

IDS 2935 Blues Music and Culture

University of Florida, Quest 1 / Identities

Class # 21783 (face-to-face) / # 27957 (on-line)

Semester: Spring 2021



Time/Location:

T (Tuesdays Periods 5-6) / MAT 0115 (Face to Face section only)

R (Thursdays) / MAT 0004 Virtual, Asynchronous Viewings of Assigned Documentaries and Videos, Independent Study

General Education Designations: Humanities, Diversity

Credits: 3 [Note: A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit] *Class resources, supplemental readings, assignments and announcements will be available via Canvas [URL]*

Instructor: Timothy J. Fik, Associate Professor | Department of Geography [e-mail: fik@ufl.edu]



Tim Fik Summer 2019

Office Location: 3137 Turlington Hall | Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursday (Live) / 9:00AM-11:00AM (or by appointment, please e-mail); Geography Department Phone: (352) 392-0494 ask for Dr. Fik. Feel free to contact me anytime: fik@ufl.edu.

This course was originally designed as a traditional face-to-face class with a focus on the written and spoken exchange of ideas and concepts relating to course material. Note, however, that the structure of this "hybrid" course will have both a live face-to-face (f2f) component and a virtual/Independent Study/Asynchronous viewing component this semester for students registered for the f2f section.

Students will engage in a series of assigned readings, documentary viewings, and discussions (through written comments/communication with the instructor and one another). Students are encouraged to discuss material with board posts, e-mail, and group/class discussions. Weekly office hours, assignments, and term projects offer additional opportunities for personal engagement with course materials and the Instructor.

Lectures will consist of Power-point presentations given live (f2f) on Tuesdays in Mat Hall (Room 0115). First f2f lecture will be on Thursday Jan.14 (MAT 0004, Period 5). First 2-hour f2f session will be given on Jan 19th (MAT 0115 Periods 5 and 6). Zoom links will be provided prior to the class periods.

Note that this is a **hybrid course**: 2 of the 3 class sessions will be live f2f and the third class period will be online (asynchronous viewing of assigned documentaries and videos). Tuesdays will be live f2f in MAT 0115 (periods 5 and 6). Thursdays will be virtual/remote/on-line/asynchronous viewing after Week 1.

Power-points slides from lectures will be made available for viewing on the Canvas website for students enrolled in both the "face-to-face" and "on-line" sections of this course. Thursday classes will be virtual with assigned asynchronous video and documentary viewing. Instructions will be posted weekly; see "Assignments" portal for details. Weekly assignments will be a combination of textbook and supplementary readings, Power-point lectures, links to material on various websites, documentaries and videos (hyperlinks provided), and music listening.

BLUES MUSIC & CULTURE: THE STORY OF "THE BLUES"



Course Description - *Blues Music & Culture*

This course examines the birth, diffusion, and meaning of "the Blues" as a musical form, artistic innovation, mode of personal and cultural expression, and catalyst of social change, as viewed through the life experiences of African-Americans in post-slavery era America. Focus is on intersecting cultural landscapes, the political and economic climate, and how Blues music helped the African-American community remain resilient and sustain their cultural identity in hostile settings and turbulent times. Class presentations and discussions will analyze and deconstruct Blues music and lyrics from a multidisciplinary perspective, to expose the underlying sub-text and metaphors, and reveal its power as an manifestation or embodiment of the human condition. Lecture material will shed light on race relations and the perceptions of how African-Americans viewed their world as they encountered forces of oppression; being part of, yet separate from, a society where racism and segregation dominated the landscape.

The Blues is represented as a community outcry that emerged to covertly confront the very forces and demons responsible for perpetuating injustice. Course materials highlight the rise, popularity, and evolution of the Blues as an entertainment platform, along with the emergence of

various regional styles. Discussion will focus on the Blues as vehicle that set into motion an early discourse on civil rights and women's rights, as well as spawned heated debates between secularists and non-secularists with its sinister label as "the Devil's music". The course will examine contributions of the Blues Matriarchy and how key figures championed feminist ideas and challenged notions of sexuality and women's roles and identities. It will be shown how the Blues set the stage for dialogue within the African-American community as it sought to find direction and develop strategies for advancement.

Through imaginative works, video, film documentaries, articles, performance and multi-media presentation, we will see how the genre of the Blues gave a voice to the African-American community, and a means for them to overtly and covertly battle hardship, endemic discrimination and structural inequality, while struggling with contrasting notions of assimilation and resistance. It is argued that Blues music offered a narrative of the everyday challenges and dangers faced by African-Americans in the Jim Crow South and the harsh environs of the Industrialized cities of the North, as they dealt with adversarial agents, racism, mistreatment, and discrimination. The course will explore how the genesis of a Blues music industry, opened pathways to independence through the development of networks of community based entrepreneurial activities that supported artists, as well as African-American owned music venues and businesses; despite unscrupulous agents that sought to exploit the genre once it became commercially viable. It is suggested that to fully understand Blues music as a cultural artifact, and the evolution of its form, one must describe its deep connections to the fabric of a cultural, the desires of a community, perceptions of place and space, the Geo-history of slavery in its various manifestations, the lineage of genre as it pertains to various pioneers and progenitors, and the nature of conflict and social interactions on the human and physical landscapes. This course will ultimately expose how an emotive and organic musical form with humble and spiritual-based beginnings became a tour de force that gave hope and a voice to an oppressed people; an American roots music that personified the basic human need to be free and the desire to overcome any and all adversity.

The "Big Questions" tackled in this course are as follows:

- (1) To what extent did Blues music play a role in the cultural preservation of African-Americans as they struggled to advance amidst an oppressive and socially unjust landscape?
- (2) To what degree did Blues music represent an artistic innovation that allowed for freedom of expression and communication within the African-American communities as they sought to gain a voice and control over their destinies, and exercise their freedom(s) in a post-Emancipation America?
- (3) How and why did Blues music become a catalyst for social change?
- (4) How did the legacy of "the Blues" change the ways in which blacks and whites in America viewed themselves and each other?

(5) What are some of the ways in which the matriarchy of the Blues contributed to the development of the genre, its popularity, and the rise of role models that fought for equal rights and gender equality?

(6) How and why did the Blues become a foundation musical form and springboard for the music innovations and hybrids that followed?

This class will proceed to analyze the legacy of the Blues historically and geographically, as well as explore various thematic aspects of the Blues based on its cultural and sociological underpinnings and the political context and setting in which it emerged. An analysis of the Blues and its associated subject matter is by its very nature interdisciplinary. This course provides a Geo-historic account of "the Blues"-- an innovation that helped African-Americans retain their cultural identity in a landscape dominated by oppression and discrimination. As a catalyst of social change, this expressive musical form covertly confronted the forces responsible for perpetuating injustice and inequality.

Quest 1 Descriptions and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Quest 1 Descriptions

Quest 1 courses are multidisciplinary explorations that take on truly challenging questions about the human condition that are not easy to answer, but also not easy to ignore: What makes life worth living? What makes a society fair? What is injustice? How do we manage conflicts? Who are we in relation to other people or the natural world? What defines one's identity and influences a person's perceptions of reality or their behavior? To grapple with these types of open-ended and complex questions and intellectual challenges they will face as critical, creative, sensitive, and self-reflecting adults navigating through a complex and interconnected world, Quest 1 students apply approaches from the arts and humanities to mine works for evidence, examine themes and constructs, create arguments, and articulate ideas. Grounded in modes of inquiry and expression characteristic of the arts and humanities, Quest 1 courses invite students to explore questions that transcend the boundaries of any one discipline, and encourage the adoption of a multidisciplinary vision and multiple perspectives in the analysis of phenomenon and the need to understand an increasingly connected and dynamic contemporary world. Students examine the world and engage in critical thinking by reflecting on the implications of how history, culture, economics, politics, life experience, social systems, beliefs, and processes working at multiple geographic scales affect outcomes and mediate understandings of an interconnected world.

Quest 1 SLOs

Quest 1 Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine essential questions about the human condition within and across the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Content).
- Analyze and evaluate essential questions about the human condition using established practices appropriate for the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Critical Thinking).
- Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection).
- Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions in oral and written forms as appropriate to the relevant arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication).

General Education Designations and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Humanities Description: Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key elements, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Humanities SLOs: At the end of a Humanities class, students will be able to...

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used in this course (Content).
- Identify and analyze key elements, biases, and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives (Critical Thinking).
- Communication knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively (Communication).

Diversity Description: In Diversity courses, students examine the historical processes and contemporary experiences characterizing social and cultural differences within the United States. Student engage with diversity as a dynamic concept related to human differences and their intersections, such as (but not limited to) race, gender identify, class, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and (dis)abilities. Students critically analyze and evaluate how social inequities are constructed and affect the opportunities and constraints across the U.S. population. Students analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultures and beliefs mediate their won and other people's understanding of themselves and an increasingly diverse U.S. society.

Diversity SLOs: At the end of a Diversity class, student will be able to...

- Identify, describe, and explain the historical processes and contemporary experiences characterizing diversity as a dynamic concept related to human differences and their

intersections, such as (but not limited to) race, gender identity, class, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and disability (Content).

- Analyze and evaluate how social inequities are constructed and affect opportunities and constraints of different groups in the United States. Analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultures and beliefs mediate understandings of an increasingly diverse U.S. society (Critical Thinking).

"Blues Music and Culture" Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment

Reflecting the curriculum structures of Quest 1 objectives and Gen Ed Humanity and Diversity designations, at the end of the "Blues Music and Culture" class, students will be able to...

1. Identify, describe, and explain the history, creation, and evolution of Blues music and its meaning and significance to the African-American community in 20th-century US, with attention to ways gender, race, and natural identity intersect and dynamically interact with other identity categories such as (but not limited to) class, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, and disability (Content SLOs for Gen Ed Hum & Diversity and Quest 1)
 - Assessed through Class Participation, Reflection Papers, and Final Project.
2. Analyze and evaluate how Blues music as a form of both personal and community expression, created by a diverse set of artists in diverse settings and contexts, depict and help to construct ideals of identity and consciousness using established practices appropriate to the arts and humanities (Critical Thinking SLOs for Gen Ed Hum & Diversity and Quest 1)
 - Assessed through Class Participation, Reflection Papers, and Final Project.
3. Analyze and evaluate how social inequities are constructed and how they in turn affect opportunities, constraints, and perceptions of different groups within and outside the African-American community in the United States, and how Blues music affected transformations of group consciousness and group identity (Critical Thinking SLO for Gen Ed Diversity)
 - Assessed through Class Participation, Reflection Papers, and Final Project.

4. Analyze and evaluate on the ways in which culture and beliefs mediate understandings and perceptions of Blues music from within and outside the African-American communities in the United States, and how intersecting differences in beliefs, perceptions and life experience emerged in the formation of various identities and divisions (Critical Thinking SLO for Quest 1 and Gen Ed Hum & Diversity)
 - Assessed through Class Participation, Reflection Papers, and Final Project.

5. Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions about how the Blues as a musical form, mode of expression, and vehicle for social changing affected the preservation and progression of culture and helped to form cultural identities of African-Americans in the 20th-century America (Communication SLO for Gen Ed Hum and Quest 1)
 - Assessed through Class Participation, Reflection Papers, and Final Project.

6. Analyze, evaluate, and critically reflect on connections between course content on the substance and impact of Blues traditions (musical, cultural, and political) and their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection SLO for Quest 1)
 - Assessed through Class Participation, Reflection Papers, and Final Project.

NOTE: This course requires an Experiential Component. See description in List of Graded Work.

Required and Recommended Texts

Books: Required books for class are available at the University of Florida Bookstore and on Amazon.com. Shorter assigned readings will be available through the class Canvas page (as pdfs). Recommended titles are also given, and should be considered as supplemental reading or as book options for the Final Project. Additional assigned readings will be available on the Canvas website in a Readings file (as pdfs).

Required books for class:

- **Required:** Giles Oakley, *The Devil's Music: A History of the Blues* (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1997)
- **Required:** Angela Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1998)

- **Highly recommended (modern classic):** Lawrence Levine, *Black Culture and Black Consciousness* (London: Oxford, 2007)

Other **Recommended** titles (as supplemental readings, not required to purchase):

- Le Roi Jones, *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (New York, NY: Quill, 1999)
- Elijah Wald, *Escaping the Delta: Robert Johnson and the Invention of the Blues* (New York, NY: Amistad, 2004)
- Paul Oliver, *The Story of the Blues* (Boston, Mass: Northeastern University Press, 1997)
- William Ferris, *Blues from the Delta* (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 1984)
- Gayle Dean Wardlow, *Chasin' That Devil's Music* (San Francisco, CA: Backbeat Book, 1998)
- James Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues* (New York, NY: Orbis Books, 1992)
- Lawrence Cohn, *Nothing But the Blues: The Music and the Musicians* (New York, NY: Abbeville Press, 1999)
- Francis Davis, *The History of the Blues: the Roots, the Music, the People* (New York, NY: De Capo Press, 2003)
- John Wilward, *Crossroads: How the Blues Shaped Rock 'n Roll (And Rock Saved the Blues)* (Boston, Mass: Northeastern University Press, 2013)
- Paul Oliver: *Blues Fell This Morning: Meaning in the Blues* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990)
- Gerhard Kubik, *Africa and the Blues* (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 1999)
- Bruce Bastin, *Red River Blues: The Blues Tradition in the Southeast*. (Urbana, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995)

Books for consideration/Final Term Project (for students taking the Book Review Option):

- Adam Gussow, *Seems Like Murder Here: Southern Violence and the Blues Tradition* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2002)
- Samuel Floyd Jr., *The Power of Black Music* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995)
- Robert Palmer, *Deep Blues: A Musical and Cultural History of the Mississippi Delta* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1992)...
- A given book of your choice (with permission from the Instructor). Note that numerous books, on various related topics to material covered in the course, will be brought to your attention during the semester. Many of these book would be good book review candidates.

Video and Film Documentaries: This course will require viewing of selected segments of several films, videos, and documentaries. Selected portions may be shown during regularly scheduled class periods; with numerous titles available through streaming services and on-line viewing. Titles include...

1. Martin Scorsese presents: *The Blues - A Musical Journey* (2003)...
2. *Feel Like Going Home*, directed by Martin Scorsese and written by Peter Guralnick
3. *The Soul of a Man*, directed and written by Wim Wenders, on IMDb
4. *The Road to Memphis*, directed by Richard Pearce and written by Robert Gordon
5. *Warming by the Devil's Fire*, directed and written by Charles Burnett
6. *Red, White & Blues*, directed by Mike Figgis
7. *Piano Blues*, directed by Clint Eastwood
8. *The Devil at the Crossroads* (2019), Re-Mastered on NETFLIX, directed by Brian Oakes
9. *Blues Story: A Documentary* (2003) on IMDb and YouTube.com, directed by Jay Levey
10. "*Bluesland*": *A Portrait in American Blues Music* (1993) on IMDD, directed by Ken Mandel
11. *Deep Blues: A Musical Pilgrimage to the Crossroads* (1992) on IMDb, directed by Robert Mugge
12. *Can You hear the Wind Howl? The Life and Music of Robert Johnson* (2011), on Amazon Prime, directed by Peter Meyer
13. *The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross (PBS special)* with Henry Louis Gates Jr. (available YouTube Subscribers and Amazon Prime)

Music: Assigned and suggested listening of music/songs in this class, by selected Blues artists, may be streamed through services like Apple music or Spotify, with most available on YouTube.

Weekly Coursework & Schedule -- See "Assignments"

Given that this is an unprecedented year in terms of course delivery... as a result of social distancing recommendations and requirements (pertaining to the pandemic), flexible modes of teaching and instruction are provided. Students have numerous options. Course materials will be available synchronously and asynchronously depending on registered sections. It is important that students visit, review, and complete their weekly assignments as outlined, and adhere to the course schedule that is found in the "Assignments" section of the Canvas website for this course.

List of Graded Work

I. Four Reflection Papers (worth 80 points total)--

Reflection Paper #1 (assigned Week 4, due Week 5): *Reflections on the Symbolic Nature and Meaning of the Blues in the Post Civil War (Postbellum) South*

Summarize and express your thoughts as you analyze and reflect on the human condition as it pertains to the challenges faced by African Americans in a Post-Civil America, the importance of music as a mode of cultural expression, and "the Blues" as a genre that, as Angela Davis put it, "marked a period in African American historical development when black communities seemed

to open up to all sorts of new possibilities". Reflect on what this music meant to African Americans. (3-4 pages of text: 600-800 word; double-space, 1" margins, standard font). **Worth 20 points** Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,4,6

Reflection Paper #2 (assigned Week 7, due Week 8): *Reflections on the Black Feminist Blues Perspective*

Summarize and express your thoughts as you analyze and reflect on the plight of African-American women in the Classic Blues era and the importance of gender based self-consciousness, Blues affirmations, and women's assertiveness and push toward self-reliance, liberation, sexual freedom, and newfound identities in the context of a dominant racist culture and male-driven domestic violence. (3-4 pages of text: 600-800 words; double-space, 1" margins, standard font). **Worth 20 points**

Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,4,6

Reflection Paper #3 (assigned Week 10, due Week 11): *Reflections on the Nature of Blues Mythology, the Intersection of Juke-Joint Culture and the Church, and Racial Injustice*

Summarize and express your thoughts as you analyze and reflect on the controversies and conflict between secular and non-secular entities in black communities during the formative periods of Blues music, and the arguments that advanced dialogue and caused tension between those following the worldly Blues impulse (juke-joint culture) versus those following the Gospel/Spiritual impulse (Church culture); and the myths and superstitions surrounding the Blues and its label as the Devil's music. Reflect also on the ongoing challenges facing society as we attempt to deal with the painful reminders of turbulent race relations, discrimination, and social injustice that still seem to haunt us today as we make sense of the past and move forward to improve race relations in the future. (3-4 pages of text:600-800 words; double-space, 1" margins, standard font). **Worth 20 points**

Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,4,6

Reflection Paper #4 (assigned Week 12, due Week 13): *A Personal Reflection of the Blues-- Creating a Personalized Blues Song and an Analysis of the Lyrics*

Write/Construct/Compose a Personalized Blues Song (Lyrical Content) using the tools and methods provided in the lecture notes and the music provided on the class Canvas site (see MP3/Wave files for slow blues or moderate blues songs as a guide). Provide a copy of the lyrics and a summary analysis of the lyrical content, reflecting on your personal blues and what your lyrics mean to you. The structure of your song/lyrics should follow the A-A-B stanza/12-bar

Blues format... as discussed in class. Use the music files provided on the class Canvas website as a guide to assist you in the creative process. (1-page lyric sheet, plus 3-4 pages of text/discussion: 600-800 words; double-space, 1" margins, standard font). Note that Quest requires some formal reflection where students reckon with what they think, why they think it, and what the implications of their thoughts are. Reflection Paper #4 provides students with chance to reflect on their personal Blues through the construction of lyrics and a write-up of the interpretation of what they mean. **Worth 20 points**

Advances SLOs: 2,6

II. Experiential Learning Component (ELC) (worth 20 points)--

Note: this class includes a requires an out-of-classroom learning experience that offers students a different take on ideas or concepts discussed in class. As such, students are expected to attend one of the several Free Downtown or ticketed In-Club Blues Concerts sponsored by the **North Central Florida Blues Society** (NCFBS website: <https://ncfblues.org/>) to experience a live Blues artist performance. Students are responsible for purchasing their own tickets for the shows, which typically run approximately \$10. Students will provide evidence that they attended a designated Blues show. This experiential learning component will count toward their Participation Grade.

Given the constraints associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, an alternative ELC has been provided (see details below).

To document this experiential learning component, students must write and submit a 2-page personal narrative about their experience (a description of what the audience was like, how did the perception of Blues change in a live setting in comparison to other forms of consuming music in the class thus far, to what extent they were moved by the experience, and any other observations they may have about the event). Note that an alternative experiential learning assignment may be given to students with a disability or for hardship cases where attending such an event is not possible (to be discussed with instructor) or in situations where it is not feasible or advisable for students to attend such a public event (e.g., due to concerns over COVID-19 and social distancing recommendation).

Advances SLOs: 2,6

NOTE: Alternative ELC due to COVID-19 and social distancing recommendations / Spring 2021.

If for any legitimate reason a student cannot participate in the Experiential Learning Component as described above, they have the option of an alternative assignment (applicable this semester).

As an alternative ELC assignment for this Spring 2021 semester, students may either (a) view and review a video documentary of their choosing on the Blues or (b) engage in the

focused study of a Blues Artist of their choice; reflecting on the contribution of the artist (living or deceased). Students choosing this Alternative ELC are required to submit a 2-page narrative describing the extent to which the experience of viewing this documentary... or learning of the contributions of the Blues artist in question... affected them in ways not expected. Narratives should be doubled-spaced, 1" margins, 12-point times roman font.

III. Final Project Proposal (worth 20 points)

Formal Proposal (assigned Week 1-2, due Week 7)... a 1-page synopsis of a *Proposed Final Project for this course*. Note that this course requires that each student write an Analytical Essay. Before proceeding, each student must submit a project proposal (which must be approved by the Instructor).

Note that there are three options:

Option 1. Book Review Proposal: Provide a brief 1-page summary of a book you wish to read and review (with permission from the Instructor), and how you intend to present and analyze the subject matter of that work in relation to the class material and course objectives...as defined through the various topics, themes, and methodologies covered in lecture, discussions, and readings, and as outlined in the initial sections of this syllabus. ***Worth 20 points***

Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,5,6

OR

Option 2. Term Paper Proposal: Provide a brief 1-page summary of a topic you wish to research and review (with permission from the Instructor), and how you intend to present and analyze the subject matter in relation to the class material and course objectives...as defined through the various topics, themes, and methodologies covered in lecture, discussions, and readings, and as outlined in the initial sections of this syllabus. ***Worth 20 points***

Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,5,6

OR

Option 3. Overview of Virtual Blues Trip-- Provide a brief 1-page summary of an itinerary of Virtual Blues Trip you will take via the Internet using historic blues markers (see details on Final Project requirements on next page of this syllabus). ***Worth 20 points***

Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,5,6

IV. Final Project / Analytical Essay (worth 100 points)--

As part of the requirements for this course, students must write an Analytical Essay. Students have three choices or options when it comes to submitting an Analytical Essay for their Final Term Project (as consistent with their Instructor approved proposals). The Analytical Essay may take the form of a traditional Book Review (Option 1), on a book that is relevant to the legacy of the Blues (with permission from Instructor); a Term Paper (Option 2) on a Blues Music related theme, artist, innovation, city, and/or sub-genre (with permission from Instructor); or a Narrative of a *Virtual Blues Trip* using the Internet and historical Blues markers (Option 3). See details below.

Option 1 or 2: An Analytical Essay (15 pages of text, double-spaced, 12-pt font, 1-inch standard margins, approximately 3,000 words), with a title page and bibliography (not counted as pages of text) that explores and analyzes an approved book, topic, or subject matter as it relates to the Blues, as discussed in this course, couched from a multi-disciplinary perspective that borrows on traditions and methodologies in the Arts and Humanities.

Option 3: An Analytical Essay in the form of a narrative or journal of a Virtual Blues Trip based on the Historical Blues markers at important Blues sites located throughout the United States [for more information see http://msbluestrail.org/blues_marker_list] and/or the many other geographic locations that serve as focal points or epicenters of the Blues (using Google search). The Analytical Essay will provide a summary of what students encountered along the way and the geo-historical significance of the sites or locations to Blues culture. Students must map out and summarize a virtual trip itinerary, choosing 20-25 Blues markers/sites/locations/regions, and discuss and analyze the contributions of the people, places, events, or innovations associated with those sites and their meaning to the Blues community; and in what ways the key innovators or locations contributed to the legacy of the Blues. Students who choose Option 3 must submit a map or trip itinerary of their virtual travels along with a 15-page summary of the Virtual Blues Trip in essay form (double-spaced format, 12-pt font, 1-inch standard margins, approximately 3,000 words). Note that the Analytical Essay for this option may alternatively be embedded with a 25-slide Power-point presentation, with graphics and text that highlight and analyze the significance of the markers/locations visited.

Option 1, 2, 3: Worth 100 points Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,4,5,6

V. Other Assessments (worth 40 points)-- Class Participation and Attendance

(i) Discussion and Interaction: Consistent, informed, thoughtful, attentive, courteous, and professional engagement and interaction with class materials, fellow students, and the instructor (in class and/or office hours or by way of virtual engagement) requires students put forth the effort to complete weekly reading and viewing assignments, as well as graded written assignments. In addition, students are encouraged to engage in discussion of the course materials presented via posts or correspondence with the Instructor.

NOTE: If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., let the instructor know as soon as possible to discuss alternative

modes of participation. Assessment is based on the Participation Grading Rubric contained in this syllabus (with maximum of 5 point per category). *Worth 20 points.*

(ii) Engagement & Attendance: Note that a large portion of the class participation assessment is based on virtual learning and independent study. Formal attendance sheets will not be distributed as the course has multiple sections (with physical face-to-face sections as well as virtual attendance). As such, the Instructor will rely on weekly statistics and analytics on student attendance/participation as provided from the Canvas portal to keep track of the time students allocate to this course as well as the number of pages viewed, etc. Students are encouraged to use the *discussion posts* available on Canvas, take advantage of office hours, and/or regularly use e-mail to communicate with the Instructor. Engagement in these components will be counted toward class attendance and participation. *Worth 20 points.*

Advances SLOs: 1,2,3,4,6

Total Possible Points: 240

The Final Course Grade is based on a percentage of total points earned from the four Reflection Papers, the Term Project Proposal, the Analytical Essay, Class Participation, and Attendance--

(Earned Points /Total Possible Points) x 100%

...in accordance with the Grading Scale posted in this syllabus (see below).

Grading Scale

A	94 – 100% of possible points	C	74 – 76.9%
A-	90 – 93.9%	C-	70 – 73.9%
B+	87 – 89.9%	D+	67 – 69.9%
B	84 – 86.9%	D	64 – 66.9%
B-	80 – 83.9%	D-	60 – 63.9%
C+	77 – 79.9%	E	<60

Policies

Attendance--

Requirements for class attendance and make-up assignments and other work in this course are consistent with University policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>. **Given the circumstances surrounding the necessity of social distancing during the pandemic, this semester will allow for added flexibility in terms of attendance and make-up assignments.**

Use of Electronic Devices and Technology--

The personal use of cell phones, I-pods, droids, etc., are not permitted in the "face-to-face" class meetings. They should be silenced and put away during the scheduled class period. If and when you **MUST** take or make a phone call during class time in case of an emergency, discuss this with your instructor in advance. The use of PCs/laptop computers are permitted in class, but students should not be using them for personal web surfing or social media. Students are allowed to research key words, concepts, and/or people, as long as the Internet searches pertain to subject matter discussed in lecture. Should you, despite these policies, become engaged with the personal use of electronic devices, you will be asked to put your device away. Second offenders will be asked to leave the class and points will be deducted for class participation. A third offense will result in two-thirds of a letter grade off your final grade for the semester (e.g., B+ becomes a B-; B becomes a C+, etc).

Course Evaluation Policy/ UF Evaluation Process: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via **GatorEvals**. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/> ([Links to an external site](#)).

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from **GatorEvals**, in their Canvas course menu under **GatorEvals**, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/> ([Links to an external site](#)). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/> ([Links to an external site](#)).

Email and Communication-- The instructor of this course uses email and Canvas to communicate with the class as a whole as well as with individuals, and University policy requires that we use our official UF e-mail address. It is your responsibility to obtain and use a **Gatorlink** account.

Vocabulary/Language--

This course covers material from earlier times as well as contemporary "mainstream" popular culture. As a result, texts--and class discussion of them-- may include language you may perceive as archaic, distasteful, or even offensive. This class acknowledges that terminologies fluctuate and are contested; we are studying the changes in social norms (and will acknowledge the work of advocacy groups) that reflect and help to construct changes in scientific understandings of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc., which in turn lead to changes in vocabulary and usage. Within this framework, this class strives for respectful language that reflects current mainstream scientific understandings of the body, gender, race, and sexuality. A good overview of today's rapidly evolving gender/sex terminology can be found in the New York Times "ABCs of LGBTQIA+" glossary. For a discussion of the evolution of terminology related to racial identity, see NPR's "The Journey from 'Colored' to 'Minorities' to 'People of Color.'"

Grading Policies and Scales--

The maximum possible points that can be earned/assigned for each graded component is highlighted in the List of Graded Work section of this syllabus. Deadlines for assignments (Reflection Papers, Proposal, and Final Term Paper/Analytical Essay) will be posted on Canvas and are due at the start of class for the due dates shown (unless the syllabus specifies otherwise). Late assignments will be marked down. For Reflection Papers or the Proposal, a point total equivalent to one-third of a letter grade will be deducted for each late day. Be sure to save your work as you go, and make sure you are uploading the correct version of your work to the Canvas portal. Should Canvas be down due to a technical glitch or maintenance, you may turn in your assignment directly to the Instructor's e-mail. Otherwise, assignments, proposals and projects should only be submitted through Canvas.

COVID-related Policy-- Please conform to all safety and social distancing recommendations as put forth by the University of Florida... including wearing masks and regular hand washing. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Grading Final Projects / Analytical Essays--

Point values are assigned to each of four levels of achievement, to assess the level reached in each of the following areas:

I **Content & Ideas** (the thoughtfulness, originality, substantive quality and insight of the

paper/project)

40 possible points

II **Development** (its continuity and progression from one idea to another based on an assessment of the paper's organization, coherence, and support)

40 possible points

III **Style** (the clarity and flow of the language and the presentation)

10 possible points

IV **Usage** (mechanics of grammar, spelling, citation, formatting, and punctuation)

10 possible points

Grading of Final papers (i.e., the Analytical essays) is based on the total number of points earned out of a possible 100 total points, with respect to the sum of the component scores for each of the categories shown above. Written comments on your papers will help explain the numerical score you receive in each of these four areas (See Final paper Rubric, shown below).

Grading Reflection Papers--

Reflection Papers are worth a total of 20 points each. The following example represents a breakdown of the scores possible in each category I - IV shown above:

0-1= incomplete or complete but superficial and wanting and/or incorrect

2-3= complete and/or correct but careless, thin, unoriginal; "phoning it in", uninspired

4-5= complete and/or correct as well as thoughtful, carefully and thoroughly done,
original

Note: Earning a score of 5 points in each of the four categories will yield a total of 20 points (the maximum for a given Reflection Paper).

Grade Ranges: Points earned on each assignment and letter grades are based on the Grading Scheme outlined in this syllabus, and is consistent with UF policies as posted at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

Analytical Essay Rubric (out of 100 possible points earned) from the four categories shown below.

	A: 90-100	B: 80-89	C:70-79	D:60-69	E: <60
Content & Ideas (40 pts)	Excels in quality and is dense and rich with content. Central ideas are clearly communicated and complexity of ideas are presented. (36-40 pts)	A fairly solid paper and statement of ideas, with only minor issues or incomplete discussions. Shows careful readings and interpretation of sources, though lacking somewhat in sophistication. (32-36 pts)	Paper has central ideas, but arguments are weak, and ideas are not sufficiently described and/or communicated. Very general in its overall content, and average in terms of critical discussions. (28-32 pts)	Paper fails to present a clear idea and/or the central idea is vague and its presentation is somewhat confusing, requiring much effort on the part of the reader to interpret what is being said. (24-28 pts)	Lacks a central idea or a central focus, and is essentially ineffective in communicating to the reader. A cursory examination at best, with little or no real serious content. (0-24 pts)
Development (40 pts)	Logically structured paper that flows well and guides the reader through the progression of ideas. Evidence or	Demonstrates a logical progression of ideas and uses solid transitional devices to achieve that end. Some logic links	Lists a set of ideas or central idea, but not well organized in terms of its overall structure. Some lack of coherence in	Random in its organization, with unstructured, with a basic lack of coherence. Not all paragraphs	No organization. Total lack of coherence and structure. No semblance of organization. (0-24 pts)

arguments are used appropriately and effectively. (36-40 pts)	are absent or faulty. Makes some connections between ideas and evidence (32-36 pts)	sentences or explanations. Uses generalizations and assumptions to support key points. (28-32 pts)	are supportive of the central idea. Clichés and generalizations are relied upon, with little reference or connection to evidence. (24-28 pts)
---	---	---	---

Style (10 pts)	Chooses words with precision and uses specificity. Sentences are clearly structured and carefully focused. (9-10 pts)	Uses words accurately and effectively but not necessarily with precision. All in all sentences are focused and clear, though awkward and incomplete in places. (8-9 pts)	Uses vague words, generalizations, and improper language. Sentences are structured correctly, but are largely unfocused, repetitive or confusing. (8-9 pts)	Vague, abstract, and personal in content, with awkward sentence structure, and a style that fails to facilitate understanding. (6-7 pts)	Uses irrelevant details and is entirely lacking in terms of supporting evidence and coherence. (0-6 pts)
---------------------------------	---	---	--	---	--

Usage (10 pts)	Largely, free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors. (9-10 pts)	Contains a small amount of errors that challenge the reader, but do not interfere with basic understanding. (8-9 pts)	Several obvious errors that interfere with meaning and translation of some ideas, but don't necessarily impeded overall understanding. (8-9 pts)	Numerous mechanical errors that challenge meaning, making it difficult to understand what is being presented. (6-7 pts)	Many mechanical errors, making it virtually impossible to comprehend. (0-6 pts)
---------------------------------	--	---	--	---	---

Participation Rubric--

Class Participation evaluations for students are based on the Grading Rubric shown below for the semester at large. Note that a total of 20 Class Participation Points is possible if a student receives 5 points for each of the Participation Categories listed below.

Participation Grading Rubric

Participation Category	High / Highest Quality	Average or Better	Needs Improvement
Informed: Shows evidence of having done the assigned work.	4-5 pts	2-3 pts	0-1 pt
Thoughtful: Shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised.	4-5 pts	2-3 pts	0-1 pt
Considerate: Takes the perspective of others into account and is respectful of alternative views	4-5 pts	2-3 pts	0-1 pt
Engaged: Shows enthusiasm for course material and regularly adds to class discussion	4-5 pts	2-3pts	0-1 pt

Students Requiring Accommodations--

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565) <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/> by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluations--

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing UF's standard online evaluations (summary results will be available to students) as

well as a course-specific evaluation that focuses on course content and the experience of the Quest curriculum. Class time will be allocated for the completion of both evaluations.

Class Demeanor--

For face-to-face class meetings...Students are expected to arrive to class on time, stay the full class period, and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be kept to a minimum. Students are required to wear masks.

Materials and Supplies Fees-- There are no additional fees for this course.

University Honesty Policy--

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness--

Counseling and Wellness Center Contact Information for the Counseling and Wellness Center (Link):

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>

Phone number: 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio--

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the UF writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.



About your Instructor:

A scholar, teacher, author, and musician, **Dr. Timothy Fik (a.k.a. Tim Fik)** is a tenured *Associate Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Florida*. He earned a Ph.D. in Geography & Regional Development from the University of Arizona (1989), an M.A. in Economic Geography (1986) and a joint Bachelor's degree in Economics & Geography (1980) from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Tim Fik was awarded the *Charles M. Tiebout Prize* recipient in Regional Science (1987) and recipient of numerous Teaching and Academic awards in a career spanning 1986 to 2021. These include *Anderson Scholar Honoree (1996)* and *University of Florida Honors Program, Elizabeth Wood Dunlevie Honors Professor (2012-2013)*, and *University of Florida, CLAS Term Professor (three-year award 2019-2021)*. He was recognized as one of the top scholars in his field during the decade of the 1990's by the International Regional Science Association (ranked #16 in terms of articles published and citations in Regional Science). In addition to conducting research on various social science topics and publishing over 40 papers in scholarly peer-reviewed journals, as well as two academic

textbooks on Economic Geography (with Wiley & Sons and McGraw-Hill publishers), Dr. Fik has been teaching classes in Quantitative Methods and Spatial Statistics, and giving Seminars and Workshops on the Geo-history of Blues Music in America. His “Popular Music and Culture” course focuses on American Roots music and the Blues as a catalyst for social change. A completed draft of the book tentatively titled “*The Devil and Mr. Blues: Post-Modern Reflections on the Meaning of Blues Music in America*” is expected by Summer 2021. This 500+ page manuscript will likely be in print by the Spring of 2022.

Tim is an accomplished artist, songwriter, and producer; as well as founding member of *Alpha Sun Records*, an Independent Record Label based out of North-Central Florida. He is a charter member of the *Bridget Kelly Band*-- a nationally touring, #1 Roots Music Radio (RMR) charting "Blues-Rock" band (from 2014-2019), with six all-original music CD's to their credit. As two-time *International Blues Challenge (IBC) Semi-Finalists* in 2015 and 2016, and IBC participant in 2018 (Memphis, Tennessee), the Bridget Kelly Band has carved out a niche for themselves within the American Blues community and expanded their global fan base. The group's “Bone Rattler” CD was #1 on the RMR "Electric Blues" chart for 24 weeks in 2017. The band's 2018 release “Blues Warrior” rose to #3 on the RMR “Blues Rock” chart in July of 2018, hit #1 in the State of Florida music chart, and was the most-downloaded Blues album on the AirPlayDirect Global Radio Indicator chart in May of 2018. The band's last CD "Dark Spaces" (released in the summer of 2020) also reached #3 on the RMR Blues Rock chart, was a top-20 album on the IBBA and #12 Australian Blues Music chart in August 2020, and #1 on the RMR State of Florida Music Album chart in July 2020; with radio airplay in hundreds of stations around the world. The Bridget Kelly Band's music, as co-written and produced by Tim Fik and wife Bridget Kelly, can be heard on Spotify, Pandora, Jango, and Sirius-XM satellite radio (B.B. King's Bluesville), as well as terrestrial, Internet and syndicated radio stations around the globe. Tim has been performing semi-professionally since the late-1970's, playing clubs, concerts, and festivals throughout North America, and was featured (as Tim La Fik) in *Guitar Player* magazine in May of 1984-- *Spotlight on New Talent*.

Tim resided as Voting Member of the *Recording Academy* -- Producer's & Engineering Wing from 2014-2018, and was a **2018 recipient of a prestigious “Keeping the Blues Alive” (KBA)** award from *The Blues Foundation* in Memphis, Tennessee (www.Blues.org) -- an award which acknowledges lifetime achievement and one's commitment in supporting/preserving Blues Music through education. He is a fervent advocate of the Arts and Humanities, and resides on the board of the *National Women in Blues (2016-2021)*. Tim's hobbies include studio production, artist development, and writing poetry. He is currently seeking a publisher of his recently completed 106-page book of poetry, a compilation of selected poems in a work entitled “Playgrounds and Mood Swings”.

If you would like to see your Instructor rockin' out some electric Blues guitar.. check out this live performance from the BKB summer tour of 2019 (click on the link below):

[Tim Fik of the Bridget Kelly Band Burns Up the Stage](#)