Rationale:

‘One could say that the main service the art of thinking sociologically may render to each and every one of us is to make us more sensitive [...] Once we understand better how the apparently natural, inevitable, immutable, eternal aspects of our lives have been brought into being through the exercise of human power and human resources, we will find it hard to accept once more that they are immune and impenetrable to human action-our own action included.’ (Zygmunt Bauman, 1990, p.16)

This course examines issues of sociology as they apply to the field of music education. Sociological theory is good to think with, it gives us a framework around which to order our investigations and analytical tools with which to dissect what we find. One could argue that this theoretical framework is something that much music education research has tended to lack in the past. Perhaps most importantly it makes the familiar strange, so that we have the opportunity to see it as if for the first time. The aim of this course is to present some relevant sociological ideas as they relate to matters of music education. As Bauman (1990) says, once we begin thinking sociologically we find that we have a new lens to bring to bear upon the world we inhabit. The aim of this course is to challenge you to consider from a sociological perspective your own experiences, beliefs and practices in music education: to make the familiar strange. It is hoped that this will provide for you a new set of lenses through which to examine some of the issues that have vexed music educators persistently since the field was first given a name. This will include questions as to whether music should be included as a compulsory element of school curricula and, if so, in what form. Questions concerning the ownership of music in education, the amount of control pupils should have over their experiences in music classrooms and the extent to which various groups and individual learners are relatively advantaged or disadvantaged by and in music education are also of the greatest interest. Emphasis will be place upon the graduate level skills of analysis, reflection, synthesis and evaluation. As such you will be expected to read widely and show the ability to draw together a range of ideas, summarise them, and reflect critically upon them, weighing their merits and identifying their deficiencies. You will also be asked to demonstrate the same qualities in relation to your own work and that of your peers.
Learning Outcomes: by the end of this course you should be able to

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of key sociological theories and their relevance to music education, including current issues and research at the forefront of the field
- Demonstrate conceptual and methodological understanding that allows critical evaluation of current research in the sociology of music education
- Develop and support a sustained argument in oral and written form
- Show competence in the research process by applying an existing body of knowledge in the critical analysis of a new question or of a specific problem or issue
- Exercise initiative, personal responsibility, accountability and informed decision-making in complex situations;
- Communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly in written and verbal form.
- Demonstrate cognizance of the complexity of knowledge and of the potential contributions of other interpretations, methods, and disciplines.

Learning Strategies

The course will utilise a blend of lectures, seminars and tutorials. Students will be required to complete assigned readings in advance of class and come to class prepared with discussion questions.

See class schedule following

Full bibliographic references for readings are to be found under the heading Required Course Readings.

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Evaluation:

1. **Class Attendance/Participation/ Discussion** 30%
   The course will comprise lectures, group seminars and individually student-led seminars. You will be expected to prepare for classes by undertaking assigned readings, conducting independent research and reflecting on the issues raised as they relate to music education and your own experiences and practices. **You should make notes on the readings and then prepare 3 questions on each to pose to the group for discussion.** You will be assessed on the quality of your questions in prompting critical reflection, your participation in class discussion, your understanding of the issues discussed, your grasp of the readings assigned to you and your ability to reflect upon them.

   **Criteria for assessment:**
   - Evidence of understanding of topics addressed in readings
   - Ability to reflect critically upon readings
   - Depth of engagement in class discussions
   - Ability to produce discussion questions that engage with issues thoughtfully and prompt discussion

2. **Critical reflection Due October 17** 30%
   You will select one reading from those assigned for the course and complete a 2,500 word critical reflection. You should reference other reading in an appropriate manner using APA style and relate issues to your own experience.

   **Criteria for assessment:**
   - Ability to reflect critically upon reading
   - Depth of engagement with issues discussed in reading
   - Ability to relate reading to your own experiences
   - Ability to relate reading to other literature
   - Ability to communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly in written and verbal form

   7,500 words. Choose one sociological issue or theory as it relates to music education, discuss the issue or theory as it applies to your own practice. Analyse the topic and explain the key debates concerning it with reference to wide reading around the topic. You will show that you can reflect upon your research into the literature and relate your reading to your own experiences in music education and your own practice as a teacher. You will present your discussion in an organised and logical format, showing that you can produce a coherent explanation of the topic, the key sociological issues relating to music education, your own views upon the topic and possible implications for future music education. You will also show that you can write in accurate, coherent English and observe the conventions of academic writing at graduate level. Use APA referencing style 6th edition. You will have opportunities provided in the course schedule to discuss your topic with me and meet with me to discuss an initial draft of your work.

   **Criteria for assessment:**
   - Evidence of a systematic understanding of a key sociological theory or issue and its relevance to your own practice in music education
• Ability to reflect critically upon a sociological issue or theory
• Depth of engagement with issues discussed in reading
• Ability to relate reading to your own experiences
• Ability to relate reading to other literature
• Ability to communicate ideas, issues and conclusions clearly in written and verbal form
• Ability to develop and support a sustained argument in written form
• Demonstration of competence in the research process by applying an existing body of knowledge in the critical analysis of a new question or of a specific problem or issue
• Accurate use of APA referencing
• Spelling, punctuation and grammar

Required Textbook:
Wright, R. (Ed.) 2010 Sociology and Music Education Farnham: Ashgate.

In library and campus bookstore

Required Course Readings:


Hofvander-Trulsson, (Eds.), *Bourdieu and the Sociology of Music, Music Education and Research*. (pp. 79-98) Farnham: Ashgate.


**Suggested Additional Reading, Sources and Materials**


**Important Information**

**Statement on Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic offence, as found at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf).

**University Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness.**

In order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the office of the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Students with special learning needs or other circumstances are asked to inform the instructor as soon as possible so that necessary accommodations can be considered.” Note that documentation should not be submitted directly to the course instructor. The Policy on Accommodation for Illness may be found at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

**Statement on Health and Wellness**

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help students achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing a graduate degree. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone in whom they feel comfortable confiding such as a faculty supervisor, a program advisor, or the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Campus mental health resources may be found at [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental-health/resources.html](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental-health/resources.html).