COURSE DESCRIPTION:

If the term “world music” once conjured up Frappuccino-infused fantasies of a harmonious “global village,” today the term invokes a range of electronic and mass-mediated pop that is decidedly more urban and dystopian. What social, economic, and technological phenomena account for the proliferation of genres sometimes termed “global ghettotech,” and how can we best go about studying them?

What questions does such music lead us to ask about the relationship between globalization and urbanization; urban segregation and race; noisy takeovers of urban space and insurgent movements demanding a “right to the city”?

Over the course of the semester we consider musical case studies drawn from cities in Brazil, South Africa, Mexico, and the United States. Ultimately, this course aims to equip you with some conceptual and methodological tools for studying emergent pop music within and about world cities.