

# FOLK FESTIVAL MANAGEMENT

## New Jersey Folk Festival 2009

American Studies 01:050:450

Mondays, 6:30 to 9:45 pm

(Except first class meets **Friday, January 23, 2-5pm**)

All classes meet at Ruth Adams 018, unless otherwise indicated.

<http://njfolkfest.rutgers.edu>

### *Faculty Advisors*

Prof. Angus Kress Gillespie, Director  
Ms. Erin Clarke, Associate Director

### *Festival Manager '09*

Ms. Beth Halgash

“The most common mistake of all is a tendency for organizers to underestimate the amount of planning and preparation needed to produce a folk festival.”

--Joe Wilson, National Council for Traditional Arts

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Congratulations again on being selected to be a part of this unique class...and thank you for accepting this exciting and extraordinary challenge! You, the student staff, are the backbone of this festival, and we'd like you to know right up front how much your hard work is appreciated by all involved...by your fellow students, faculty, volunteers, performers and other participants and, of course, the audience.

The mission of the New Jersey Folk Festival (NJFF) is to celebrate the folk traditions of the diverse communities of New Jersey. Our festival is one of only a handful of large-scale, multi-arts folk festivals in North America organized and managed by undergraduate students. This year's student staff is composed of fourteen coordinators, each with a designated role. The faculty is committed to providing you with hands-on, service-learning experience. Students in this course develop management and leadership skills and written and verbal communication skills. The course encourages initiative and student ownership of the festival. Our task is one of applied folklore. We assemble the folklore and folklife of all ethnic groups and classes in New Jersey and present their cultural traditions with respect.

The Monday night class is divided into two parts: formal classroom instruction and business meeting. You should plan on arriving at the office at 6:15 to hang up your coat, check your mailbox, greet fellow coordinators, and get settled. The class begins promptly at 6:30 pm and continues until 7:45 pm, and the focus will be on the academic study of folk music, folk festivals and folk arts. We will discuss course materials including musical performances, scholarship on folklore, and leadership development. At 8:00 pm, we will begin the business portion of the class over which the Festival Manager will preside. This portion represents the service-learning component of the course in which students will apply their knowledge to produce and manage the folk festival. A complete description of the business meeting can be found in the NJFF Manual.

Although every effort is made to keep the meetings within the scheduled class time, be prepared to spend as much time as necessary to get your job done. Do not schedule outside appointments or responsibilities you might be anxious to get to after Monday night class; we will not always end promptly at 9:45 pm.

The folk festival class is a team: you -- the students/coordinators -- are the team players, and the Festival Manager is your Team Captain. Ms. Clarke and Professor Gillespie are your coaches, offering encouragement, instruction, and advice -- all to guide you toward success. Individual problems or questions should be brought to the attention of the Festival Manager or the faculty advisors. Don't wait until it's too late!

Plan your time carefully with regard to your other class schedules, exams, outside jobs and social lives to accommodate the unusual demands of the NJFF. This is an extraordinary class/internship for which you receive academic credit as well as an extraordinary experience that will help you prepare for your professional lives. Treat your festival responsibilities as such, not as "homework" that can wait till the night before class.

*(Please note: Cell phones may not be used during class and must be turned off prior to start of class. Food may not be eaten during the class except during the 15-minute break; beverages are permitted at all times.)*

## **OFFICE HOURS**

**Ms. Clarke:** Immediately after class on Mondays and by appointment  
Cell phone: 732.991.3966. Email: eclarke@rci.rutgers.edu

**Prof. Gillespie:** Mondays 3:00 to 5:00 pm (RAB 024) and by appointment  
Office: 732-932-1630, and Email: agillespie@amst.rutgers.edu

## **REQUIRED READING**

The first title is provided by NJFF; the other is available for purchase at the Cook Douglass Co-Operative Bookstore, Nichol Avenue and Lipman Drive.

### ***New Jersey Folk Festival Manual 2009***

Performer bios (handout, also will be available on the NJFF web site)  
Quiz on this material at the midterm exam.

***The Dynamics of Folklore***, Revised and Expanded, by Barre Toelken  
Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1996

Weekly quizzes, chapter by chapter, for the first six weeks.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Attendance (50%)**

Prompt attendance at weekly classes is required. Because the production of the NJFF is a team effort as well as an internship, it is different from most other courses at Rutgers. Your role in this class affects your classmates in the overall efficient management of the Festival. The academic portion of the class will provide essential insight for you to effectively do your jobs. You should stay current with the reading assignments. You will note that everyone is required to make oral presentations and reports to the class. You should prepare carefully for these public speaking assignments. An internship is service-learning experience, one you will benefit from for years to come. Only the faculty advisors can excuse you from class should you encounter an extraordinary circumstance. Plan ahead if snow is in the forecast; because we only have a limited number of classes prior to the festival and each one is crucial. We generally hold class in spite of snow.

### **Job Performance (50%)**

Your grade here will be based on the timeliness, thoroughness and efficacy with which you carry out your responsibilities. This means knowing your job, taking initiative, appropriately implementing your task and interacting effectively with fellow team members. In addition, a brief final critique of the festival will be due in lieu of the last class (see final class date info for details). There will be a number of quizzes along the way, which will count toward your final grade. However, the most crucial portion of your job performance grade is your ability *to complete your assigned responsibilities effectively and on time*. Failure to meet the deadlines listed in the manual will result in a reduction of grade, especially if you fail to notify the faculty advisors that there will be a problem meeting a deadline. So, too,

incomplete or shoddy work on your tasks, even if they are complete, will result in grade reduction. Considering this, it is very important that you reach out for guidance from the faculty advisors if you find yourself having a problem effectively completing one of your responsibilities.

## OTHER CLASS REQUIREMENTS

### ✓ **Computer skills.**

You must be able to carry out your responsibilities fully and efficiently utilizing:

- Windows operating system
- Email (please provide us with your most frequently used address.)
- Microsoft Word (word processing)
- Microsoft Access (database management)
- InDesign (desktop publishing) (*required for Program Book & Graphics Coordinators, limited knowledge needed for all others*)
- Acrobat Distiller and Reader 5.0 (portable document file converter, from Word and PageMaker) (*required of most coordinators*)
- QuickBooks (simple accounting) (*required for Finance Coordinator*)
- Internet Explorer for web browsing and research using search engines
- McAfee Anti-Virus (virus scanning of files, floppy disks, zip disks, CD-ROMs)
- Zip disk backup using "Copy to" command

### ✓ **You are required to check your email on a daily basis. But phones are not obsolete!**

Email is our primary method of communicating with each other. Webmail (<http://webmail.rutgers.edu>) is good for checking your Eden account as it allows you to check from any computer with Internet access, including the Gatehouse computer, American Studies computers, those in the RUCS labs or from your homes or dorms. We encourage everyone to have an outside "backup" account, however everyone should have a designated primary email account. If this changes during the year, you should let the faculty advisors know. Also, do not rely exclusively on email. When time is of the essence, pick up the phone.

### ✓ **Media appearance.**

Participation in one or two radio or TV shows to talk about and promote the festival is a important learning experience. It is natural to be anxious about this assignment, but we will provide training prior to your media appearance. We usually do this during the last two-three weeks leading up to the festival. The shows we schedule are all no more than an hour from New Brunswick and air on various days and times, day or evening, including weekends; you must leave your weekends open.

### ✓ **Mailbox and other correspondence.**

You must check your mailbox in the American Studies office at least 2-3 times a week throughout the semester for mail, phone messages from your contacts and other materials. Since the festival has its own dedicated phone line with voice mail, 732-932-5775, rather than using your personal local phone numbers, it is preferred that we primarily use the festival number for contact with any and all vendors and performers; messages will be passed along appropriately and in a timely fashion, usually via email. You must respond to messages promptly and persistently (if unable to reach a contact). Remember to give and get area codes when taking or leaving messages since 10-digit dialing is standard.

## SYLLABUS 2009

"Traditions are guideposts driven deep in our subconscious minds. The most powerful ones are those we can't even describe, aren't even aware of."

--G.K. Chesterton

### \*\*\*Friday, January 23, 2-5pm INTRODUCTION TO FOLK FESTIVAL MANAGEMENT

*\*Today's class will meet at RAB 018 and then move to the Gatehouse, 183 Ryders Lane.*

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*Assignments due today:*

- First "read-through" of **NJFF Manual** should have been completed prior to class.

*Handouts:* Syllabus, Manual updates and Appendix materials, Computer Guidelines

--Student re-introductions

--Intro/explanation of course requirements and NJFF Manual (EC)

--Discussion of **NJFF Manual** (EC)

--Bringing you up to speed: Status report on '09 festival, what's ready, what's not (AKG)

--In class DVD "Presenting at the Festival" by the Smithsonian Folklife Festival

--Keeping on track: Festival TimeLine and Deadlines (*site map visual aid*) (EC)

--Intro to using Gatehouse and festival computers, and procedures. (EH)

--Intro to Access (EC) Folk Festival as a Business, Mr. Mark DiGiovanni, President of Board

--Brief "start-up" meetings (10-15 min. each) with each management team (break-out session)

### Monday, January 26 PUBLIC SECTOR FOLKLORE

*Assignment due today*

Create a written position-specific timeline and keep a copy for yourself.

Quiz on **Dynamics of Folklore**, Introduction and The Folklore Process

Read **NJFF Manual**: Preface, Timeline & Chapters 1-7, 11-12, plus chapter(s) specific to your position

--In Class DVD "Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Roots of Public Folklore" & "Genesis of Smithsonian FAF"

--Executive administration presentation/overview (EC)

--Lesson on public speaking with confidence (AKG)

--Student coordinator presentations: overview of individual positions, responsibilities and interactions.

Be informative and descriptive. (10-minutes each, Q&A following each) *Tonight: Festival Manager*

--Intro and overview of weekly business meeting structure (EH) --First formal business meeting: What deadlines are already upon us? How do you handle stressful deadlines? How do you interact with each other? (EH)

### Monday, February 2, THE FOLK FESTIVAL AS A BUSINESS

*Assignment due today:*

Quiz on **Dynamics of Folklore**, Dynamics of the Folk Group, The Folk Performance

Read **NJFF Manual**: Chapters 13-15

Student presentations as noted below:

--Student coordinator presentations: overview of individual positions, responsibilities and interactions.

Be informative and descriptive. (10-minutes each, Q&A following each) *Tonight: Finance, Food, and Crafts*

## **Monday, February 9, PERFORMANCE-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

*Assignment due today:*

Quiz on **Dynamics of Folklore**, Dimensions of the Folk Event, Aesthetics and Repertoire

Read **NJFF Manual**: Chapters 8, 9, 16-21

Student presentations as noted below:

- Student coordinator presentations: overview of individual positions, responsibilities and interactions. Be informative and descriptive. (10-minutes each, Q&A following each) *Tonight: Skylands Stage, Shore Stage, Pinelands Stage, Heritage Area, and Children's Specialist.*

## **Monday, February 16, FESTIVAL PUBLICITY**

**\*\*\*PHOTO SESSION: DRESS FOR SUCCESS, 7:45 pm**

Photography by Bill Aitken

*Assignment due today:*

Quiz on **Dynamics of Folklore**, Folklore and Connotation, Folklore and Cultural Worldview

Read **NJFF Manual**: Chapters 10, 22-25

Student presentations as noted below:

*Handouts:* Performer bios

- Student coordinator presentations: overview of individual positions, responsibilities & interactions. Be informative & descriptive. (10-min. each, Q&A following each) *Tonight: Media, Program Book, Graphics, Web,* --Brief review of how to write a press release (EC)

## **Monday, February 23, PUBLIC CULTURAL REPRESENTATION**

*Assignment due today:*

Quiz on **Dynamics of Folklore**, Surrounded by Folklore, Folklore Research

Write a press release about your appointment to the NJFF committee to be sent to your local papers (must be turned in on NJFF press release letterhead as if ready to be mailed).

- "Folk Music Instrumentation" Guest Lecture by Dan O'Dea, Multi-instrumentalist

Introduction to fiddle, mandolin, flat-picking guitar, banjo, standup bass, and harmony vocals

## **Saturday, February 28, EVENING OF GOSPEL CHOIRS**

Sign up for tasks in connection with this annual event celebrating Black History Month, presented by Douglass College at 7:00 pm in the Voorhees Chapel, featuring the Lumzy Sisters of Mississippi Unless specifically excused, everyone should sign up for at least one task.

## **Monday, March 2, THE SMITHSONIAN'S FESTIVAL AS A MODEL**

*Assignment due today:* - **Dynamics of Folklore**, Applications of Folklore

--Read **NJFF Manual**: Chapters 26-32

Read all performer bios; read Program for Smithsonian Folklife Festival 2008

"NASA: Fifty Years and Beyond" pages 34-53. Are there comparable state agencies in New Jersey for which we could offer a similar feature?

- Lecture on Smithsonian Festival, Guest Lecture by Dr. James Deutsch, Folklorist

---Discussion of Midterm quiz (EC)

## **Monday, March 9, MIDTERM QUIZ**

*Assignment due today:*

Review all performer bios

- Midterm objective quiz, covering Manual and your positions as well as "Dynamics of Folklore"
- --Evaluation of festival planning process, student feedback and constructive criticism (EC)

## **Monday, March 16, DEADLINE FOR CRAFT APPLICATIONS**

## **Monday, March 16, SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS**

**Monday, March 23, THIS YEAR'S PERFORMERS**

*Assignment due today:*

Read performer bios

--Discussion on this year's performers by Kathy DeAngelo, Music Director

**Tuesday, March 24, CRAFT JURY, 6-9:30PM, Gatehouse, includes buffet dinner**

*Optional attendance except Crafts and Heritage Coordinators,*

*Advance space reservation for buffet dinner required*

**Monday, March 30, REASONS NOT TO HAVE A FOLK FESTIVAL**

Guest Speaker: Folklorist Charles Camp

**Tuesday, March 31, INFORMATION SESSION 7:00 pm**

We need at least two volunteers to be on hand to answer questions and share the festival experience with prospective NJFF officers for 2009. We will be explaining the application and interview procedures.

**Friday, April 3, EAST BRUNSWICK TELEVISION STUDIO 2:00 pm**

We need at least two from Media Team to tape a public service announcement and brief promotional interview at the library located at 2 Jean Walling Civic Center, East Brunswick, New Jersey 08816.

**Monday, April 6, MOCK RADIO INTERVIEWS, PART 1**

*Assignment due today:*

Read/review **NJFF Manual**: Chapters 28-30

Review all festival publicity materials to prepare for radio interviews; interviewees will be chosen in random order during class (NJFF web site is a good source!)

--How to prepare and be at ease for your radio interview

**Monday, April 13, MOCK RADIO INTERVIEWS, PART 2**

*Assignment due today:*

Review all festival publicity materials to prepare for radio interviews; interviewees will be chosen in random order during class (NJFF web site is a good source!)

--How to prepare and be at ease for your radio interview

**Monday, April 20, FINAL PLANNING SESSION**

**\*\*\*Tonight's class will meet at the Gatehouse**

*Assignment due today:*

Review/read **NJFF Manual**: Chapters Chapter 12.43 (Festival Day section), Chapters 16, 29, and 30, review site maps; also review Chapters 28-30

--Overview of field setup and site lines, stage setups and management, interaction with participants, radio communications, check-in procedures

--Site walk-through

--Phone Duty, assignments to be announced.

--Final/last-minute details and staffing assignments (coordinators & volunteers) for April 24, 25, and 26.

**Thursday, April 23, PRE-FESTIVAL SETUP**

--Partial field setup; two 2-hour shifts minimum required of all (will be assigned), 9am-6pm.

Second shift required for everyone is 6-8pm. Keep the day as open as possible. See Manual 29.1

**Friday, April 24, PRE-FESTIVAL SETUP**

--Field setup, 9am until we're done. All coordinators on field all day except when you are in class. See Manual Section 29.2. Work excuses not accepted on this day.

**Saturday, April 25, 35th ANNIVERSARY, NEW JERSEY FOLK FESTIVAL**

Be available 6am-9pm; shifts and staffing assignments will be determined as semester progresses and as your position requires. See Manual Section 30.

Crafts run from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm; Music runs from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm.

**Monday, April 27, FINAL CLASS MEETING and BANQUET**

--Session starting promptly at 6:00 pm at the Presidents Room of the Rutgers Club  
199 College Avenue, New Brunswick. Dress to impress. Annual Awards Presented.

--Plenary Session: Evaluation of NJFF 2009

Please be prepared to report on your most satisfying experience in managing the festival. For you, what was the high point of the day? See Manual 31.3

---Final Assignment (See Manual 31.2) to be distributed at this meeting and completed prior to Exit Interview. (See Manual 31.4)

**Week of May 4, INDIVIDUAL EXIT INTERVIEWS**

---To be scheduled. The purpose of these interviews for seniors is to provide us with feedback on what you liked or did not like about your work on the festival. For underclassmen, you should be thinking about whether or not you would like to return to the festival next year and in what position you would be most suitable. At your exit interview, you will have to present your Final Assignment. See Manual 31.4

**Sunday, May 10, MOTHER'S DAY** You're on your own; just don't forget it.