For a Song: Thinking about Musical Labor and Media Technologies
ETHNMUS 188
Upper-level Undergraduate and Graduate
Dr. Shannon Garland (https://schoolofmusic.ucla.edu/people/shannon-garland/)

Course Description
This course examines musical practices in relation to questions of livelihood, in terms of the production both of human communities and of larger social structures. Musical performance often figures as a primary site of the production of social relationships, producing communities and realizing community values. Yet these practices often also intertwine with larger needs of attaining resources for individuals and groups, and thus are animated by conceptions of race, gender, technology, and art. Changes in media technologies, moreover, tend to bring changes in how musical practices are configured, and how musicians and musical communities gain the resources they need to continue their craft and produce their larger social worlds. As such, this course explores how musical economies and forms of musical labor are produced and changed with shifts in media technologies, financing practices, and changing social identities.

This course is designed for upper-division undergraduates and participating graduate students, who will have additional assignments (see “Grad: ..” on syllabus).

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes
Students will learn ways of thinking approaching questions of musical labor, social construction, and media technologies. Students will be able to situate diverse literatures within relevant disciplinary modes of thought. Students will learn skills for thinking and writing in an interdisciplinary fashion. Students will also hone their critical reading and writing skills, as well as analytic techniques for thinking about music, economy, media, and culture.

Requirements
Students are required to attend class, having done the required reading, prepared to ask questions and discuss texts. Students will write 3 papers for the class: two shorter papers (3-4 pages for undergraduates; 5-8 pages for graduates) which ask students to trace a question across two or more class texts, and one final paper (5-7 pages for undergraduates, 8-10 pages for graduates) which will ask students to discuss a music phenomenon of their own choosing in relation to the class materials. For graduate students, this should be related to current or envisioned historical or field research for the MA or Ph.D. thesis. Undergraduate students can develop a small research activity in consultation with the professor.

Grades:
Class attendance and participation: 15%
Class preparation: 15%
Paper 1: 15%
Paper 2: 20%
Presentation: 10%
Final paper: 25%

Course Schedule
**Week 1: Introduction to Musical Labor and Economy**

Class 1: Introduction and syllabus review.

Class 2: History and Issues of Aesthetics, Economy, and Work


  Grad: TBD

**Week 2: Recording Labor as Art, Economy in the US**

Class 1: Approaching Creative Labor as Economy


  Grad: 1st half of book.

Class 2: Thinking about Recording and Appropriation


  Grad: 2nd half of book.

**Week 3: Economics of Performance in South Asia: Work, Gender, Power**

Class 1: Honor, Performance, and Economy


  Grad: Stirr Intro and Chapter 7.

Class 2: Recording and Performing Femaleness in South India


**Week 4: Changing Economies: Tradition, Morality, Modernity**
Class 1: From “Local” to Commercial in the Home Studio


Grad: TBD

Class 2: Moral Qualms in the Economic Transformation of Tradition


Week 5: Working Race, Working Music: Andean Music in Japan

Class 1: Calibrating Otherness to Tour


Grad: 1st half of book.

Class 2: Transnational Travel and Touring in the Production of a Music Market


Grad: 2nd half of book.

Week 6: Race, Production, Work, Consumption: Early 20th Century American Music

Class 1: Touring, Adapting, and Mixing Sounds.


Grad: 1st half of book.
Class 2: Technology, Markets, and Racial Categories.


Grad: 2nd half of book.

Week 7: Perspective on Contemporary Music Industries from Latin America

Class 1: Networked Models of Production.


Class 2: The Mass that Not’s Mainstream


Week 8: Exchange, Circulation, Gift

Class 1: Rethinking Musical Practices and Music Objects in Colombia


Class 2: Segregation and Mobility, Stealing and Giving in South Africa


**Week 10: Financing Culture**

Class 1: Early Recording Technology and Advertising


Class 2: Autonomous Production and Capital Connection
