>xin Jiangnan sizhu</i>)
12	Music as a Function of Politics	Revolutionary songs of the 1930s, Mao’s “Talks at the Yan’an Forum on Art & Literature”, Social Realism in Music, the Model Operas and “ <i>The Yellow River</i> ” <i>Cantata</i> and <i>Piano Concerto</i>
13	Chinese Popular Music	<i>Gangtai yinyue</i> (Cantopop and Mandopop) & Mainland Chinese pop, rock and rap music – trends and trajectories

Planned Assessment Tasks:

In-class tests	15%
Mid-term test	20%
Final exam	25%
Written assignment	20%
Course participation	20%

Samples of readings:

1	DeWoskin, Kenneth. 1982. <i>A Song for One or Two: Music and the Concept of Art in Early China</i> . Ann Arbor: East Asian Studies Program, University of Michigan.
2	Chow, Yiu Fai and Jerome de Kloet. <i>Hong Kong Pop and the Global Circulation of Sound and Image</i> . Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2013.
3	《琴道》(The Lore of the Chinese Lute: An Essay on the Ideology of the Ch'in) [荷] 高罗佩 著, 宋慧文, 孔维。中西书局。ISBN: 9787547505427