

**APPALACHIAN MUSIC**  
**MUS 224**  
**FALL 2004**

Instructor: Atossa Kramer  
Office: 405 Presser  
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Meeting Time: MWF 8:00AM  
Meeting Place: 223 Presser  
Office hours TBA

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to the music that has been, and is, an important part of the culture of the Southern Appalachian region in which we live. While the emphasis will be on Anglo-American music, styles and influences from African-Americans, other European-Americans, as well as Native Americans will be explored. We will look at religious and non-religious music, ballads and songs, instrumental music, and more modern developments such as bluegrass and country music.

Some broad goals and questions that guide this course:

1) We are all presently living in the Appalachian Region, and many of you have grown up in this area. We want to increase our awareness of and appreciation for the vast treasure of music that is part of this heritage.

2) Music is made by people. It is important to learn about these people. How, why, and what kinds of music did they make? How do people pass along their music and how have the traditional styles influenced the music of today.

3) We hope to awaken your interest in your own roots. What is the role of music in your life? What family traditions are important to you, especially those that include music? How important is this to you and to future generations?

**REQUIRED BOOKS**

Ritchie, Jean. Singing Family of the Cumberlands.  
Wolfe, Charles. Tennessee Strings  
Blank CD suggested

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

We will listen to a sampling of music representing a variety of styles from early to modern times. In addition, we will explore briefly the social history of the area to set a context for the development of these musical styles.

### **II. SECULAR SONGS AND BALLADS:Anglo- and African-American**

We will listen to, sing, and read about various songs and ballads in Jean Ritchie's book as well as in other sources. Some time will be spent on a more formal analysis of an early ballad.

### **III. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND DANCE TRADITIONS**

Music for dancing was widespread in the mountains, including music of the Cherokee Indians. We will look at several styles of traditional mountain dancing.

### **IV. EARLY RECORDING AND RADIO IN APPALACHIA**

The advent of these media had a profound affect on mountain music and musicians and marked the beginning of the country music industry in the eastern part of the country. We will discuss a few of the pioneers such as the Carter Family, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, Lily May Ledford, and others.

### **V. BLUEGRASS MUSIC**

This is a style which is associated with the area and which emerged in the 1940's. We will look at how it developed, specific characteristics, and some of the key people.

### **VII. RELIGIOUS MUSIC**

We will look at the various kinds of music performed in relation to worship. In particular, we will cover black and white spirituals, lining out, shape-note singing, and gospel music.

### **VIII. FOLK REVIVAL AND THE FOLK ROOTS OF CONTEMPORARY POPULAR MUSIC**

The music of the mountains has had a tremendous impact on many more recent styles of popular music. As time permits, we will look at some of these styles.

## **LEARNING GOALS**

It is hoped that this survey will whet your appetite for continued interest in music of all kinds and particularly that which arises out of your culture. A certain body of knowledge specific to the area including some key dates, people, and events will be found in the reading and in the lectures. It is also hoped that a keener musical ear will be developed by listening to and distinguishing between styles of singing and playing of particular instruments. You will be given ample opportunity to develop written and oral skills through various assignments and activities.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS – dates will be assigned

1. Analysis of a Ballad
2. Midterm Exam
3. Essay: personal essay based on Jean Ritchie's book and your own family folklore
4. Final paper- Specific details will be given as we get into the semester.
5. In class presentations on various topics
6. **Final Exam on Tuesday, Dec. 14 at 8:00AM (!)**

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the assignments and exams included in the description above, there will be some short listening assignments, additional readings, informal and creative writing, and videos to view in and out of class. Both exams will include a listening as well as a written component.

**Please keep the week-end of Oct. 29-31 open if possible** so that you can attend the Celebration of Traditional Music held on campus. It is a wonderful event and relates directly to this course. There will be an assignment based on some of the activities Fri. evening, during the day on Sat., the Sat. evening concert, and/or the hymn sing on Sunday morning. Opportunities for extra credit will be available.

The final grade will reflect an average of all grades assigned on your papers, exams, and listening assignments. Various components of the course will be averaged according to the table below.

## GRADING

<u>Papers</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Ballad Assignment	10%
Personal essay	15%
Final paper	20%
<u>Exams</u>	
Midterm	10%
Final	10%
<u>Other</u>	
In Class presentations	10%
Listening/writing assignments And In –class participation	20%
Traditional Festival	<u>5%</u>
Total	100%

A's will fall in the 90 - 100% range; B's, 80-89%; C's, 70-79% etc.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY and COURSE EXPECTATIONS

It is assumed that students will attend class regularly, and attendance will be taken. If you know in advance that you will miss class, please try to notify the teacher. You are responsible for getting notes and assignments if you do miss. Any student having more than three unexcused absences may be penalized by lowering the grade. **There will be no make-up exams given for unexcused absences.** An excused absence is one approved by the teacher in advance or is an emergency situation which can be verified to the satisfaction of the teacher.

All assignments must be handed in on time. It is your responsibility to communicate with the teacher if you have a reasonable excuse for not having it done. Otherwise, the grade will be decreased by 10% if the assignment is one class period late. Any assignments later than that will not be accepted without prior arrangement with the teacher.

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**The Berea College Faculty adopted the following definitions of letter grades in the spring of 2003. Note that the weights of plus and minus grades for the computation of GPA have changed since last term. I WILL assign the plus or minus distinction to your grade in MUS 224.**

**Grade Point Average:** For purposes of computing the Grade Point Average (GPA), the following weights are used: A=4.0; A-=3.7; B+=3.3; B=3.0; B-=2.7; C+=2.3; C=2.0; C-=1.7; D+=1.3; D=1.0; D- = 0.7, and F=0.0 (Note: Prior to Fall Term 2003, the following weights were used to calculate GPA: A=4; B=3; C=2; D=1; and F=0. These weights will remain in effect for grades earned prior to Fall Term 2003.)

**Grading Scale-** there are 1000 points possible in MUS 224:

A 1000-920 pts	A- 919-900 pts	B+ 899-880 pts	B 879-820 pts
B- 819-800 pts	C+ 799-780 pts	C 779-700 pts	C- 699-680 pts
D+ 679-660 pts	D 659-620 pts	D- 619-600 pts	F <600