

MUS 536, Area Studies in Ethnomusicology: Music and Belief
Instructor: Margarethe Adams | Tuesday, 3:30pm – 6:20pm

In this course we will interrogate our framings and assumptions of belief and secularity, examine the sonic dimensions of worshipping and of worship spaces, and explore the multifaceted performance of belief. An introductory ethnomusicology graduate seminar, it examines intersections of music and belief in major world religions, as well as older belief systems (animism, shamanism), and religion/philosophy complexes like Confucianism and Taoism. Topics include: Confucian and Taoist influences in the philosophy and performance of the Chinese zither (guqin) and in *jiangnan sizhu* ensemble music; throat-singing and animism in Tuva (Siberia); Sufi influence in the sung poetry and zikr traditions of Central Asia and the Middle East; popular music and American evangelical worship; Blues, gospel and forms of “sonic black womanhood” (Daphne Brooks 2011). Our study will take both anthropological and musicological approaches to these topics and students will gain an introductory look at important scholarship in ethnomusicological social theory along the way. Requirements include weekly readings, weekly written assignments, article presentations, and a final paper. Attendance and active participation in seminar discussion are mandatory.

This course is suitable for all students. For DMA students, it fulfills the Elective Group 1 requirement. For students in the MA/PhD track in Critical Music Studies, it satisfies the Elective Group 1 requirement. Interested MM students may enroll with permission of Professor Adams. Interested MMs must also contact the Graduate Program Director.

3 credits