

Elizabeth Massey

AY 2018-19 All-S.T.A.R. Fellow

College of Arts and Humanities

School of Music

4th year Graduate Student, TA



As a Teaching Assistant, I strive to blend course content with my research methodologies and topics, which deal with how music actively participates in religious, political, and ethnic conflicts. Through this approach, I enable my students to learn not just the important facts and figures of music history, but also to acquire the analytic skills needed to understand how musical objects are both products and producers of their surrounding culture.

In the non-major The History of Popular Music course, I incorporate discussions about authenticity, cultural appropriation, marketing and performance image, and identity expression. In these classes, students with a variety of backgrounds and majors can engage with the course material, understand how music reflects and is reflective of cultural values and events, and begin to challenge cultural assumptions through the familiar medium of popular music. When teaching Music History I, II, and III to music majors, I help students understand why major events such as the Lutheran Reformation, Scientific Revolution, Great Depression, and Cold War directly impacted musical features. This exercise guides my students through connecting past and current religious, scientific, economic, and political events to the music of their everyday lives. In all my courses, I use a variety of primary resources to demonstrate how music helped to spread contemporary ideas, becoming an active agent in creating culture.

Teaching a variety of courses to both music majors and non-majors has helped me stay true to my goal of connecting music to diverse real-world cultural experiences in both my classroom and my research.