

MUSIC 186: Musical Life Today

Fall 2026 - Section A1 MW 9:30-10:50 am *or* Section A2 TR 2:00-3:20 pm

Co-Instructors: Dr Michael Frishkopf and Dr Patrick Nickleson

Musical Life Today explores how people engage with music across different traditions, cultures and localities. The course considers engagements of all kinds, from practicing for a concert to whistling at the bus stop or dancing at a community drum circle.

Prerequisite: None. The course is open to all students at the University of Alberta and does not require previous knowledge of music.

Objectives: In this course, you will encounter different notions of what music is, and different ways of thinking about music today.

Choosing examples from different traditions and contexts, while giving ample space to the diverse musical experiences of the course's participants, will provide an inclusive set-up for our reflections. Learning to be in dialogue with a plurality of musics and approaches is the primary objective of the course. The course aims to introduce students to the many and multifaceted ways in which music can be an object of study, both within the university and outside of it.