Spring Semester 2015  
Music 177: Introduction to Hawaiian Music  
C.D. Kaʻala Carmack, Instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A survey of Hawaiian music from Polynesian origins and pre-contact traditional forms to acculturated and contemporary forms and expressions including vocal, instrumental and dance music in their social, cultural and religious contexts. (3 hours lecture)

- Identify and define the basic concepts, terminology and distinguishing features of Western European and Hawaiian music.
- Identify (a) the distinguishing features of indigenous Hawaiian music, (b) the musical instruments indigenous to Hawai‘i, (c) acculturated Hawaiian music, and (d) acculturated musical instruments.
- Explain or discuss the functions of music in pre-contact Hawaiian society and in contemporary Hawai‘i.
- Discuss the interplay of Hawaiian music and Hawaiian dance performance.
- Identify and discuss important events and personalities in the evolution of Hawaiian music.
  - Discuss the composition, recording, production, and commercialization of Hawaiian music.
  - Sing chosen Hawaiian mele as a class; define Hawaiian text, discuss history and meaning of the mele; discuss composers and their intention of the mele chosen.

COURSE TASKS

The course is taught in lecture/lab format, i.e., part of the class will be lecture and part will be in laboratory/practicum sessions. In other words, we will “talk” music and then we will “music” music. My expectation in such lectures is that you take notes and ask questions in such a fashion as to assist yourself in understanding the material that is covered in each class. That is, if you do not understand a concept, the onus falls upon you to make sure that you seek understanding. Coming to know Hawaiian music is a cumulative process; what you learn today depends upon your grasp of what was covered yesterday. So, it is imperative that you maintain a working
knowledge of the material. Other than lecture, we will collectively participate in in-class activities---the intimate and intense discussion of mele and the contents therein---and you will be given homework assignments, periodically. While I make every attempt to involve every student in the in-class activities, if you have something to say or mana’o to share, make sure you do! Homework assignments, while not given often, are critical to the maintenance of knowledge in this class. I rarely accept late homework assignments. Plan accordingly.

**ASSESSMENT TASKS AND GRADING**

Grades will be calculated as follows:

- **Attendance**
  - 20% = 100 points
- **Homework & in-class participation**
  - 20% = 100 points
- **Mid Term examination**
  - 20% = 100 points
- **Final Project**
  - 40% = 200 points
- **TOTAL points for semester**
  - 500 points

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

There will be no such thing as an excused/unexcused absence. You are allowed 3 absences for any reason. **After three (3) absences, your grade will be reduced by one entire letter per absence.**

Therefore, on absence number 4, your grade drops from an A to a B; on absence 5, from a B to a C; and, so forth.

If you are absent, for whatever reason---sickness, death in the family, dog bit you, etc.---you are still responsible for making up the material you missed.

**CONCERT REVIEW PAPER**

Each student will be required to attend a recital, church service or concert attendance. At this concert, there must be Hawaiian music on the program, and your reaction to the performance of the Hawaiian music will be what your review is focused on. A 2-page, double space, 12 font, computer generated paper of your comments on the performance is due by Thursday, April 7, 2015. Much of your grade for this paper will be based on how much you incorporate some of the musical concepts that we cover in class. It is my hope that students will NOT have to spend money to attend a concert where Hawaiian music will be part of the program. Please share with each other upcoming events that your classmates may want to be made aware of in order for them to attend as well.
FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT

Much of our work this semester has been coming up with a working, collective definition of Hawaiian music: its attributes, qualities, instrumentation, influences, functions, history, etc. Your final project will be a combination of the following:

1. Put into words your definition of what Hawaiian Music has been and is still today.

2. Take a particular Hawaiian composer or performer and do the following: a. write no more than a page of biographical information on him or her; b. listen to at least 2 songs recorded by that person and analyze and write about what qualities in those songs elucidate your definition of Hawaiian music; c. provide background information on the songs and their meanings; d. speak briefly about the performance practice of the age in which the pieces you chose were recorded – for example, if you choose to write about Charles E. King and his song, “Na Lei o Hawai‘i”, it would be best if you were to pick a recording from years ago (it was written in 1916) and compare it to a more recent recording, with at least these questions in mind: how similar are the 2 recordings? How different? What instruments are present in both? How do the voices sound to you? In your estimation, has the song stood the passage of time?

3. The most important part of your paper will concern your mana‘o on the future of Hawaiian music. What hope do you have for its future? How much innovation can it undergo before it ‘loses’ the Hawaiian quality inherent in your definition of Hawaiian music? Should it always remain as you define it, or does your definition include room for growth and change?

4. Your paper should be 4 – 6 pages in length, double-spaced, 12 font, with footnotes and/or endnotes using whatever editing style with which you’re familiar (e.g., Chicago). We can talk about this aspect of the paper more in class. Remember, there is no RIGHT answer to this question, only YOUR answer.

LEARNING RESOURCES

There is no text per se for this class. As a reading resource on the subject of Hawaiian Music, I strongly suggest that you read online
Hawaiian Music for Listening Pleasure, a blog written and maintained by Dr. Amy K. Stillman. Dr. Stillman is an Associate Professor of American Culture at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and is the premier scholar of Hawaiian Music. Her blog’s web address is: amykstillman.wordpress.com.

I hope to bring performers and guest artists to visit our class this semester, as their schedules permit. I am confident that you will all be respectful but also be ready to ask questions pertinent to your curiosity on aspects of the history and practice of Hawaiian music. Again, note-taking from the blogs and guests lectures will be of great help when it comes time to 1) to successfully answer questions that may appear on quizzes and mid-terms, and, more importantly, 2) to walk away at the end of the semester with a clearer understanding of your individual and our collective kuleana is, with respect to the perpetuation of Hawaiian Music.

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Ann Lemke can be reached at 235-7448, lemke@hawaii.edu, or you may stop by Hale ‘Akoakoa 213 for more information.