

Title of lecture: MPhil – Musicology and Its Debates**Response from: Gavin Williams and Flora Willson (16 December 2014)**

We are delighted that the feedback to the course was mostly positive. Many students said the course provided a broad-ranging and stimulating introduction to disciplinary issues. Students were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of discussion, and were broadly interested in the range of topics discussed. Despite this consensus about the value of what *was* discussed, several respondents felt that certain disciplinary perspectives were under-represented (these ranged from ethnomusicology to music and science, philology to popular music studies). The marked lack of consensus with regard to what other topics might usefully have been included did seem symptomatic of the inevitably disparate interests and educational backgrounds of any group of students taking a course of this kind.

That said, the course convenors accept these criticisms, and would be happy to attempt to broaden further the intellectual and disciplinary scope of the course in future iterations. We remain acutely aware that most respondents to the questionnaire reported that the quantity of set reading each week was reasonable but pushed at the upper limit of what they could be expected to manage. Any further broadening of the course would need not only to take this into account, but also to consider carefully how many texts can be thoroughly and productively addressed in a single three-hour seminar.

We were glad to receive some further practical suggestions about how the course might be run: that students might submit questions-for-discussion prior to seminars; that there might be a greater number of weekly assignments; that 'break out' (small group) discussions in class were particularly useful and could have been done more frequently. We would like to thank the students for these suggestions and for the rest of their thoughtful feedback; and also, finally, for their participation in a seminar that we have both enjoyed and found stimulating to lead. We wish them the best of luck with the rest of their MPhil course.

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Response from: Professor Ian Cross - Degree Secretary (8 December 2014)

The fifteen MPhil questionnaires returned showed that, in general, the students have enjoyed the course and feel that they have gained greatly from it. There is consistent praise for the intellectual and organisation contributions of the course leaders, Flora and Gavin.

A few points are raised concerning course content (the readings). Hip hop, ethnomusicology, music and science, world music and medieval music were mentioned by one or another student as areas that the course did not address, and few students felt that the issues of what constituted 'music' within the course could fruitfully have been explored. One student noted that as several of the texts were by Faculty members, contributions to the seminars from those Faculty members would have been extremely helpful.

The questionnaires reveal a course that appears academically rigorous, well-conducted and enjoyable for the students. It could benefit from consideration of the specific points raised by students, particularly in terms of breadth of coverage; some contributions from Faculty members, in particular, would be likely to be extremely well-received.