

2005-2007 LITRE Grant Proposal

1. Project Title:

Implementation of media-rich online course in the Global Approach to Understanding Music.

2. Project Coordinator:

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3. Other Participants:

Alison Arnold, Ph.D.

4. College or Unit:

Student Affairs

5. Department:

Music

6. Project Description:

Through this grant application, my colleague Alison Arnold and I are seeking funding to complete the project we began last spring, funded by a LITRE grant, for creating an online version of our existing MUS200 course, "Understanding Music: Global Perspectives." This course was created to provide an inclusive approach to traditional courses in music appreciation for general students, and to further the goals of Inquiry-Guided Learning (IGL) pedagogy in which NC State, through the Hewlett Initiative and FYI program, has become a national leader. It meets the GER Visual and Performing Arts elective criteria and therefore is much in demand among the general student population. The course is deeply enhanced by audio and visual media and its methods are informed by a university-wide initiative to design undergraduate general education courses that cultivate critical thinking skills in students, develop intellectual maturity and responsibility, and promote inquiry as the basic operation of learning.

Because it relies heavily on the audio and visual media that constitute a major part of the "text" of the curriculum, this course presents several challenges to existing online technology. The funding would be used to:

1. Develop the online course structure--classes, reading/listening assignments, papers/projects, interactive student-teacher and student-student formats for exchange of ideas and information;
2. Create an online course format, web layout, etc.

3. Write down the material for each class period, approx. 30 classes, and structure it in a web-friendly, user-friendly format.
4. Select our A/V examples that illustrate our topics, taking into consideration download time for online students.
5. Convert non-digital formats (VHS) for computer use.
6. Combine text, audio and visual components for each class unit.

Thus far, we have organized the curriculum around four thematic units divided into thirty virtual class periods. Each class period is identified with a topic and linked to digitized audio and video files that are stored in both D.H. Hill Library E-reserves and a Wolfware locker. Much of the work we did in the spring involved digitizing more than seventy individual video clips, each exemplifying musical and cultural materials discussed in the various units of the curriculum. We received generous assistance with this project from the LTS staff. In addition, we worked with the staff at D.H. Hill on the E-reserve audio files that we had begun to collect and store two years ago, identifying further examples that have now been added online. We are currently adding thirty-seven separate audio links to a single case study dealing with music in South Africa during Apartheid within our course unit on Music and Identity.

We have written introductory and contextualizing materials for several of the more complex class periods, which link together scholarly articles and digital media. Completing the contextualizing and linking essays, uploading all the readings and media into WebCT Vista, and creating an appropriate user format remains to be completed. We are seeking \$4,000 for a course buy out, so that over the spring semester the work on finalizing the project may be completed.

7. Project Objectives:

Our goals are to make a ground-breaking approach to music in general studies available to students who are using DL technology to pursue undergraduate learning, and to make available to students enrolled in traditional classroom sections the media-rich online resources for study, research, and review. We believe that the course, which has reached hundreds of students on campus, is a good fit for the distance learner, utilizing interactive technologies, audio and video streaming, and student-centered pacing and critical thinking strategies. Having GER courses available on-line will further the university's Distance Education objectives. The DL website promises the off-campus learner: "Wherever your personal or professional life takes you, North Carolina State University can deliver a powerful learning experience where and when you need it. With NC State Distance Education, you can stay on track for the college education you need, while you stay connected to your life." The availability of DE GER courses furthers this opportunity.

Making the course and its materials available online will enhance student learning by increasing access to a rich global approach to the study of music which incorporates critical thinking strategies, makes strong connections to other disciplines (anthropology, religious studies, history, arts studies), and utilizes both group discussions and individual projects. Increasing access and visibility for the course may provide greater recognition for the Music Dept. and Arts NC State and may encourage the development of further online music

courses by other faculty members.

8. Estimated number of students affected:

Since this course fulfills a GER requirement, it could reach a large audience as Distant Learning and online courses become more prevalent. On campus, approximately 50 students per semester are enrolled in MUS200 Understanding Music: Global Perspectives. Perhaps 30 more could be enrolled through DE each semester. Having lecture notes and, more particularly, audio and video streams available to students enrolled both in DE and traditional formats would greatly enhance student learning for both populations.

9. Outcomes of the Project:

Below are outlined five specific educational outcomes we hope to achieve through this grant and the educational resources it will make available to students.

Because of the on-line media made available to both traditional and DE students this grant will make available, they will...

1. Have a deeper understanding of course material that derives from drawing relationships between music and cultural contexts.

Explanatory note: It is the claim of the discipline of Ethnomusicology that divorcing musical sounds from musical contexts and behaviors distorts and falsifies musical understanding. Yet the study of sound recordings alone forms the material of most college-level "music appreciation"-type courses. Being able to access outside class the rich video documentation of music that has been assembled by the course instructors and the D.H. Hill Library Media Center will enable students to understand more fully the relationships between musical sound and social practice which lie at the heart of musical understanding.

2. Have wider experience with a variety of case studies made available by web-based resources and technologies.

Explanatory note: The course is based upon case studies illustrative of music "commonalities" (e.g. music's roles in the constitution of social identities, religious experience, and narrative performance). Students, using web-based resources, will be asked to provide their own case studies to supplement materials provided by instructors.

3. Develop greater facility in musical analysis as already-available audio materials can be paired with relevant video documentation.

Explanatory note: The first part of the semester deals with musical materials and elements which students use to analyze musical sounds (instruments, melody, harmony, rhythm, etc.). Students currently practice analytical processes using audio materials that are available on e-reserve at D.H. Hill

Library. Now, students can pair the audio material with streamed video in order to understand the social contexts from which the sounds derive.

4. Achieve greater fluency in the use of IT, especially relevant for students enrolled in Q (First Year Inquiry) sections of the course.

Explanatory note: As the university moves towards a more fully integrated IT learning environment, it is crucial that students learn how to use web-based media and computer-based learning environments early in their university careers. Because MUS 200Q is offered to first semester freshmen, students can learn how to navigate IT environments successfully.

5. Improve critical thinking skills by being able to make reasoned judgments on the basis of increased availability of primary musical/cultural evidence. This both enables and encourages closer observation of relationships between sound and occasion made possible by this technology.

Explanatory note: "Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness" (Richard Paul). By enriching course content with web-based media and providing students with the means of accessing this content and engaging with it in the preparation of assessable course product, students will progress in the development of these skills.

These five goals are certainly relevant to at least of the above-stated dimensions of learning: B) empirical inquiry, C) research from sources, and D) performance in the discipline.

10. Project impact on NCSU:

North Carolina State University will benefit from this project by being able to offer students an innovative approach to the study of music, a subject for which North Carolina State University is not distinguished, utilizing technological resources, for which the institution is recognized as a leader. The implication of this synergy is that the arts can indeed flourish in a technological environment. In addition, it benefits the Distance Learning initiative by adding a GER-listed arts course to the list of available on-line courses, and it enriches the learning experiences of students in traditional music classes.

11. Project Assessment Plan:

Because the project was not completed last spring, below is the assessment plan we submitted with the earlier grant application. Note that the learning outcomes enumerated in #9 above are listed again with specific assessment strategies.

ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR MEDIA-RICH ONLINE COURSE IN THE GLOBAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING MUSIC

NOTE: The proposed project is in two phases. The first phase involves developing online streaming media for a course already being taught at NC State. The first part of this assessment plan seeks to determine the impact of available online media on student learning in this class. The second phase involves using this media to create a Distance Education section of this course.

A. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Learning Objectives and Outcomes/Assessment

Because of the availability of online media, students in Music 200Q will...

1. Have a deeper understanding of course material that derives from drawing relationships between music and cultural contexts.

Explanatory note: It is the claim of the discipline of Ethnomusicology that divorcing musical sounds from musical contexts and behaviors distorts and falsifies musical understanding. Yet the study of sound recordings alone forms the material of most college-level "music appreciation"-type courses. Being able to access outside class the rich video documentation of music that has been assembled by the course instructors and the D.H. Hill Library Media Center will enable students to understand more fully the relationships between musical sound and social practice which lie at the heart of musical understanding.

Assessment:

In the current third written paper (Fall 2004), students must discuss five case studies, explored in class, on the use of music to express identity. By making excerpts of videos seen in class available online, students will be able to examine in greater detail the connections between the music and its composers/performers as well as its social, cultural, geographical, political, and historical settings. Students can be asked specifically to draw on the video recordings in presenting their responses, and to use information from the videos as evidence in support of their conclusions on music and identity. The depth of their understanding can be assessed by comparison with student responses to the same question in Fall 2004 or Spring 2005, prior to the availability of online video materials.

2. Have wider experience with a variety of case studies made available by web-based resources and technologies.

Explanatory note: The course is based upon case studies illustrative of music "commonalities" (e.g. music's roles in the constitution of social identities, religious experience, and narrative performance). Students, using web-based resources, will be asked to provide their own case studies to supplement materials provided by instructors.

Assessment:

In the current second written paper (Fall 2004), students are asked to explain several views on music and religion and then illustrate these with examples from class readings, discussions, videos, and their own experience. For example, the first quotation to be explained and illustrated is: "Religious believers have heard music as the voices of gods and the cacophony of devils, praised it as the purest form of spirituality, and condemned it as the ultimate in sensual depravity; with equal enthusiasm they have promoted its use in worship and sought to eradicate it from both religious and secular life."

With the availability of online video excerpts, and use of the world-wide web (especially in the Distance Ed. course), students can be required not only to use examples already discussed but to research and analyze their own case studies illustrating these views. Again the responses can be compared to those submitted by students in Fall 2004 or Spring 2005, in terms of the breadth of material presented and explored.

3. Develop greater facility in musical analysis as already-available audio materials can be paired with relevant video documentation.

Explanatory note: The first part of the semester deals with musical materials and elements which students use to analyze musical sounds (instruments, melody, harmony, rhythm, etc.). Students currently practice analytical processes using audio materials that are available on e-reserve at D.H. Hill Library. Now, students can pair the audio material with streamed video in order to understand the social contexts from which the sounds derive.

Assessment:

One question asked in the current first written paper (Fall 2004) is:

2. Listen to the following five musical excerpts on e-reserve (accessible through WebCT). For each track, analyze the music you hear in terms of the musical elements (vocal style, instruments, melody, rhythm, texture, structure) then with the help of the brief online descriptions, identify the relevant function or functions of each musical selection based on Merriam's and Storr's lists of functions.

With the use of video excerpts, the students can be asked not only to analyze the musical sounds and identify the functions of music but also to discuss other contextual, semiotic, and performative aspects of the performances they see and hear (i.e. perspectives they learn about in the first unit of the course). Student responses can be compared to written responses to the above question prior to the introduction of online visual media (e.g. in Fall 2004 or Spring 2005).

4. Achieve greater fluency in the use of IT, especially relevant for students enrolled in Q (First Year Inquiry) sections of the course.

Explanatory note: As the university moves towards a more fully integrated IT learning environment, it is crucial that students learn how to use web-based

media and computer-based learning environments early in their university careers. Because MUS 200Q is offered to first semester freshmen, students can learn how to navigate IT environments successfully.

Assessment:

Following each written paper in which students use online visual as well as audio media, possibly also an end-of-semester questionnaire, they will be asked to complete a short survey documenting their successes and failures with using IT. This can range from their ability to navigate WebCT, upload assignments, and access music files on e-reserve, to exploring the www, finding and using online musical information, and applying their newly acquired musical analysis skills to online audio and video materials.

5. Improve critical thinking skills by being able to make reasoned judgments on the basis of increased availability of primary musical/cultural evidence. This both enables and encourages closer observation of relationships between sound and occasion made possible by this technology.

Explanatory note: "Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness" (Richard Paul). By enriching course content with web-based media and providing students with the means of accessing this content and engaging with it in the preparation of assessable course product, students will progress in the development of these skills.

Assessment:

Currently the students keep an online journal in which they document, three times a week, "musical encounters" in their everyday lives (what, when, where, and their reaction to the music). Every four weeks they write a reflection on one journal entry, and the following week they critique their own reflection based on two of the universal intellectual standards (clarity, accuracy, precision, depth, breadth, relevance, logic). This allows the students to assess how well they are applying critical thinking skills to their own thinking and writing; and they receive written feedback on this from the instructor.

In Fall 2005, the journal could include music encountered online through web-based research. One online musical encounter (i.e. audio and video) per week, for example, could be required for the journal. The reflection assignment could include specific questions requiring the students to draw reasoned conclusions on aspects of their musical encounter, such as the identity being expressed or the functions of the music.

Criteria for assessment of student learning in a Distance Learning MUS200 section using media-rich web-based learning environment are the same as the criteria for assessment of the classroom-based sections of MUS200. In addition to written assignments, instructors will utilize Discussion Board and Chat Room features of the DL platform. These replace classroom discussions and presentations for purposes of assessing student learning.

B. ASSESSMENT OF FACULTY LEARNING

Instructors will keep journals with observations concerning:

1. The impact on classroom time and student/teacher interactions when video materials are accessible outside the classroom.
2. Workload generating media, preparing it for implementation, working with IT staff, and developing written materials that contextualize the media resources.
3. Problems encountered in developmental, implementation, and instructional phases of the grant.
4. Both successes and necessary improvements in the use of online media both from perspective of learners and instructors; new types of assignments, new questions, new teaching strategies made possible by enriched learning environment.
5. Ways online media impacts teaching strategies.

In addition, both students and instructors will maintain a log of use and satisfaction. Instructors will develop end-of-course questionnaire eliciting student feedback and satisfaction

12. Staffing and Support:

Alison Arnold will receive \$4,000 during the spring semester to complete the format and uploading of the DL version of MUS200 "Understanding Music" onto WebCT Vista and make it ready for and accessible to Distance Learners.

13. Financial Support Requested:

EPA salary total: \$4,000

SPA salary total: 0

Other salary: 0

Equipment: 0

Cost associated with assessment: 0

Other financial support requested: 0

Total Funds requested: \$4,000

Additional Explanation of how funds will be used:

The funds will be used to support Alison Arnold's work in developing the DE platform for the DE course; in completing, with me, the written portion of the course, consisting of contextualizing essays, headings, and linking materials; and in uploading all materials into

14. Funding Breakdown:

Total funding requested for fiscal year 2005-2006: \$4,000

Total funding requested for fiscal year 2006-2007: 0

15. Staff Support and/or Technical Support Requested:

During the initial phase of this project, we received generous and invaluable assistance from LTS. We feel that for this final phase of the project we are self-sufficient, but would appreciate help if necessary in problem-solving and trouble-shooting.

16. Timetable for Implementation:

We expect that with the support of this grant we will be able to implement the on-line version of MUS200 "Understanding Music" in the fall of 2006. On-line video files will be available for students currently enrolled in MUS200Q to stream within a few weeks. E-music audio files are already operational and in use. This fall we will be able to assess the usefulness and educational value of the digitized media by which we have enriched the curriculum.

17. Human Subjects Protection:

If your proposal project involves research using human subjects, you will need approval from the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB) prior to final approval. IRB information is available at <http://www.ncsu.edu/sparcs/irb>



18. Proposal Release:

By submitting this proposal the applicant grants the LITRE Advisory Board permission to make this proposal available as an example for future grant applicants. All personal information will be removed if this proposal is used as an example.

