

**November 15, 2016**

**Notice of Motion for approval of a new SOMD course:**

**MUS 346 Music, Money, and the Law**

**4 credits, Arts & Letters satisfying in the Social Science group**

**Taught annually by Larry Wayte, beginning Sp17**

**Rationale:**

This class fills a gap in the current curriculum by focusing broadly on the music and media distributions industries rather than the actual process of music-making. This course will offer historical, theoretical, and practical knowledge, helping students understand the complex and changing workings of the industry they will likely enter, and how that industry has developed over time to reflect new technologies and interests. Every student studying a practice area that uses intellectual property or relates to the creation and distribution of media can benefit from the perspectives offered by this class. The entertainment and media distribution industry shapes and significantly determines the career course of any musician, film-maker, media content creator, so understanding that industry will serve all students by broadening and informing their perspective of the roles of money and law in the industry.

**Course Description:**

This class examines the way in which money flows through the music industry (as broadly defined) and the entertainment and media distribution industries in general, and the legal concepts and structures that underpin those transactions. We will study the history, theory, and practical applications of copyright law, recording royalties, media licensing, publishing, commissions, performance contracts, management contracts, venue contracts, and musician unions, in order to gain an understanding of how these various legal relationships, rights, and obligations function. The class will provide a balance of historical, theoretical, and practical information so that students will learn not only how these financial transactions operate in the industry today, but also the financial and legal motivations for how and why those transactions developed over time. We will also pay particular attention to those areas of the law and financial relationships that are likely to change rapidly in the near future due to changes in technology and consumer behavior, such as internet streaming and social media. The class will use a combination of required background readings, class lectures, and discussion of historical and hypothetical “case studies” that will vividly portray the arguments that have been made by various stakeholders in disputes involving money and music, and how the legal system has evolved over time to favor certain interests over others. This approach will generate both practical knowledge of how the entertainment industry and legal system operate in these contexts as well as an informed and critical sense of how that system favors certain interests and why.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

- Students will be able to articulate, in detail, how the music and related industries currently operate with respect to intellectual property laws, mechanical reproduction rights, and royalties.
- Students will have a detailed sense of how the music and related industries have developed over the past 150 years, and how that development has shaped both cultural style and consumer listening habits.
- Students will be able to articulate the current points of contestation in the music and related industries, the forces at work in determining the outcome of those contests, and a vision for how those contests might resolve.
- Students will have a set of tools for examining their own roles within the entertainment and media distribution industries, and an informed sense of the laws and financial pressures that will be applied to those roles.