COURSE GENERAL OUTLINE
A social history (illustrated lectures with numerous slides and musical examples) of African popular music in general and Ghanian popular music (and drama) in particular over the last 200 years. With particular reference to the relationship between African popular performance and traditional resources, colonisation and the de-colonisation/independence struggle, the impact of the music and entertainment of the Black Americas, urbanization, social protest and commentary, generational identity, changing gender roles, music economics and the rise of ‘World Music’ and new forms of electronic media. After these lectures remaining half of each 3 hour class will include video films, group discussions, presentations, tests and also at least three/four practical classes on local percussion and highlife/traditional African clave/bell rhythms and drumming. As Professor Collins co-runs the Local Dimension a highlife band and is a patron of the Ghana Musicians Union (MUSIGA) and other local cultural bodies he will also occasionally suggest music programs that might be of interest to the students.

GRADING BASED ON: 40% written papers, 30% class participation, 30% tests/exams (1 mid and 1 end-of-semester) . 2% of grades will be subtracted for each un-explained class absence.

MUSIC DIARY & SEMINAR PAPER During the semester students are expected to keep a diary of musical events and observations that will be discussed in class from time to time – this will be part of the class participation grade. Students will discuss and work on a seminar paper for an end-of-semester presentation. For this they will be encouraged to work with Ghanian artists, local music associations, unions and copyright bodies or local music archives. Prof Collins can put his students in touch with these individuals, bands and organisations. This projects can involve video documentation.

DETAILED WEEK BY WEEK COURSE OUTLINE
1. INTRODUCTION TO COURSE & OVERVIEW OF GHANAIAN POPULAR MUSIC
2. BRIEF SURVEY OF the music of South Africa
3. BRIEF SURVEY of the music of Zimbabwe.
4. BRIEF SURVEY of the music of Central Africa and Francophone West Africa.
5. NATURE OF TRADITIONAL AFRICAN MUSIC Types of indigenous African instruments and the functions of music and performance in traditional African societies
6. NATURE OF TRADITIONAL AFRICAN MUSIC Features of traditional African music and performance and the importance of local recreational music for the emergence of popular music, including a look at neo-traditional forms in Ghana: such as Ga kpanlogo drumming and Ewe borborbor music.
7. GOOMBAY: WEST AFRICA’S FIRST POPULAR TRANS-CULTURAL MUSIC Spread of Maroon Jamaican/Caribbean goombay frame drum music to West Africa via Sierra Leone from 1800. Links to migrant workers movements. Ghana regional developments of goombay;
Akan konkoma, Ga gome music, 1930's simpa music of Dagbon and the use of the gome by Ga 'cultural groups of the 1970's (Wulomei etc)

8. FIFE AND BRASS BANDS. The emergence of brass band 'adaha' highlife music in Cape Coast/El Mina from the 1880's. The importance on it of the 6,000 West Indian soldiers stationed in Ghana from 1870. Adaha offshoots - such as konkoma highlife. Comparison of the development of adaha and American jazz. MID TERM TEST

9. Spring Break


11. DANCE ORCHESTRAS AND DANCE BANDS. Local Ghanaian elite ballroom orchestras from 1914 to the 1940s. The origin of term 'Highlife' (i.e. high-class life). The link between local dance orchestras and imported vaudeville shows and the origins of the Ghanaian CONCERT PARTY popular theatre. THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR TWO American/British servicemen and rise of 1950’s swing-jazz influenced highlife dance-bands like E.T Mensah’s Tempos. Kofi Ghanaba’s introduction of Afro-Cuban percussion, the Tempos employment of the first professional female stage performers. King Bruce’s Black Beats and other pioneering Ghanaian and Nigerian highlife bands. Their role in the Pan-African/independence movement.

12. THE CONCERT PARTY. Overview of this local Ghanaian comic opera from 1920’s to the present. Early vaudeville shows and their indigenisation during the 1930’s. Post Second World War developments. The Jaguar Jokers concert party – rural tours and urban socialisation. The use of guitar-band highlife music by concert parties and E.K. Nyame’s role in this. The emergence of concert party actresses from the 1960’s.

13. AFRO-FUSION MUSIC OF THE 1970’S. Emergence of musical blends created by highlife musicians influenced by black diasporic jazz, soul and rock ‘n’ roll (i.e. black R&B) and reggae. The Afro-jazz of Kofi Ghanaba (Guy Warren), the Afro-beat of Nigeria's Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, Osibisa's Afro-rock and the influence of West Indian Reggae on Nigerian and Ghanaian artists.

14. COLLAPSE OF THE GHANAIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY in the late 1970’s to 1980’s. Economic and political causes: political corruption in the late 1970’s, military coups, night curfews, a musical ‘brain drain’, the imposition of luxury import duties on musical instruments, the demotion of music in the education system. The formation of musicians unions. THE RISE OF TECHNO POP. Disco-music influenced 'burher highlife created by Ghanaian expatriates in Germany in the 1980’s. Hiplife (Ghanaian rap) since the 1990’s.

economic liberalisation and the recent growth of commercial folkloric groups and cultural centres. Government recognition of the commercial entertainment sector, the new and controversial copyright bill (its folkloric tax clause), the World Bank interest in the African music industry and local poverty reduction strategies. The growth of international ‘World Music’ and its impact on local Ghanaian/African music.

16. SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS AND CLASS EXAM/TEST

BIBLIOGRAPHY CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FROM NYU IN GHANA LIBRARY
West African Pop Roots by John Collins (Temple University Press, US, 1992) REQUIRED TEXTBOOK
Sweet Mother by Wolfgang Bender (Trickster Verlag, 1985)
Fela: From West Africa to West Broadway editor Trevor Schoonmaker (Palgrave/MacMillan 2003)
Nationalism, Cosmopolitanism, & Popmusic (Zimbabwe) T.Turino (Chicago Univ. Press,2000) Chaps 6-8
Fela: Kalakuta Notes. John Collins (Royal Tropical Institute Amsterdam 2009)
(Sahelian West Africa, Zimbabwe & South Africa) PHOTOSTAT COPIES

OTHER SUGGESTED READINGS (some available on J Collins CD)
Music Makers of West Africa. John Collins (3 Continents Press/Passegiata Press, Colorado, USA, 1985)
E. T. Mensah the King of Highlife by John Collins (Anansesem Press, Accra, 1996)

ARTICLES AND PAPERS Prof Collins will make available to the student a CD (to put on lap-top) of many of his writing on West African popular music: including books, articles, discographies and 150 music samples. Some of these are also available on his new 2010 website at www.bapmaf.com

VIDEOGRAPHY Films for classes will include commercial DVD’s of S. African & Sahelian music, Fela Kuti and the 1971 Ghana Soul to Soul Festival. Also snippets of film on traditional Ghanaian drum-dances from the BAPMAF archives pius productions John Collins was involved with: namely
5. 'Brass Unbound' (on brass-band music in Ghana) ID TV, Holland, 45 minutes. 1993
8. ‘Women’s Digest’ GTV program (interviews with T.O. Jazz, Prof Nketia etc), 40 mins, 1999.
STUDENTS CAN AT ANYTIME CONTACT PROF COLLINS
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