

PERF 2025 THE POLITICS OF AUSTRALIAN MUSIC

Credit Points 10

Legacy Code 102552

Coordinator Joseph Williams ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Joseph Williams/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Joseph%20Williams/))

Description In 2020 this unit replaced by 102762 - World Music. The unit explores the histories and politics that have shaped the development of Australian music from 1788 to the present day. It critically engages with the historical narrative that perpetuates the dominance of white, post-settler composers and musicians, asking what mechanisms have given rise to some music becoming silenced. How have post-settler musicians approached indigenous music as a challenge that is both aesthetic and ethical? In what ways does the diverse make-up of the Australian population since the mid-twentieth century erode the sharp distinction between the indigenous and the non-indigenous populations in music? Completing this unit will teach students how to critically evaluate Australian music history, to recognise the power of the dominant historical narrative, and to question the assumptions on which it is based. The unit is framed by Attali's theory of noise, which shows how the production, performance, and consumption of music are linked with power and order in society, and introduces Bourdieu's field theory.

School Humanities & Comm Arts

Discipline Music

Student Contribution Band HECS Band 2 10cp

Check your HECS Band contribution amount via the Fees (https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/fees/) page.

Level Undergraduate Level 2 subject

Equivalent Subjects PERF 3002 - Contemporary Arts 3 Politics and Communities PERF 2014 - Modes and Codes of Music Production PERF 2028 - World Music

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students should be able to:

1. define key critical terms and concepts relating to Australian music
2. explain Attali's theory of power, and Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field, showing their application to Australian music
3. analyse the nationa

Subject Content

Students will work on topics about Australian music that include the:

1. historical narratives of Australian music
2. indigenous/non-indigenous distinction in post-settler music
3. folk and bush music traditions
4. impact of multi-culturalism
5. minor musical traditions
6. nationalism and the national identity debate
7. ethics and aesthetics of appropriate practices
8. concepts of the habitus and the field in Bourdieu as they apply to Australian music
9. application of Attali's theory of power to Australian music

Assessment

The following table summarises the standard assessment tasks for this subject. Please note this is a guide only. Assessment tasks are regularly updated, where there is a difference your Learning Guide takes precedence.

Item	Length	Percent	Threshold	Individual/ Group Task
Presentation	15 minutes	30	N	Individual
Annotated Bibliography	2000 words	35	N	Individual
Essay	3000 words	35	N	Individual
Art of Sound	Minimum 2 hours per fortnight	S/U	Y	Individual

Teaching Periods