

Performance Studies

Last Updated: Fri, 11/21/2025

Course prefix: LMC

Course number: 3262

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
31554

Instructor First Name: Philip

Instructor Last Name: Auslander

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

This course explores methods for understanding and analyzing music performance. Classical music, jazz, rock, blues, country, and other genres will all be represented in our readings and classroom examples; the ideas presented are not specific to a particular genre.

Our framework for thinking about musical performance is multi-disciplinary, drawing from sociology, musicology, psychology, media studies, and performance studies. Some of the key issues to be discussed include genre; the visual aspects of musical performance; musicians' performance personae and how they are constructed and disseminated, and the means musicians use to communicate in performance, including gestures, movements, facial expressions, and stage talk.

You do not have to have any technical knowledge of music or any musical ability to take this course. Enthusiasm for some kind of music and an interest in spending a semester thinking about musicians and what they do as performers are necessary prerequisites.

Course learning outcomes:

- **Historical Analysis:** Students will study cultural texts and performances within historical frameworks to become familiar with the various forces that shape the production and dissemination of culture. They will learn to interpret history actively, rather than passively accepting archival information.
- **Interpretive Frameworks:** Students will become familiar with a variety of interpretive frameworks drawn from social, cultural, and aesthetic approaches and be able to apply such frameworks to cultural texts, as well as to their own observations.

- **Textual/Visual Analysis:** Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret cultural texts and performances within the realm of music.

Required course materials:

All materials will be provided. There is nothing to purchase.

Grading policy:

Final Grade Scale: To get a final grade of A, you must have earned at least a numerical grade of at least 90% of the available points. For a B, you must have a numerical grade of at least 80%; 70% for a C; 60% for a D. Please use these benchmarks to interpret the numerical grades you receive in the course.

The numerical grade generated by this calculation is subject to modification in either direction in light of attendance, class participation, and other indications of engagement with and commitment to the course (or lack thereof). Please note that I do not automatically round up numerical grades at any stage

Attendance policy:

You may miss a total of three (3) classes over the course of the semester without penalty. If at all possible, please contact the instructor when you know you will not be in class.

- **Reasons for absences.** The attendance policy does not make any distinction about the reasons for your absences. Absences for any illness count against the three permitted absences. Only absences officially exempted by the Institute (e.g., due to participation in official GA Tech athletics, to religious observance, to personal or family crisis confirmed by documentation from the Dean of Students) will not be counted among your allotted absences. These exemptions are difficult to get.
- **Responsibility for missed work.** Students are responsible for finding out what they may have missed while absent from class and what policy the instructor has for making up missed work. However, if you are not present to participate in a group presentation, you will fail the course.
- **Absence penalties.** Each additional absence after the allotted number deducts onehalf of a letter grade (5 pts) from your final grade.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts in English or other languages, or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence