

**MUS 537, Research Methods in Ethnomusicology**  
**Instructor: Benjamin Tausig | Thursday, 12:30pm – 3:20pm**

Ethnography has grown increasingly central to the scholarly study of music. The engagement of living subjects can illuminate music and musical practice from many times and places. And yet, ethnographic methods are not easily defined, no less learned. The challenges of writing human lives compels us to think ethically, legally, interpersonally, and philosophically, often all at once. This course thus asks students to read extensively in the history and methods of ethnography, reflecting on its key arguments and genealogies. We will learn together how to navigate the special pitfalls of working with human subjects, from making and sustaining relationships in the field to representation, from documentary technologies to IRB compliance. At times the course will be quite practical; at others, we'll grapple with heavy-duty aporia. Each student will spend the semester working on an ethnographic project, and your final deliverable will be a scholarly paper based on your findings.

We will read a combination of books, articles, and research guides, among other things. This course is intended for students interested in developing long-term ethnographic research projects, or ethnographic components within broader projects.

*This seminar is primarily intended for MA/PhD students, and it is a required course for students in the MA or PhD Critical Music Studies track. With the permission of the instructor, interested MM or DMA students may enroll in the course, which fulfills the Elective Group 1 requirement. MM and DMA students must check with their large ensemble instructor to see if this course would conflict with the ensemble's rehearsal schedule. If it will conflict, the student must check with the course instructor to see if absences for this reason would be permitted.*

*3 credits*