

## **MUH 3541 LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC** **LAS 3930 SPECIAL TOPICS in LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES**

**MUH 3541** – Class Number: 25851 Section REG & **LAS 3930** – Class Number: 28096 Section WT01  
**FALL 2025**, MWF – 5<sup>th</sup> period (11:45 AM – 12:35 PM) – MUB 146

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Office hours: MWF – 7<sup>th</sup> period (1:55 – 2:45 PM) and by appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores selected musical cultures from Latin America and the Caribbean in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries within their cultural and geographical contexts. Throughout the semester, you will familiarize yourself with different styles and repertoires of Latin American music, such as the bolero, ranchero, marimba de tecomates, bossa nova, choro, Latin pop, merengue, nueva canción, wayno, bambuco, rumba, salsa, samba, son, bachata, milonga, and others. We will also examine the historical background and social functions of these styles, along with notable composers, performers, and musical instruments from the region. Although we will cover various geographical and cultural areas, it is not possible to include all the music of Latin America and the Caribbean. Additionally, we will discuss concepts and properties of musical sounds, as well as the classification of musical instruments based on ethnomusicological concepts and cultural elements of each region. This course will incorporate audio-visual materials and handouts, which I will send via email (always to your UF email). Class sessions will involve lectures, presentations, listening and viewing activities, and open discussions on the topics covered. Formal musical or anthropological training is not required; however, you should be willing to engage your ears and minds critically to understand the material.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Develop an appreciation for Latin American and Caribbean music and culture and its role and relevance to the understanding of the sociocultural meaning of the region.
- Become familiar with the historical development of music in different regions of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Be able to discuss sociocultural topics within Latin America and the Caribbean in connection with music.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- To fully appreciate Latin American music, its role, and its relevance to understanding Latin American society.
- To become familiar with the different stages of development of music in different regions of Latin America.
- To acquire a broader, critical, and more sensitive understanding of Latin American music.
- To look at various Latin American musical styles and be able to identify and associate them with specific geographical regions.
- To recognize the impact of Latin American music in the development of its people and their political and cultural identity.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

- Attend class (please give yourself a few minutes before class begins) and actively participate in class discussions.
- Complete the assigned reading, listening, and viewing.
- Take three exams during the semester.

- Present a PowerPoint and research presentation (creative project). Specific information on your presentation will be discussed during the semester.

## READING

### Textbook (Required)

**Schechter, John M. 1999. Music in Latin American Culture: Regional Traditions. New York: Schirmer Books.** The CD (Music in Latin American Culture: Regional Traditions) is also available at a very reasonable price on various sites for used or new books on Amazon.

- <https://www.betterworldbooks.com/product/detail/music-in-latin-american-culture-regional-traditions-9780028647500>
- <https://www.thriftbooks.com/browse/?b.search=Music%20in%20Latin%20American%20Culture%3A%20Regional%20Traditions#b.s=mostPopular-desc&b.p=1&b.pp=30&b.oos&b.tile>
- [https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?kn=Music%20in%20Latin%20American%20Culture%3A%20Regional%20Traditions&sts=t&cm\\_sp=SearchF-\\_topnav-\\_Results&ds=20](https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/SearchResults?kn=Music%20in%20Latin%20American%20Culture%3A%20Regional%20Traditions&sts=t&cm_sp=SearchF-_topnav-_Results&ds=20)

I will create a ***Schedule of Topics*** with ALL reading and listening assignments for the semester. I will also provide the AUDIO class samples on Dropbox from the Textbook for listening and videos for viewing. Some viewing might happen during our class period as needed. The audio files will be used for exam questions.

### Additional Reading

Supplemental readings will be assigned from books and journals found in the Music Library and online **Jstor** (<http://www.jstor.org/>). You must be logged into the University network with your student credentials or have access to VPN (software available at UF by CISCO to log in when you are off campus) to download or print articles. Students are also encouraged to consult *The New Grove II Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (ML 100.N48x REFERENCE) and the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Vol. 2* (ML 100 G16 REFERENCE) for entries on individual countries, musical styles, and musicians in Latin America. These sources are also available online at our AFA Music Library website <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/afa/> (music); click on the left column "Research Guide by Subjects "Music" for the Oxford Music on Line link, for the New Grove II Dictionary of Music and Musicians, and <http://gld.alexanderstreet.com/> for the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*.

## LISTENING AND VIEWING

Students must learn and become familiar with various audio/visual examples of Latin American and Caribbean music. These examples can be found on a CD or through a provided link on **DROPBOX**. Additional assignments will be announced in class and confirmed via email. All other personal communication must be arranged/made during office hours.

## EXAMS

Each exam will include multiple choice, short answer, essay, and identification of listening examples. This course has three exams (each will take place during the class period). I will give make-up exams only if a student misses the exam due to an excused absence. Excused absences are granted for **1)** a medical illness confirmed by a written statement from your physician or **2)** a medical emergency in the family confirmed by a written statement from a parent or guardian, **3)** an official university activity confirmed by a written statement from a faculty advisor, **4)** a religious holiday which you must observe, or **5)** military obligations. For excused absences in categories 3 and 4, you must notify me at least two weeks before the absence, and there is no penalty. For reasons other than those listed above, you may confer directly with me (at least two weeks before the exam date), and I will tell you if you receive an excused absence. You are responsible for ALWAYS being available during our class time to take the exams. Exam and critical dates are (subject to change)

<b>Exam 1:</b>	<b>September 26</b> (Friday), 2025
<b>Exam 2:</b>	<b>October 24</b> (Friday), 2025
<b>Exam 3:</b>	<b>November 21</b> (Friday), 2025
<b>Final Creative Project</b>	<b>First Presentation</b> (December 1) and
<b>(No Final Exam)</b>	<b>Second Presentation</b> (December 3)

### CREATIVE PROJECT (Two Documents)

- **Document 1** - Students will submit a creative project (PowerPoint or Keynote). This innovative project is YOUR presentation that requires you to deliver a short in-class presentation (duration will depend on the number of students enrolled). The presentation should demonstrate your ability to incorporate concepts discussed in class and integrate musical elements, musical styles, cultural topics, social issues, historical events, political issues, and other essential concerns relevant to your specific region in Latin America.
- **Document 2** – A 3–4-page paper elucidating your presentation and project purpose (questions you are answering or information about your topic and findings). I will give you an additional handout detailing the format and including suggestions for presentation topics. A typed three-paragraph abstract equivalent to a 250-word (1.5 space / Times New Roman with a Title and your name) abstract/proposal for your presentation will be due **November 7 (Friday)**.

Each project should centralize music from a genre discussed throughout the semester or a topic of your choice discussed with the professor. The project should also reflect a specific sociocultural topic as the undercurrent of the production.

### PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE

- Students are expected to come to class having read, listened to, and watched the required materials for the course. Students will engage with the instructor and one another to investigate and explore the topics. A student's involvement in class discussions and activities is an essential aspect of the overall learning process for this course.
- Regular attendance is required (much of the information on the tests comes directly from class lectures and discussed reading). Three unexcused absences (except exam days) are allowed during the semester. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your overall point total by five points per absence. (See below for an explanation of point tabulation). Attendance will be checked!

### GRADING

Grades are assigned according to the total points you accumulate during the semester.

Exam 1.....	100 points
Exam 2.....	100 points
Exam 3.....	100 points
Class Attendance/Participation/ <u>Quizzes</u> .....	50 points
Creative Project* .....	150 points
* Deadline ( <u>no exceptions</u> ) to submit your two documents via e-mail or Dropbox ( <b>PowerPoint/paper</b> ) for the Creative project is <u>Wednesday, December 3</u>	

**Total..... 500 points**  
This yields a total of 500 points. Grades will be assigned as follows:

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

<b>A</b>	(446-500)	93-100%	<b>C</b>	(346-365)	73-76%
<b>A-</b>	(431-445)	90-93%	<b>C-</b>	(331-345)	70-72%
<b>B+</b>	(416-430)	87-89%	<b>D</b>	(284-330)	65-69%
<b>B</b>	(396-415)	83-86%	<b>E</b>	(283 and below)	64% or below
<b>B-</b>	(381-395)	80-82%			
<b>C+</b>	(366-380)	77-79%			

\*All Grade issues must be addressed within 72 hours

## HINTS FOR STUDENTS

Attend classes regularly, read the assignments, ask questions, and take copious notes. Re-read your notes to ensure you understand them and underline essential names and terms. (If you take notes on one side of the page, you can later use the backside to define the terms and expressions you underline.) When reading, listening, and viewing required assignments, take notes to help you remember important points and salient musical features. Jot down information from the listening and look at your Textbook to confirm the songs, author, region, style, and other regional information about your listening. Create a class notebook (digital or otherwise) where you keep the syllabus and all handouts given out in class together with your notes from the lectures and the reading, listening, and viewing assignments. This will help you organize information and study for tests more efficiently. Be sure to refer to the syllabus for assignments and other information. Become familiar with the resources of the Online Music Library. Make suggestions for new CDs and other audio recordings not available in the library that you think are relevant for this course.

## COMPLETING THE READING, VIEWING, AND LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

Under each topic in the **Listening and Viewing Assignments** are listed as required materials. Most non-textbook readings come from journals and are available online from **JStor**. Additional reading assignments will be sent on specific topics or issues throughout the semester and can be downloaded in Adobe (.pdf) and saved on your computer.

## NOTE

During the semester, short quizzes (about 6 minutes) on the required reading materials will be conducted at the beginning of the class period. For other communications, I will create a listserv through the University Lists that emails all students registered with MUH 3541 & and LAS 3930 (Latin American Music). UF emails ONLY for communications, updates, or links to specific readings. To save and print reading materials and access JStor from outside campus, ensure you are logged in with the University system through a VPN.

## COMMUNICATION

Email is the best way to stay in contact with me! I do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours. If I do not respond to you within that time frame, please send another email or talk to me about it in class. Additionally, if you would like to schedule a meeting, you can attend my office hours and request an appointment through Zoom.

\*This syllabus and course assignments are subject to change as the instructor sees fit. Any changes will be announced in class and confirmed through email.

## Scholastic Dishonesty

Cheating on exams and using someone else's ideas in a written paper without providing proper recognition of the source is plagiarism. As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: *"I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty*

*and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."* <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>. Further, UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the University of Florida community members, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated – anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing is subject to an automatic E and further disciplinary action. If you are unsure of how to cite something correctly, just ask!

## **COURSE EVALUATION POLICY**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give input professionally and respectfully is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries, of course, evaluation results are available to students at <http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

## **DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER**

The University of Florida is committed to providing equal educational access to students with disabilities. As you are developing and updating your syllabi, please take a moment to review the University's [Policy on Course Syllabi](#), which specifies the inclusion of the following recommended statement related to accommodations for students with disabilities:

"Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the **Disability Resource Center** by visiting our [Get Started page](#). Students need to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester." The purpose of the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is to address access barriers, which may vary from course to course. We work towards creating a campus culture of access and inclusion. Students with disabilities can contact our office to receive support services and accommodations. <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>

**!!Please turn off cell phones** before entering class. Using electronic devices other than your laptop (ONLY for taking notes) is prohibited. Texting is strictly prohibited!!!!