

MUSIC 233 (SEM 0.50)  
Musical Rhythms of the World  
Winter 2025  
Professor Maisie Sum

University of Waterloo, Conrad Grebel University College  
Department of Music

**Territorial Acknowledgement:**

*We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes 10 kilometres on each side of the Grand River. For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the [CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory \(PDF\)](#).*

**Class Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 1:00–2:20 PM

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Office Location:** CGR Rm 1102

**Class Location:** CGR Rm 1208

**Email:** [msum@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:msum@uwaterloo.ca)

**Phone:** 519-885-0220 x24219

## Announcements

I use the Announcements widget on the Course Home page during the term to communicate new or changing information regarding due dates, instructor absence, etc., as needed. You are expected to read the announcements on a regular basis.

To ensure you are viewing the complete list of announcements, you may need to click on **Show All Announcements**.

## Contacts

For Course-related questions (e.g., course content, deadlines, assignments, etc.) and questions of a personal nature.

- Contact your professor: Maisie Sum [msum@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:msum@uwaterloo.ca)  
Your professor typically checks and writes email Monday to Friday 9AM–5PM and will make every effort to reply to your questions within 48 hours. When emailing, please indicate the **course code** (i.e., MUSIC 233) in the subject line, use your **UWaterloo** email address, include an appropriate greeting in the first line of the email (e.g., Hi Prof Sum), **and** your student ID number at the end of the email.

For Technical Support and Technical problems with Waterloo LEARN.

- Contact: [learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:learnhelp@uwaterloo.ca)  
Include your full name, WatIAM user ID, student number, and course name and number.

Technical support is available during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM (Eastern Time). [LEARN Help Student Documentation](#)

For Student Resources.

- Contact: [Student Resources](#) for Academic advice, Student success, WatCards, Library services and more

## Course Description

A study of rhythm in selected musics from oral traditions worldwide. The course emphasizes communal spirit, musical interaction, and human experience through theoretical and ethnographic studies, and hands-on workshops. It focuses on the development of rhythm skills, embodiment of new sounds, and acquisition of new tools for practicing, performing, teaching, composing, and thinking about music. Experience a unique opportunity to study the rhythms of diverse music cultures, learn from guest artists, and play a range of percussion instruments including drums, bells, shakers, bronze metallophones, and gongs.

## Summary of what the course will offer

- Rhythmic training through hands-on music activities<sup>1</sup>
- Aural skills development through oral music instruction and listening activities
- An interdisciplinary view of music as a universal human phenomenon
- Practical and theoretical knowledge of rhythm from various perspectives and cultures
- A sense of what music, and rhythm can mean and how it can be used
- Exposure to music you have never heard, and some that you have
- Interaction with professional musicians<sup>1</sup>
- Hands-on experience playing or reciting rhythmic patterns associated with the oral traditions of selected cultures – including a chance to play Balinese gamelan instruments and African drums<sup>1</sup>

## Key Learning Outcomes (KLOs)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- KLO 1. Identify and describe acoustical phenomena (e.g., instruments, musical elements, style) in music [selected from cultures](#) using basic concepts and terms.
- KLO 2. Demonstrate and embody sound patterns characteristic of music selected from beyond Western European music.
- KLO 3. Discuss the ways in which music (rhythms) may relate to societal systems, cultural beliefs, and social cultural processes.
- KLO 4. Compare the rhythmic aspects of music across cultures and relate them to your own knowledge and experience.
- KLO 5. Reflect on your direct experience of playing and performing as a way to examine the process and significance of studying music beyond more familiar and popular Western-European music and its associated challenges and concerns.\

## Course Materials

All assigned listening, reading, and AV sources are available on LEARN.

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<sup>1</sup> These opportunities may be modified as needed in accordance with health and safety guidelines and measures.

## Summary of Due Dates and Assessments

Grading Components	Due Date	KLOs	Weighting (%)
Class Preparation and Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Music Activities - 15%</li> <li>• Group-Led Discussions (3) - 10%</li> <li>• Posts (7) - 5%</li> </ul>	ONGOING See Course Schedule See Course Schedule	1, 2 3 to 5 3 to 5	30
Rhythm Skills Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Performance (3 @ 7.5%)</li> <li>• Group Performance (3 @ 7.5%)</li> </ul>	See Course Schedule See Course Schedule	1, 2	45
Reflection Activities (3)	See Course Schedule		10
Integrative Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative Reflection (options)</li> </ul>	See Course Schedule	1 to 5*	15
BONUS (e.g., first word, community building tasks, music café) – notify prof by Wk 3	ONGOING		2

\* depends on selected assignment option

## Course Work

(See Coursework Guidelines on LEARN for detailed instructions.)

### 1. Preparation and Participation (30%)

This is a seminar course, which means that your success is based on your contribution during class time and participation in course activities, which include:

- weekly and ongoing preparation of course repertoire and assigned materials
- being part of the class ensemble
- learning music aurally, orally, and by rote in class, in workshops, at home (suggested daily practice of 10–15min)
- demonstrating rhythmic patterns (in class, in workshops)
- class discussions
- collective music practice and performance with peers
- submitting assignments by the due date and time (see Course Schedule)

We will work to create a collaborative learning community, which requires presence and respectful engagement with the material in the form of music activities and class discussions and with each other.

### 2. Rhythm Skills (3 @ 15% each = 45%)

Students demonstrate their rhythm skills through solo and group performances. Whether you are a musician or music enthusiast, setting performance goals will enable you to hone your skills and push them to the next level. The consistent practice and repetition required to prepare for a performance creates the necessary condition for the embodiment of new sounds, patterns, and skills, which is a key learning outcome of this course.

- Individual Demonstration (3 @ 7.5%). You will meet one-on-one with the instructor (or guest artist) three times during the term to demonstrate rhythms learned in each Section. Accuracy and memorization are expected. Scheduled during class time. See Course Schedule.

- Group Performance (3 @ 7.5%). In groups of two to five, you will demonstrate rhythms learned in each Section to the rest of the class. Accuracy, memorization, and ensemble playing are expected (i.e., intently listening to each other, group cohesion, non-verbal communication). Scheduled during class time. See Course Schedule.

### 3. Reflection Activities (3@ 3.33% each = 10%)

Human experience is an important component of this course. Reflection and reflective practice are the cornerstone of continuous learning, which integrates experience with knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the term you will have opportunities to develop your critical thinking skills as you observe and analyse your experiences learning musical rhythms through oral transmission and by rote (in class, at home, alone, with your peers, and with expert native practitioners), examine differences in your learning across music cultures, relate them to your experiences and knowledge of music, and make connections to societal systems, cultural beliefs, and social cultural processes.

### 4. Integrative Assignment (15%)

Students integrate their learning and experience over the term through a creative reflection piece of their own choosing.

## Playing Music Throughout Your Studies

The UWaterloo Department of Music offers several instrumental and vocal music ensembles to choose from. For more information go to the Dept. of Music website (<https://uwaterloo.ca/music/ensembles>). Of particular relevance to this course are three Balinese bronze percussion ensembles called *gamelan*: two large ensembles (*gamelan semara dana*) and a chamber percussion ensemble (*gamelan gender wayang*). At the end of the term, you will play in the gamelan concert.

Balinese gamelan is an oral tradition—that is, no written music is used to learn or play the instruments. The music is taught orally and learned aurally. Participation in one of our Balinese gamelan ensembles provides an excellent opportunity to experience how an oral tradition is transmitted and learned over a 12-week period by an expert native practitioner, Dewa Suparta, Grebel's artist-in-residence from Bali, Indonesia, who is a founding member of *Gamelan Çudamani*. (Check out a performance recorded during one of their U.S. tours <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGy1ANrWmY4>).

If you are able to add music ensemble to your course load, I strongly recommend you enrol in one of these to complement your learning in this course. These gamelan ensembles are open to ALL students, whether you have studied music before or not. No experience playing gamelan is expected, which means no audition is required to join; however, you are expected to attend the open rehearsal (sign up at <https://uwaterloo.ca/music/balinese-gamelan-ensemble>)

Past gamelan players have commented on how the ensemble has enhanced their musical skills, in particular how they perform, learn, and think about music, but also how it honed their listening and memory skills. The supportive group learning experience has also been satisfying for many. If you want to be a part of this group music-making experience and learn about another culture and its music at the same time, this is an excellent and rare opportunity!

The scheduled meet times are below. For general information about the gamelan ensemble go to <https://uwaterloo.ca/music/balinese-gamelan-ensemble> ask your prof!

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<sup>2</sup> Reflective practice is **the ability to reflect on one's actions** so as to engage in a process of continuous learning.

### Balinese Gamelan (*large ensemble*)

- Balinese Bronze Percussion Ensemble Course: MUSIC 116, 117, 216, 217, 316, 317, 416, 417 (register for credit)  
Meets Tuesday and Thursday 4:00 to 5:20 PM
- Grebel Community Gamelan Warga Santi (non-credit)  
Meets Wednesday 6:30–8:30PM (begins Jan 15)

## Responsibilities, Expectations, and other Academic Information

1. **Attendance.** Attendance is monitored. A poor attendance record and habitual lateness will affect your overall performance and result in a lower grade. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have not been marked absent for the duration of the class. To allow for occasional illness UWaterloo has put in place a 48-hr self-declared absence (see *Accommodation for Illness* below). It is **your responsibility to contact your professor in advance** if you know you will miss a class.
  - **You are responsible for catching up on or learning the material that you have missed.** You can do this by asking me about any materials that you missed and how you might access them, and borrowing notes from a classmate. (Please do not ask me for my lecture notes, they will probably not help much!).
2. **LEARN.** This course uses LEARN. It is your responsibility to ensure you can receive email and access LEARN as this is how your professor will communicate with students and you with each other. Please check the course site regularly for announcements, handouts, tips, etc. You will be submitting your assignments via LEARN.
3. **Communication.** If you wish to talk with your professor about any course related or other matters, you may do so after class, by appointment, or through email. Your professor will do their best to respond to your emails **within 48 hours between 9 and 4PM**. Before you make an inquiry about assignments, etc., please do check the syllabus first to confirm whether the information you need is there. All requests for assignment extensions or other special arrangements must be confirmed with your professor by email, so that there is an agreement in writing (and so that your professor does not forget!). Ensure that your UWaterloo email address is forwarded to your personal email address (if you prefer to only check the latter). While email works well, your professor would prefer to speak to you in-person or face-to-face on Zoom. Please make an appointment via email or drop by my office. Your professor is happy to talk and eager to get to know you.
4. **Understand course requirements.** Please ask questions if these are not clear. Complete assignments on time (see **Syllabus** and **Course Schedule** for due dates). Note that electronic submissions to the Dropbox on LEARN have specified end times on the given due date. Assignments arriving after these times will be considered late, unless they are eligible for an extension (see Late Policy below).
5. **Late Policy.** Assignments that are submitted past the due date and time without any prior consultation with your professor will be subject to a grading penalty of 2% per day of its weighted value.

N.B. If LEARN is not functioning, your professor will communicate alternate submission instructions to you by email. Please plan your academic work carefully, keeping in mind the deadlines for assignments in all your courses. Your professor is generally amenable to requests for extensions in situations of illness, emergencies, or family/personal crises; however, you are expected to consult with your professor about an extension **BEFORE** the assignment is due.

## Assignment Screening

Text matching software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin and alternatives in this course. See Administrative Policy below for more information and links.

## Administrative Policies

### Generative AI

This course includes the independent development and practice of specific skills, such as listening to and describing specific musical phenomena. Therefore, the use of Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) trained using large language models (LLM) or other methods to produce text, images, music, or code, like Chat GPT, DALL-E, or GitHub CoPilot, is not permitted in this class. Unauthorized use in this course, such as running course materials through GenAI or using GenAI to complete a course assessment is considered a violation of [Policy 71](#) (plagiarism or unauthorized aids or assistance). Work produced with the assistance of AI tools does not represent the author's original work and is therefore in violation of the fundamental values of academic integrity including honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and courage ([ICAI](#), n.d.).

You should be prepared to show your work. To demonstrate your learning, you should keep your rough notes, including research notes, brainstorming, and drafting notes. You may be asked to submit these notes along with earlier drafts of their work, either through saved drafts or saved versions of a document. If the use of GenAI is suspected where not permitted, you may be asked to meet with your instructor or TA to provide explanations to support the submitted material as being your original work. Through this process, if you have not sufficiently supported your work, academic misconduct allegations may be brought to the Associate Dean.

In addition, you should be aware that the legal/copyright status of generative AI inputs and outputs is unclear. More information is available from the Copyright Advisory Committee: <https://uwaterloo.ca/copyright-at-waterloo/teaching/generative-artificial-intelligence>

Students are encouraged to reach out to campus supports if they need help with their coursework including:

- [Student Success Office](#) for help with skills like notetaking and time management
- [Writing and Communication Centre](#) for assignments with writing or presentations
- [AccessAbility Services](#) for documented accommodations
- [Library](#) for research-based assignments

## Intellectual Property

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor, TA, and/or the University of Waterloo.

Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);

- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student's educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner's permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor, TA and/or the University of Waterloo for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor, TA or the University is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

## Chosen/Preferred First Name

Do you want professors and interviewers to call you by a different first name? Take a minute now to verify or tell us your chosen/preferred first name by logging into [WatIAM](#).

Why? Starting in winter 2020, your chosen/preferred first name listed in WatIAM will be used broadly across campus (e.g., LEARN, Quest, WaterlooWorks, WatCard, etc). Note: Your legal first name will always be used on certain official documents. For more details, visit [Updating Personal Information](#).

### Important notes

- If you included a preferred name on your OUAC application, it will be used as your chosen/preferred name unless you make a change now.
- If you don't provide a chosen/preferred name, your legal first name will continue to be used.

## Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

### On Campus

***Due to COVID-19 and campus closures, services are available only online or by phone.***

- Counselling Services: [counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca) / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655

- [MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by the Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) and Counselling Services

### Off campus, 24/7

- [Good2Talk](#): Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 ext. 6880
- [Here 24/7](#): Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- [OK2BME](#): set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online on the Faculty of Arts [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information.

## Coronavirus Information

This [resource](#) provides regular updates and University of Waterloo information on COVID-19 and [guidance for accommodations](#) due to illness and extenuating circumstances.

### University Policy

*Purpose: for students to understand the University Policies that pertain to them being a student in the course.*

**Academic integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate



dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

## Copyright

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