

## **MUS 537, Research Methods in Ethnomusicology**

**Instructor: Benjamin Tausig**

**Thursday, 1pm-3:50pm**

This course is an intensive, hands-on introduction to research methods in the ethnographic study of sound. The study of sound (including musical sound) in the humanities has been approached through diverse methods drawn from linguistic anthropology, deep listening, affect theory, postcolonial studies, and musicology among others. We will read widely together to contextualize and practice these approaches, with all their divergent applications of metaphor, quantitative measurement, and cultural signification. We will read a combination of monographs, articles, and methods texts, including both very recent and very old writing. Students will emerge from the course with a robust toolkit for conducting ethnographies to which sound is central.

Students will proceed through the semester with ears attuned and sound recorders in hand, gaining experience with different ways of attending to (and drawing meaning from) sound. We will approach terms like "interpretation" and "close listening" with care and theoretical attention, and we will put these ideas into direct practice throughout the semester, culminating in final research projects designed by students.

Coursework includes weekly readings, Brightspace postings, one presentation on an assigned sound recording, and a substantial final paper (with formal presentation) based on an original research question.

*This course is primarily intended for MA and PhD students, and is a requirement for students in the MA/PhD in Critical Music Studies track. Any MM or DMA students may enroll with permission from Prof. Tausig; if permission is granted, this would be considered a course "substitution" to satisfy the Elective 1 requirement for MMs or DMAs (information on the process for substitutions will be circulated the week before the semester starts). MM and DMA students must also check with their large ensemble instructor to see if this course would conflict with the ensemble's rehearsal schedule. If it will conflict, the student must check with the course instructor if absences for this reason would be permitted.*

*3 credits*