



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Course information:

Copy and paste current course information from Class Search/Course Catalog.

Academic Unit Herberger Institute Department School of Music

Subject MHL Number 294 Title Introduction to Sound Studies Units: 3

Is this a cross-listed course? Yes
If yes, please identify course(s) HDA 294

Is this a shared course? No If so, list all academic units offering this course _____
Course description: _____

Requested designation: Humanities, Fine Arts and Design-HU
Note- a separate proposal is required for each designation requested

Eligibility:

Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university's review and approval process.
For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact Phyllis.Lucie@asu.edu or Lauren.Leo@asu.edu.

Submission deadlines dates are as follow:

For Fall 2015 Effective Date: October 9, 2014

For Spring 2016 Effective Date: March 19, 2015

Area(s) proposed course will serve:

A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

Checklists for general studies designations:

Complete and attach the appropriate checklist

- Literacy and Critical Inquiry core courses (L)
- Mathematics core courses (MA)
- Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses (CS)
- Humanities, Arts and Design core courses (HU)
- Social-Behavioral Sciences core courses (SB)
- Natural Sciences core courses (SQ/SG)
- Cultural Diversity in the United States courses (C)
- Global Awareness courses (G)
- Historical Awareness courses (H)

A complete proposal should include:

- Signed General Studies Program Course Proposal Cover Form
- Criteria Checklist for the area
- Course Catalog description
- Course Syllabus
- Copy of Table of Contents from the textbook and list of required readings/books

Respectfully request that proposals are submitted electronically with all files compiled into one PDF. If necessary, a hard copy of the proposal will be accepted.

Contact information:

Name Robert Oldani Phone 5-3371

Mail code 0405 E-mail: Robert.Oldani@asu.edu

Department Chair/Director approval: (Required)

Chair/Director name (Typed): Heather Landes Date: 1/15/15

Chair/Director (Signature): 

Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for
HUMANITIES, ARTS AND DESIGN [HU]

Rationale and Objectives

The humanities disciplines are concerned with questions of human existence and meaning, the nature of thinking and knowing, with moral and aesthetic experience. The humanities develop values of all kinds by making the human mind more supple, critical, and expansive. They are concerned with the study of the textual and artistic traditions of diverse cultures, including traditions in literature, philosophy, religion, ethics, history, and aesthetics. In sum, these disciplines explore the range of human thought and its application to the past and present human environment. They deepen awareness of the diversity of the human heritage and its traditions and histories and they may also promote the application of this knowledge to contemporary societies.

The study of the arts and design, like the humanities, deepens the student's awareness of the diversity of human societies and cultures. The arts have as their primary purpose the creation and study of objects, installations, performances and other means of expressing or conveying aesthetic concepts and ideas. Design study concerns itself with material objects, images and spaces, their historical development, and their significance in society and culture. Disciplines in the arts and design employ modes of thought and communication that are often nonverbal, which means that courses in these areas tend to focus on objects, images, and structures and/or on the practical techniques and historical development of artistic and design traditions. The past and present accomplishments of artists and designers help form the student's ability to perceive aesthetic qualities of art work and design.

The Humanities, Arts and Design are an important part of the General Studies Program, for they provide an opportunity for students to study intellectual and imaginative traditions and to observe and/or learn the production of art work and design. The knowledge acquired in courses fulfilling the Humanities, Arts and Design requirement may encourage students to investigate their own personal philosophies or beliefs and to understand better their own social experience. In sum, the Humanities, Arts and Design core area enables students to broaden and deepen their consideration of the variety of human experience.

Revised April 2014

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

ASU - [HU] CRITERIA			
HUMANITIES, ARTS AND DESIGN [HU] courses must meet <i>either</i> 1, 2 or 3 <i>and</i> at least one of the criteria under 4 in such a way as to make the satisfaction of these criteria A CENTRAL AND SUBSTANTIAL PORTION of the course content.			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Emphasizes the study of values; the development of philosophies, religions, ethics or belief systems; and/or aesthetic experience.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Concerns the interpretation, analysis, or creation of written, aural, or visual texts; and/or the historical development of textual traditions.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Concerns the interpretation, analysis, or engagement with aesthetic practices; and/or the historical development of artistic or design traditions.	syllabus
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. In addition, to qualify for the Humanities, Arts and Design designation a course must meet one or more of the following requirements:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Concerns the development of human thought, with emphasis on the analysis of philosophical and/or religious systems of thought.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Concerns aesthetic systems and values, especially in literature, arts, and design.	syllabus and assignment (Shopping Sound Ethnography)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Emphasizes aesthetic experience and creative process in literature, arts, and design.	syllabus and attached assignments (Outdoor Soundscape Report and Analyzing a Song I & II)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Concerns the analysis of literature and the development of literary traditions.	
		THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF COURSES ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE [HU] DESIGNATION EVEN THOUGH THEY MIGHT GIVE SOME CONSIDERATION TO THE HUMANITIES, ARTS AND DESIGN:	
		• Courses devoted primarily to developing skill in the use of a language.	
		• Courses devoted primarily to the acquisition of quantitative or experimental methods.	
		• Courses devoted primarily to teaching skills.	

Course Prefix	Number	Title	General Studies Designation
MHL/HDA	294	Introduction to Sound Studies	HU

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria. Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checklist)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
Concerns the interpretation, analysis, or engagement with aesthetic practices	MHL 294 asks students to consider a wide range of interdisciplinary aesthetic practices surrounding sound- from sound art, to music, to literature, to film and video games.	The classes on Noise and Sound Art discuss modernist and avant-garde compositions from the twentieth century that diverge from standard definitions of "music." The song analysis assignment is an engagement with various types of song (whether by Copland or Mozart or sung by Billie Holiday or Howlin Wolf). The class on Poetry and Literature asks students to engage with poems and literature as musical. The classes on Bach and Shostakovich deal with interpretations and analyses of their compositions. The classes on Sound Recording, Music and Film and Music and Video games all interpret, analyze, and engage with these varied aesthetic practices (even if only recently have video games been considered as such). The remainder of the classes, insofar as they engage with music or sound making as meaningful activities, ask for interpretation, analysis and engagement with aesthetic practices (e.g., Performers Listening to Themselves Perform).
Concerns aesthetic systems and values, especially in literature, arts, and design	Throughout MHL 294 students are asked to grapple with the aesthetics of sound and the values placed on various aspects of the sound continuum (from silence, noise, to music) both in the past and today.	The unit on Silence and the environment asks students to consider the meaning of silence in the contemporary soundscape, as does the Shopping Sound Ethnography. The ethnography in particular asks students to consider the aesthetic/commercial values accorded music (and other sounds) today. The Bach and Shostakovich classes engage with the meanings accorded music in the past (as does the Voices class). My Noise is Your Music looks at the cultural specifics (and variability) of sound/noise/music. And several other courses discuss the history of aesthetic values surrounding listening (e.g., From Participation to Silence and the Musical Soundscape of Modernity). Finally, the last two classes tackle the issue of taste in musical aesthetics and why certain music, specifically Kenny G and Celine Dion) is considered "bad" (or not).

<p>Emphasizes aesthetic experience and creative process in literature, arts, and design</p>	<p>Students in MHL 294 engage with various examples of sound studies as it is reflected in sound art, music, and various hybrid genres (film, video games, etc.). Several projects directly ask students to create and perform sound art, and to analyze songs</p>	<p>Outdoor Soundscape Report involves creating a sound composition based on students' field recordings; Analyzing a Song parts I and II ask students to examine in detail a song, considering the ways in which the composer and performers realize a given text; In the Our Sounds class the students rehearse and perform a composition by Pauline Oliveros based entirely on vocal sounds (non-traditionally notated). The final project for the class also allows for a creative component. Numerous other classes (e.g., on music and film, music and video games, sound recording) address the creative process, esp. as it relates to mixed media and technology.</p>

MHL 294 (HDA 294) Introduction to Sound Studies

M W: 10:30-11:45 am

Prof. Peter Schmelz

Office: TBA

Office hours: TBA

Course Description:

Over the past decade the interdisciplinary field of sound studies has boomed, with scholars from history, English, cultural studies, film, media, and music contributing to the increasingly active discussion. This interdisciplinary course will draw upon the most pertinent of this scholarship to explore a range of issues related to contemporary hearing and the sonic worlds of the past. Our basic aim will be to consider the many ways in which sound becomes meaningful and affects our lives today. We will develop historical and conceptual frameworks as well as a critical vocabulary for dealing with sound in its various manifestations including art, music, the environment, commerce, and conflict. Through hands-on projects, readings, discussions, and performances, we will discuss diverse figures and topics ranging from John Cage (the composer-philosopher of silence and random sounds), Gregorian Chant, and Bach, to Muzak, the development of recording technology, and recent research in music cognition. Other subjects to be discussed include aesthetics, politics, performance practice, taste, popular music, sound and music in film and video games, and sound and music in other cultures. Although the class features a collective performance near its conclusion, *the ability to read music is not required*.

Primary Objectives

1. To develop a historical and theoretical knowledge of the sound continuum (silence, noise, music), and cultivate a vocabulary for discussing its many facets.
2. To achieve a broad yet detailed understanding and awareness of sound and its meanings through the examination of specific case studies, including readings, written projects, performances, and other assignments.

Weekly projects and final project:

Over the course of the semester students will be asked to engage in a variety of projects applying various class readings and discussions to practical activities, whether ethnographies, sound art, song analysis or other

Materials:

There are no required books. Materials will be available either on reserve in the music library (or on online reserve), or on the streaming audio website.

Materials and some projects will also be handled through Blackboard.

Other texts will be distributed in class and/or placed on reserve in the music library.

The course will require regular attendance and participation, occasional short response papers, a final exam, and a longer final project on a topic of your choosing (this--including its due date--

will be discussed in more detail in a few weeks). The course will emphasize listening and reading; class sessions will be guided primarily by discussion, therefore your participation is crucial and is weighted accordingly.

Your final grade will be computed using the following percentages:

Attendance and participation	35%
Short papers and in-class presentations	30%
Final project	20%
Final exam	15%

As you can see, attendance and participation are an integral part of your grade. Continued attendance is essential for doing well in the course. Should an emergency arise and you are unable to attend class, please let me know ahead of time.

Student Responsibilities

- 1-Students are expected to prepare and bring all necessary course materials to every class.
- 2-Students must check their ASU email account (...@asu.edu) regularly for important class information and reminders. All email correspondence will be sent to each student's ASU account. To activate your ASU email or to route it to an external address log on to MyASU and click on the MyProfile tab. Under Computer Accounts, click on the 'Add/edit email addresses' or 'Change your email destination' links.
- 3-Check the course website on Blackboard (via MyASU <https://myasucourses.asu.edu>) on a weekly basis for announcements and assignment guidelines.

Special Accommodations

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the ASU Disability Resource Center (<http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/#> ; Phone: (480) 965-1234; TDD: (480) 965-9000). This is a very important step as accommodations may be difficult to make retroactively. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, in order to assure that you receive your accommodations in a timely manner, please present this documentation to me no later than the end of the first week of the semester so that your needs can be addressed effectively.

Academic Dishonesty

All forms of student academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and plagiarism are subject to disciplinary action, as stated in the ASU Student Code of Conduct. Note that the Student Academic Integrity Policy includes under academic dishonesty the use of "materials from the Internet or any other source without full and appropriate attribution". I urge students to familiarize themselves with both the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Academic Integrity Policy before submitting any assignment. All necessary and appropriate sanctions will be issued to all parties involved with plagiarizing any and all course work. Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty that is in violation with the Student Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and may result in failure of the course with an XE.

For more information, please see the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy:
http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.htm

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

August 24 (M) Introduction to sound studies, history and definitions

Aug. 26 (W) Historicizing and defining sound studies (continued)

Unit 1: Silence and the Environment

Aug. 31 (M) Silence

Reading: Lutosławski, "On Silence"

Eric De Visscher, "'There's no such a thing as silence...':

John Cage's Poetics of Silence" (1991)

Sept. 2 (W) Environmental Engagement, Sound Walking

Reading: Hempton, *One Square inch of Silence: One Man's Quest to Preserve Quiet*

Viewing: <http://onesquareinch.org>; documentary: *Soundtracker*

Listening: John Luther Adams, *Become Ocean (excerpts)*

Peter Maxwell Davies, *Antarctic Symphony (excerpts)*

Sept. 7 (M) No Class: Labor Day

Unit 2: Noise in music and art

Sept. 9 (W) Noise?

Various readings from *Audio Cultures*, ed. Cox and Warner
And Kahn, *Noise, Water, Meat*

Listening: Edgard Varese: *Hyperprism*

Morton Feldman: *The Viola in My Life no. 3*

Glenn Branca (also interview:

<http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/glenn-branca-where-my-cars-want-to-go/>

Sept. 14 (M) Sound art

Listening: Luc Ferrari, *Presque rien nr. 1 (Lever du jour au bord de la mer)*

Alvin Lucier, "I am Sitting in a Room"

Bob Dylan, "Like a Rolling Stone"

Reading: Seth Kim-Cohen, *In the blink of an eye: Toward a non-cochlear sonic art*, chapter 7, "Sound out-of-itself"

Sept. 16 (W) *Our Sounds I*

Outdoor soundscape report;

based on Pauline Oliveros, "Field Recording," in *Deep Listening* (p. 27)

Sept. 21 (M) My noise is your music: Aesthetics and Ethnomusicology

Listening: *Voices of the Rainforest* (tracks 1-3; remainder optional)

Komar and Melamid and David Soldier: *The Most Wanted Song*;
The Most Unwanted Song

Reading: Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology*, chapter 2
Plato/Aristotle (excerpts TBA)
CD *Voices of the Rainforest* (read liner notes by Feld)

- Sept. 23 (W) Background music from Furniture Music to Elevator Music
Listening: Erik Satie, *Musique d'ameublement*
Brian Eno, "Music for Airports"
Reading: Jonathan Sterne, "Sounds like the Mall of America: Programmed Music and the Architectonics of Commercial Space," *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Winter, 1997): 22-50.
"Beware of Beethoven: What you hear affects what you buy online," *Economist*, April 23, 2014, 63.
Brian Eno, "Ambient Music"
<http://www.newmusicbox.org/articles/the-dangers-of-secondhand-music/>
- Sept. 28 (M) *Our sounds II*
Shopping sound ethnography:
Report on the soundscape of a particular store or other local public retail environment (more detailed description to be provided)

Unit 3: From Speech to Song

- Sept. 30 (W) Voices
Reading: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The first voices"
George List, "The boundaries of speech and song"
Jacques Derrida, "The separation of speech and song"
Roland Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice"
Potter, *A History of Singing*
- Oct. 5 (M) Poetry and Literature
Reading: Tom Paulin, "The Despotism of the Eye" in *Soundscape: The School of Sound Lectures, 1998-2001*, 35-48.
Apollinaire, selected poems
Joyce, Sirens from *Ulysses*
Schwitters, *Ursonate* (<http://www.ubu.com/sound/schwitters.html>)
- Oct. 7 (W) Analyzing a Song I
Listening and Reading: TBA
- Oct. 12 (M) No Class: Fall Break
- Oct. 14 (W) Analyzing a Song II
Song project reports due

Unit 4: Instruments and Meaning

- Oct. 19 (M) Music and Meaning: Bach, Brandenburg Concerto no. 5
Listening: Bach, Brandenburg Concerto no. 5, movement I

Reading: Susan McClary, "The Blasphemy of Talking Politics During Bach Year" (concentrate on Brandenburg Concerto, no. 5—skim *Wachet auf* section)

Oct. 21 (W) Music and Politics: Shostakovich and Stalin's Purges
Listening: Shostakovich, Symphony no. 5, movement IV
Reading: TBA

Unit 5: Technology and the Contemporary Soundscape

Oct. 26 (M) The Musical Soundscape of Modernity
Reading: David Suisman, *Selling Sounds*,
Chapter 8, "The Musical Soundscape of Modernity" (and Epilogue)
Sterne, *MP3: The Meaning of a Format* (excerpts)

Oct. 28 (W) The Sound of Recording
Reading: Zac, *The Poetics of Rock*, chapter 3 "Sound as Form"
Listening: Dylan and Hendrix versions of "All Along the Watchtower" (and other selections guided by Zac's chapter)

Nov. 2 (M) Music and Film: *Touch of Evil* (old and new)
Viewing/Listening: Orson Welles, *Touch of Evil*
Reading: Walter Munch, "Touch of Silence" in *Soundscape: The School of Sound Lectures, 1998-2001*, pp. 83-93

Nov. 4 (W) Music and video games
Cheng, *Sound Play: Video Games and the Musical Imagination* (excerpts)
Miller, *Playing Along* (excerpts)

Nov. 9 (M) Scientists and music
Reading: Levitin, *This is your brain on music* (chapter 3)
Sacks, *Musicophilia* (excerpts)

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/07/20/how-an-ipod-can-fight-alzheimer-s-and-dementia.html>

Nov. 11 (W) No Class: Veteran's Day

Unit 6: Performers

Nov. 16 (M) Performers listening to themselves performing
Reading/Listening: Elisabeth Le Guin, *Boccherini's Body*
pp. 223-253 (with tracks 61-70 of accompanying CD—on streaming reserve)

Nov. 18 (W) Our sounds (Rehearsal)

Nov. 23 (M) Our sounds (Performance)

Unit 7: Listeners and Rituals

Nov. 25 (W) From Participation to Silence

Johnson, *Listening in Paris*, chapters 13 and 16

(optional: Small, *Musicking*, prelude and chapter 12)

JRMA vol. 135 supplement 1, 2010 (special issue on listening)

concert report due

Unit 8: Taste

Nov. 30 (M) Kenny G and "Bad Music"

Reading and Listening: Levitin, *This is Your Brain on Music*, chapter 8

("My Favorite Things: Why do we Like the Music We Like")

Robert Walser, "Popular Music Analysis: Ten Apothegms and Four

Instances," in *Analyzing Popular Music*, ed. Allan F. Moore

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 22-27 and 33-37.

Pat Metheny on Kenny G; available on various sites, including:

<http://www.fanpop.com/external/3220>

Dec. 2 (W) A Journey to the End of Taste: Celine Dion

Reading and Listening:

Wilson, *Let's Talk about Love: A Journey to the End of Taste* (excerpts)

MHL 294

Analyzing a Song Part I:

For Wednesday's class listen to the following two pieces (the text is on the attached pages; the music is on the Music Library Streaming Reserve site).

Consider the many ways in which one can analyze these. Start by considering the following questions (by no means exhaustive).

Aaron Copland, "Nature, The Gentlest Mother," from *12 Poems of Emily Dickinson*
Dawn Upshaw soprano

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Voi Che Sapete," from *The Marriage of Figaro*, Act II
Cecilia Bartoli mezzo-soprano

How would you describe the voice?

What is the structure of the song?

How melodic or unmelodic is the vocal line?

Where are the most interesting moments? What makes them interesting?

What is the relationship between the voice and the accompaniment?

What is the nature of the accompaniment?

We will discuss these together in class. Bring your notes, but no written work will be turned in.

MHL 294

Analyzing a Song Part II:

For class next Wednesday I would like you to listen to the two selections listed below (again, these are on the Music Library Streaming Reserve site). Pick one of them and in a 2-3 page paper provide a detailed analysis using our discussion in class last Wednesday as a model (the paper should be typed, double-spaced). We will use your papers as a basis for the in-class discussion on Wednesday and you will submit them to me at the end of class.

These two examples raise somewhat different questions because of their genres, but the basic approaches should be similar.

Consider the text, the voice's relationship to the text, the nature of the melody, the form of the song, the accompaniment, the most interesting moments, etc.

Howling Wolf, "Killing Floor" (1964)

Billie Holiday, "I'll Be Seeing You" (1944)

MHL 294
Final Project Description

Prof. Schmelz

As part of your requirements for this class you will produce a substantial final project.

You have two options:

1) Research/Response Paper: Research and write an **8-10 page paper** dealing with a topic of your choice that builds upon or expands a topic that we discussed in class this semester. The choice of topic is flexible and depends upon your interests, but the paper must respond to at least **two** of the readings from class as well as incorporate other research materials. Subjects related to sound art, sounds of other cultures, music, technology, and/or any of the other topics that we have discussed this semester are only some of the possibilities.

2) Creative project/paper: This option has two components:

- (1) a creative project related to the topics that we discussed this semester, and
- (2) a shorter paper—**4-5 pages**—that discusses the process by which you conceptualized and created the project and its assessed its success and implications, referring, like option 1, to at least **two** of the readings from class.

In two weeks, I would like a one-page typed short project proposal. This description should indicate which option you have chosen, and also include a title and a one- paragraph summary of your project.

MORE ON REVERSE----

Final paper nuts and bolts:

The final paper should be either 8-10 or 4-5 pages long (depending on your choice of project) and should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins, preferably using Times New Roman or Courier New font. It should include proper citation of sources (i.e., footnotes or internal citation) and an appropriate list of works cited (using the Chicago Manual of Style, social sciences or humanities format). Plagiarism (including paraphrasing without citations, or close paraphrasing in any case) will not be tolerated. Please ask me if you do not understand what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty. If in doubt, cite it!

For those pursuing option 2, you should also submit, in an appropriate form, the creative component of the project.

All of the projects will be due in my mailbox by TBA.

(NB there will be a take-home final due by TBA)

**BE SURE TO CAREFULLY PROOFREAD YOUR
FINAL COPY BEFORE SUBMITTING**

MHL 294 Introduction to Sound Studies

Assignment for Weds. September 16

Our sounds I

Soundwalk/Outdoor soundscape report:

Based on Pauline Oliveros, "Field Recording," in *Deep Listening* (p. 27)

Make at least a ten-minute recording of an outdoor soundscape of your choosing. Edit the recording down to the "best" three minutes (defining "best" however you like). Upload the three-minute recording to the class sound wiki by noon on Friday, Sept. 11. After listening to the other files on the web site from classmates chose one or more of the files to mix together with your own file to make a three-minute piece. (Audacity or a live stream recording application would probably be useful for this.)

Give your piece a title and post the results to the class website by Monday, September 14 (noon). We will listen to the results and discuss them in class on Wednesday, September 16. Be prepared to tell us about your soundscape and the process by which you arrived at your final sounding result.

As you create your piece, consider the topics we have been discussing in class, and especially your role in the final recording.

Did you feel that you needed to make your presence known, like Luc Ferrari, or were you content, like Cage, to let the sounds be themselves?

What role did your personal tastes play in this process? How did you determine what the "best" three minutes were?

MHL 294 Introduction to Sound Studies

Assignment for Monday, September 28 (M)

Our sounds II

Shopping sound ethnography:

For next Monday, I would like you to ethnographically investigate a specific commercial soundscape. This assignment is based upon the reading by Jonathan Sterne titled “Sounds like the Mall of America: Programmed Music and the Architectonics of Commercial Space” that we will be discussing in class on Thursday, so please feel free to use Sterne’s approach and his conclusions as a starting point.

In the next week you should visit your chosen soundscape at least once—and maybe more than once, perhaps at different times of the day. You may interpret “commercial soundscape” with some freedom, as long as you can justify your decision. On the most basic level, you should explore some sort of public space in which commercial transactions occur. You should take notes on your soundscape and observe the ways in which music or other sounds (or silence?) interact with the various uses to which the space is being put—whether intentional or unintentional.

I want you to act as an ethnomusicologist by treating your object of study as if it were part of a foreign culture. This has many implications, one of the most difficult of which is the need to assume that your readers are unfamiliar with the culture you are describing, requiring you to point out even very basic details.

Type up a brief (2 pages, double-spaced) description and assessment of the role of music, sound, or noise in your chosen soundscape and bring it to class next Tuesday (this will be submitted). Also be prepared to present your findings briefly to the class.

As always, you may post preliminary findings or questions for discussion to the class Blackboard page.