



**Psychology Department
PSY 250, Music, Mind, and Message
Unit Outline, 1st Semester, 2011**

**Unit convenor: Prof Bill Thompson
Taught by several instructors**

Students should read this unit outline carefully at the start of semester, as it contains important information. If anything is unclear, please consult the course convenor.

ABOUT THIS UNIT

- Unit description and rationale

The music industry is among the largest worldwide and music is a pervasive part of our lives. We turn on music while driving, we listen to music at parties, bars, and restaurants, we dance to music, shop to music, sing in the shower, and attend concerts. Yet the psychological and social significance of this aspect of our lives is not widely understood. The goal of *Music, Mind and Message* is to expose students to the psychological and semiotic dimensions of music in every day experience. The course will examine current psychological research on music, and explore the social significance of music using a semiotic approach. By the end of the course, students will have an understanding of the cognitive and emotional implications of music, and will have the semiotic skills to critically analyse the layers of significance associated with a range of musical genres, from hop-hop and heavy metal, to opera and chamber music.

Prerequisites: 24 credit points
PSY250 is worth 3 credit points.

It is University policy that the University issued email account is used for official University communication. Students are required to access their account frequently.

Lectures: Thursdays 1-3 E7B 100

***Tutorials: Wednesdays 10, 11, 12, or 1 pm Y3A 223
Students must enrol in one tutorial hour only***

TEACHING STAFF

Course chair and lecturer

Prof Bill Thompson Dept Psychology

Course teaching staff

Prof Bill Thompson: Lecturer and convenor
Guest lecturers (to be announced)

Tutorial / practical coordinator

Brent Keogh (PhD candidate in music)
Consultation should occur through Blackboard, during one of the tutorial times, or by appointment.

Students must enrol in one of the tutorial hours on Wednesday in Y3A room 223 (Wednesdays 10 am; 11 am; 12 am; 1 pm).

Changes to all units can be done on-line via eStudent. After week 2, no further changes will be entertained unless supporting documentation about the reason for changing is provided and there is space in the tutorial you wish to change into.

CLASSES

- Thirteen weeks: 12 x 2-hour lecture + 2-hour practical / tutorial; 1 Midterm test; 1 Final Exam (date to be announced)

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS

- **Required Readings:**
- Thompson, W.F. (2009). *Music, Thought, and Feeling: Understanding the Psychology of Music*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Available from the bookstore. *Note that only selected sections of each chapter will be examined. The page numbers that you are responsible for will be posted on Blackboard*).
- Additional required readings posted on blackboard
- **Supplementary recommended reading:**
- Levitin, D. *This Is Your Brain On Music: The Science of a Human Obsession*. 2006. Atlantic Publisher.
- **Additional resources:**
- *Brief video lectures on selected topics:* Links provided on Blackboard
- Selected readings available as background for practical

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

- Lectures are held Thursday 1-3 pm in E7B 100. They will address material covered in the readings but will also go beyond the readings.
- Students must enrol in one of the tutorial / practical times. The purpose of the tutorials / practicals is to help students complete their audio-visual project, and to provide basic assistance with course content. Additional information about the tutorial / practicals will be provided in the first lecture.
- The group audio-visual project provides you with an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills you have acquired throughout the semester in an original, creative product. To enable the creation of a high-quality end product you will work in small groups whereby each group member specializes in a particular area of the audio-visual production. Such specialisation mirrors creative industries in the real world.
- Students are expected to complete readings prior to attending the lecture, and they are expected to participate in class discussions.

UNIT WEB PAGE

- The web page for this unit can be found at: <http://learn.mq.edu.au>

The week-by-week list of topics is as follows:

Week	Date	Topic	Reading
1	Feb 24	Introduction & evolutionary origins of music	THOMPSON selected sections from Chapter 2
2	March 3	Music acquisition in infants and children	THOMPSON: sections from Chapter 3 & 4
3	March 10	Using semiotics to understand music	Lectures notes to be posted on Blackboard
4	March 17	Midterm test on weeks 1 - 3	
5	March 24	Understanding musical signs	Lectures notes to be posted on Blackboard
6	March 31	Music perception and memory	THOMPSON: selected sections from Chapter 5
7	April 7	Emotion and music I	THOMPSON: selected sections from Chapter 6
8	April 28	Emotion and music II	THOMPSON: selected sections from Chapter 6
9	May 5	Music Therapy	Lectures notes to be posted on Blackboard
10	May 12	Creating Music	THOMPSON: Selected from Chapters 8 & 9
11	May 19	Music and Violence	Lectures notes to be posted on Blackboard
12	May 26	Music and other abilities	THOMPSON: Selected sections from Chapter 10
13	June 2	Overview: linking music mind & message	No reading assigned

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will consist of a midterm test, a group audio-visual project, a write-up of that project, and a final examination. The midterm test and examination will be based on readings and lectures. Details are as follows:

1. Midterm test: 20%

- The midterm test is a 45-minute multiple-choice examination that will be held in class during week 4. The test assesses your understanding of lecture topics and reading materials in weeks 1-3 only, providing a low-risk means of evaluating your potential early in the course.

2. Group audio-visual project: 30%

- The Group Audio-Visual Project provides students with an opportunity to apply skills and knowledge they have gained in the unit in a creative group task. Each student is assigned a particular role within the group and is marked for their contribution in that role. The project is due in week 12.

3. Individual write-up of group project: 10%

- This assessment task provides students with the opportunity to reflect on their group project, to identify strengths and weakness of group members. Although the audio-visual project is completed in groups, the write up must be your own individual work. The final completed write-up is due in week 13 at the tutorial but you are expected to make some contributions to the write-up each week.

4. Examination: 40%

- A three-hour examination comprised of short-answer and multiple-choice answer questions. The examination provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge. All unit material is examinable. It provides a final summative assessment of the students' understanding of unit content and their ability to apply that knowledge.

Students are expected to attend all classes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course students will

1. Have drawn on their personal experience of engaging with music (as consumer, performer, teacher, etc) to develop their understanding of how humans think, feel and communicate with each other;
2. Have an understanding of music as a multimodal communicative (semiotic) practice;
3. Have an understanding of human capacities of perception, memory, affect, mutual understanding and co-operation, which underpin musical expression and appreciation;

4. Have a general understanding of how music from different cultures and different historical periods has varied, and how this variation forms part of the changing cultural and psychological context of human societies
5. Be able to use key concepts from linguistics and psychology to describe different kinds of music in terms of the symbolic resources that are drawn on to achieve each piece/song's purpose as a communicative event;
6. For text-based music, explain how key features of the language (in lyrics) reflect or resonate with – or sometimes set up oppositions with –key features of the music itself - in particular they will be able to note how structures in the textual mode often change at the same time as there is a major change in a crucial aspect of the musical mode.

The above learning outcomes will lead to the following graduate capabilities:

- *Knowledge and skill in the study of music psychology and semiotics*
- *Increased ability at critical, analytical and integrative thinking*
- *An ethical awareness of scientific practice and cultural differences*

POLICY ON STUDENTS WHO MISS AN EXAM

MID-SEMESTER EXAMS: All students must attend the mid-semester exam at the same time. There is no separate arrangement for evening students to sit this exam.

Students who are unable to sit the mid-semester exam at the specified time must advise the Psychology Office via email and must also submit an Application for Special Consideration form (and Professional Authority if reason is medical, clearly stating the reasons for the absence from the exam). The form is available outside the Psychology office or can be downloaded from

<http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APScons.pdf>

This should be submitted to the Student Enquiry Services within five days from the day of the examination. The unit chair(s) will determine eligibility for a late mid-semester exam and eligible students will be notified about the time and location of the exam. There will be only one alternative time.

The University Examination period in First Half Year 2011 is from June 6 to June 24, 2011. You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations.

<http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam>

The only exception to not sitting an examination at the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at <http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCon.pdf>

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process, the examination will be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period.

Supplementary Examination in the Department of Psychology will be held on the: 7th and 8th of July, for Semester One 2011.

Supplementary Exams are only offered to students who have satisfactorily completed all other assessments for the unit and were unable to sit the final exam.

Instructions on applying for sitting of a supplementary exam are available from the website, www.psy.mq.edu.au/speccond. It is the student's responsibility to follow the steps outlined in this website. When a supplementary exam has been granted an email will be sent to the student. It is the student's responsibility to check the Department of Psychology Special Consideration website for information relating to the date and location of the supplementary exam. Students who are granted to sit for a supplementary exam must make themselves available to sit for the supplementary exam on the specified dates. There will be only one alternative time. It is the student's responsibility to email the Psychology Office, psy_off@mq.edu.au to confirm attendance to the supplementary exams.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, which is the final day of the official examination period.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is an integral part of the core values and principles contained in the Macquarie University Ethics Statement. The Policy covering Academic Honesty is available on the web at:

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Plagiarism is an example of dishonest academic behaviour and is defined by the Policy on Academic honesty as: "Using the work or ideas of another person and presenting this as your own without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work or ideas".

Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. The Academic honesty Procedure is available at

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/procedure.html

This procedure notes the following responsibilities for students:

- Act in accordance with the principles of the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Become familiar with what academic dishonesty is, what are appropriate referencing techniques and the consequences of poor practice.
- Seek assistance from the unit convenor (or their nominee) to remedy any deficits or if you are unsure of discipline specific practice.
- Submit only work of which you are the author or that properly acknowledges others.
- Do not lend your original work to any other person for any reason.
- Keep drafts of your own authored work and notes showing the authorship or source of ideas that are not your own.

The penalties which can be applied for academic dishonesty are outlined in the Academic Dishonesty – Schedule of Penalties which can be found at: http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/schedule_penalties.html
The penalties range from applying a fail grade for the assessment task or requiring the student to re-submit the assessment task for a mark no greater than 50 to applying a fail grade to the unit of study and referral to the University Discipline committee.

You must read the University's Policy and Procedure on Academic Honesty.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GRADING

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines for the achievement of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG). On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive. For more information please refer to the Macquarie University Handbook.

EXTENSIONS

Requests for extensions for the written report are granted by the practicum / tutorial coordinator. Ordinarily, no extensions of written work will be granted since ample time for its preparation is provided. If an extension is required for medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may request this in writing but must include supporting documentary evidence (such as medical certificate, counsellor note, or similar). All requests for extensions must be made prior to the due date for the assignment. Penalties will be levied for late submission of assignment (5% per day) and for exceeding the word limit (5%).

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Macquarie University provides a range of academic student support services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://www.student.mq.edu.au>.

On matters pertaining to the regulations, the Registrar's Office should be consulted or, within the Department of Psychology, Dr Julia Irwin, Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students with disabilities who have problems within the Department should consult Ms Radha Pathy, the Disability Liaison Officer. If your difficulties cannot be resolved by these members of staff you should consult the Head of Department.

If you have a major difficulty associated with writing skills, you could enrol in a short course on writing skills. For details go to: http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/support/writing_skills/index.htm

APPEALS AGAINST GRADES

Please refer to the Macquarie University Handbook.

