

# **MUN 2800 (Section: AFRP) - African Popular Music Ensemble**

## **World Music Ensemble – African Popular Music Ensemble**

Tuesdays (8:20 pm-10 pm) in MUB 121

**Dr. Sarah Politz**, [spolitz@ufl.edu](mailto:spolitz@ufl.edu)

Office: Yon Hall 435

Office hours: By appointment, via Zoom

Credits: 1.0 credit hours, repeatable up to 4 times for credit, 2 contact hours

The African Popular Music Ensemble will specialize in the popular music of the African continent, with a special focus on Afrobeat, highlife, soukous, African jazz, and the brass band traditions of Africa and the diaspora. Together we will listen to, perform, and arrange music from artists such as Fela Kuti (Nigeria), Salif Keita (Mali), Hugh Masekela, Abdullah Ibrahim, Miriam Makeba (South Africa), Mulatu Astatke (Ethiopia), and the Gangbe Brass Band of Benin. Instrumentation will vary based on personnel each semester, and will typically include a rhythm section, horn section, and vocal soloists. The ensemble will also draw on the participation of faculty performers, as well as guest artists specializing in African popular music from the community and beyond. These collaborations will contribute to the diversity of musical and cultural experiences related to Africa that are available to students throughout the semester.

## **Course Objectives**

- Students will develop a knowledge of African culture by careful listening to recordings, along with contextual readings and media, and through the practice of performance.
- Students will gain a basic knowledge of the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic structures underlying these styles. They will also gain experience in learning ensemble parts by ear and from recordings. If so desired, they will have the opportunity to learn to improvise.
- Students will be able to discuss the connections between African popular music and other aspects of African culture, such as politics, aesthetics, religion, language, decolonization, and cultural exchange. This understanding will be developed through the discussion of listening assignments, both in rehearsal and outside of class, including podcasts and radio programs as well as music recordings.

## **Course Pre-Requisites**

Proficiency on a musical instrument (including voice) is required to participate in the ensemble. Proficiency will be determined by audition. Except in cases such as piano and drum set, students should provide their own instruments.

## **Course Requirements**

Members are expected to learn and practice their parts and come to rehearsals prepared to perform (in some cases written music will be distributed, in other cases you will be expected to learn your part aurally). Everyone is expected to help set up and strike equipment used during rehearsals. This means coming ten minutes prior to rehearsal time you are assigned, and staying ten minutes after.

## **Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

## **Assessment/Grading**

Your grade in this course will be based on your attendance, participation, and preparation, in keeping with UF's grading policies (available [here \(Links to an external site.\)](#)).

Grading will be apportioned as follows:

Attendance and participation at rehearsals (being there, and participating actively) (20%)

Attendance and participation at concerts (20%)

Preparation in rehearsals, including any assigned listening or reading (demonstrating work done outside of class, i.e. practicing, listening, reading) (40%)

Preparation in concerts (20%)

Participation and attendance will be evaluated according to the following rubric.

A: Attendance at all or all but one rehearsal and both concerts

Demonstrated ability to play assigned parts at a high level based on rehearsal and practice out of class

B: Attendance at all but 2-3 rehearsals and both concerts

Demonstrated ability to play assigned parts proficiently based on rehearsal and practice out of class

C: Attendance at all but 4-5 rehearsals and one concert with no makeup

Demonstrated ability to play assigned parts semi-proficiently based on rehearsal and practice out of class

D: Attendance at all but 6-7 rehearsals and zero concerts with no makeup

Little demonstrated ability to play assigned parts based on rehearsal and practice outside of class

F: More than 7 missed rehearsals and two missed concerts with no makeup

No demonstrated ability to play assigned parts based on rehearsal and practice outside of class

Preparation will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

**High Quality**

Shows clear evidence of having done the assigned listenings and readings, and evidence of practice outside of rehearsal.

**Average**

Shows mixed evidence of having done the assigned listenings and readings, and some evidence of practice outside of rehearsal.

**Needs Improvement**

Shows no evidence of having done the assigned listenings and readings, and no evidence of practice outside of rehearsal.

If you attend all of the rehearsals and performances, and prepare for rehearsal by listening and practicing, showing consistent improvement, you will receive an A for the course. Students will receive individual written feedback from the professor midway through the semester assessing their performance so far in the ensemble.

You may miss one rehearsal without it negatively impacting your grade, but each subsequent, unexcused absence will result in a 3-point deduction from your semester grade (i.e. 95 to 92, or A to A-). In the case that you cannot avoid missing a performance, you will be required to complete a make-up assignment, or be penalized by one full letter grade (i.e. A- to B-, or B to C).

A	94.00-100.00	C	74.00-76.99
A-	90.00-93.99	C-	70.00-73.99
B+	87.00-89.99	D+	67.00-69.99
B	84.00-86.99	D	64.00-66.99
B-	80.00-83.99	D-	60.00-63.99
C+	77.00-79.99	E	< 60.00

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Click [here](#) to read the university attendance policies.

## Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Click [here](#) for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [ufl.bluera.com/ufl/](http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/). ([Links to an external site.](#))[Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

## Health information:

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/> ([Links to an external site.](#)). Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.
- If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email [covid@shcc.ufl.edu](mailto:covid@shcc.ufl.edu)) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website for more information.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
- If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.
- Continue to regularly visit [coronavirus.UFHealth.org](https://coronavirus.UFHealth.org) and [coronavirus.ufl.edu](https://coronavirus.ufl.edu) for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

## **Campus Resources**

Health and Wellness

*U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website \(Links to an external site.\)](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

*Counseling and Wellness Center:* [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website \(Links to an external site.\)](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

*Student Health Care Center:* Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

*University Police Department:* [Visit UF Police Department website \(Links to an external site.\)](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

*UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:* For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road,

Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

## Academic Resources

*E-learning technical support:* Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk \(Links to an external site.\)](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

[Career Connections Center \(Links to an external site.\):](#) Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

[Library Support \(Links to an external site.\):](#) Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

*Teaching Center* ([Links to an external site.](#)): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

*Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

*Student Complaints On-Campus*: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information \(Links to an external site.\)](#).