

ERIC J. SCHMIDT

Babson College
Division of Arts & Humanities
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APPOINTMENTS

Babson College

Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology, Division of Arts and Humanities, 2025–

Southern Methodist University

Lecturer of Musicology, Meadows School of the Arts, 2023–25

Boston University

Visiting Researcher, African Studies Center, 2024–25

Adjunct Assistant Professor, College of Fine Arts and Fredrick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, 2020-23

Assistant Director, African Studies Center, 2018–23

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Ethnomusicology • University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Dissertation: “Rhythms of Value: Tuareg Music and Capitalist Reckonings in Niger”
(Advisor: Timothy D. Taylor)

M.A., Ethnomusicology • University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Paper: “Rock (Music) at Hard Rock Cafe: Articulating Texts, Experiences, and Ideologies in the Experience Economy”

B.A., Music: Jazz Studies with University Honors • American University, 2009

Summa cum laude

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Articles

2020 “Arid Fidelity, Reluctant Capitalists: Salvage, Curation, and the Circulation of Tuareg Music on Independent Record Labels.” *Ethnomusicology Forum* 28(3): 260–282.

Book Chapters

- In Press “Playing with Class: Honor, *Griotisme*, and Professional Artists in the Tuareg Music Economy.” In *Music as Cultural Text: Performance Traditions in West Africa and its Diasporas* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025), edited by Babacar M’Baye, Fallou Ngom, Alioune Willane, and Khadimou Rassoul Thiam.

Encyclopedia Articles

- 2019 “Tuareg Guitar Music.” *Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, Volume XII, edited by Heidi Carolyn Feldman, David Horn, John Shepherd, and Gabrielle Kielich, 545–548. New York: Bloomsbury.

Reviews

- In Press Book Review • Ama Oforiwa Aduonum, *Walking with Asafo in Ghana: An Ethnographic Account of Kormantse Bentsir Warrior Music* (University of Rochester Press, 2022). *Yearbook for Traditional Music*.
- 2019 Film Review • *Akounak tedalat taba tazoughai* (Rain the color of blue with a little red in it) by Christopher Kirkley. *Ethnomusicology* 63(1): 156–158.
- 2014 Book Review • Andy Morgan, *Music, Culture, and Conflict in Mali* (Freemuse, 2013). *Ethnomusicology Review Sounding Board*. <http://www.ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/content/book-review-music-culture-and-conflict-mali-andy-morgan>.
- 2012 Album Review • *Wallahi le Zein! Wezin, Jakwar, and Guitar Boogie from the Islamic Republic of Mauritania* (Latitude 07, 2010). *Ethnomusicology Review Sounding Board*. <http://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/content/cd-review-wallahi-le-zein>.

Other Publications

- 2020 “Fighting for Funding: A Member Experience at the 2019 Coalition for International Education Advocacy Event.” *African Studies Association News* 53(1): 8–10. https://issuu.com/alix-africanstudies/docs/asa_news_complete.
- 2018 “East-West Musical Exchanges in the Sahel-Sahara: Mauritanian Dances on Tuareg Guitars.” *West African Research Association Newsletter*. https://issuu.com/west-african-research-assn/docs/jan_25_final_newsletter_2018.
- 2016 “Attending to Localized Internet Practices in Fieldwork.” *Ethnomusicology Review Sounding Board*. <http://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/content/attending-localized-internet-practices-fieldwork>.
- 2014 “Interview: Christopher Kirkley, Sahel Sounds, and Guerrilla Ethnomusicology.” *Ethnomusicology Review Sounding Board*. <http://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/content/interview-christopher-kirkley-sahel-sounds-and-guerrilla-ethnomusicology>.
- 2013 “New Branches and Deep Roots in Malian Music: Vieux Farka Touré and a Tribute to Ali Farka.” *Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA Blog*, Jan 31. <http://cap.ucla.edu/blog/new-branches-and-deep-roots-in-malian-music-vieux-farka-toure-and-a-tribute-to-ali-farka>.

- 2012 “Nigerien Radio on a Nigerian Radio.” *Ethnomusicology Review Sounding Board*.
<http://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/content/nigerien-radio-nigerian-radio>.

Manuscripts in Preparation

Desert Reverberations: Remaking Tuareg Music after Rebellion. (Book manuscript; conducting follow-up research and writing.)

GRANTS, AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2024– ACLS Fellowship, American Council of Learned Societies
- 2024 Sam Taylor Fellowship, United Methodist Church
- 2023 Postdoctoral Fellowship, West African Research Association
- 2023 Hub (General Education Curriculum) Course Enhancement Fund, BU
- 2022 Title VI National Resource Center and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Programs institutional funding, US Department of Education
(\$2.4m, as lead grant writer and coordinator for BU African Studies Center)
- 2022 Diversity and Inclusion Learn More Programming Grant, BU
- 2022 Advocacy Travel Award, African Studies Association
- 2021 Hub (General Education Curriculum) Course Enhancement Fund, BU
- 2019 Advocacy Travel Award, African Studies Association
- 2018 Title VI National Resource Center and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Programs institutional funding, US Department of Education
(\$2.2m, as grant coordinator for BU African Studies Center)
- 2017 African Libraries Student Paper Prize, Society for Ethnomusicology
- 2017 Honorable Mention, Ki Mantle Hood Student Paper Prize, Society for Ethnomusicology – Southern California and Hawai’I Chapter
- 2017 Dissertation Year Fellowship, UCLA
- 2016 Fulbright US Student Fellowship (Niger)
- 2015 Arnold Rubin Award, Fowler Museum, UCLA
- 2015 FLAS Summer Fellowship (Hausa), University of Florida
- 2014–15 Graduate Research Mentorship, UCLA
- 2014 FLAS Summer Fellowship (Hausa), University of Kansas
- 2014 FLAS Summer Fellowship (Hausa), University of California, Berkeley (*declined*)
- 2014 Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA
- 2013 Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA (*declined*)
- 2013 Critical Language Scholarship (Arabic/Morocco)

- 2013 FLAS Summer Fellowship (Arabic), UCLA (*declined*)
- 2012–13 Dr. Hyman Eugene Oxman Scholarship, School of the Arts and Architecture, UCLA
- 2012 Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA

INVITED AND PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Invited and Campus Talks

- 2025 “Rebels, Authors, Compatriots: Exilic Space and the Making of Popular Music in Niger.” Walter Rodney Seminar, African Studies Center, BU, Mar 17.
- 2025 with Etran Finatawa, “À l’écoute de la création de la musique populaire nomade au Niger” [Listening for the Making of Nomadic Popular Music in Niger]. Filière Arts et Culture, Université Abdou Moumouni, Niamey, Niger, Jan 24.
- 2019 “‘Arid Fidelity’ and ‘Reluctant Capitalists’: Independent Record Labels and the Circulation of Tuareg Music.” Walter Rodney Seminar, African Studies Center, BU, Apr 22.
- 2018 “The Cultural Production of Displacement: Tuareg Nomads Rocking the Saharan City.” Musics Abroad Seminar, Mahindra Humanities Center, Harvard University, Oct 18.
- 2017 “Ethnicity, Tourism, and the Formalization of the Cure Salée Festival, Niger.” Fowler Museum, UCLA, May 18.

Public and Media Outreach

- 2025 Interviewed about research seminar with Etran Finatawa, Studio Kalangou, Niger, Jan 24. <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1BPLKX28Y2/?mibextid=wwXIfr>
- 2023 Consulted for *New York Times* reporting, “Soundtrack of a Coup: The Revival of Pro-Military Music in Niger,” Sep 4. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/04/world/africa/niger-coup-music-videos.html>
- 2022 Facilitator, artist workshops with Qwanqwa and Yamma Ensemble, BU Global Music Festival, Sep 17.
- 2022 “Music in the Classroom.” Teaching Africa Teachers’ Certificate Program event, BU African Studies Center K-16 Education Outreach Program, Jun 23.
- 2022 “Emerging Scholars and Advocacy: Finding Your Voice on Capitol Hill and Beyond.” African Studies Association online event, Apr 27.
- 2016 Interviewed about Jazz Appreciation Month by Radio Télévision Dounia, Niger, Apr 19.
- 2014 with Scott Linford, “Exploring Banjo Origins in West African Lutes.” Pre-concert talk, UCLA Center for the Art of Performance, Feb 8.
- 2013 “Music in Mali Today.” Pre-concert talk, UCLA Center for the Art of Performance, Feb 1.

Guest Lectures

Babson College, BU, College of the Holy Cross, Eisenhower Science and Technology Leadership Academy (Philadelphia), Northeastern University, SMU, UCLA, and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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| 2024 | “Whose Right to Copyright? Authorship and Collective Heritage in Tuareg Guitar Music.” Paper, African Studies Association annual meeting, Chicago, Dec 12. |
| 2024 | “Covers and <i>Confiance</i> : Collective Heritage and Nongovernmental Culture in Tuareg Guitar Songs.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting, online, Oct 25. |
| 2023 | “Resources for Teaching African Studies in the College Classroom.” Chair, roundtable by Association of African Studies Programs, African Studies Association annual meeting, San Francisco, Dec 1. |
| 2023 | “Composing a New ‘Music of Nomads’: Wodaabe Artists and Tuareg Guitar in Niger.” Paper, African Studies Association annual meeting, San Francisco, Dec 1. |
| 2023 | “Capital Nomads: Wodaabe Artists at the Margins of the Tuareg Guitar Scene in Niamey.” Paper, International Council for Traditional Music World Conference, Legon, Ghana, Jul 17. |
| 2022 | “Radio Clubs to WhatsApp: Listening for the Ideal Nomadic Subject in Niger.” Paper, African Studies Association annual meeting, Philadelphia, Nov 19. |
| 2022 | “Nomadic Listening: Tuareg Subjectivity in Niger across Radio, Cassette, and Social Media.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting, New Orleans, Nov 13. |
| 2021 | “Where Does African Studies Belong? Institutional Experiences of African Studies and African-American Studies.” Co-organizer, roundtable by Association of African Studies Programs, African Studies Association annual meeting, Nov 17. |
| 2019 | “Political Advocacy and the African Studies Association: Ways Forward.” Panelist, African Studies Association annual meeting, Boston, Nov 21. |
| 2019 | “Legacies of Professionalism: Honor and the <i>Artiste</i> in the Tuareg Music Economy.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting, Bloomington, Nov 10. |
| 2018 | “Tuareg Ethnopreneurialism and the Ownership of Nomadic Culture at the Cure Salée Festival, Niger.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting, Albuquerque, Nov 15. |
| 2018 | “Between ‘Conflict’ and ‘Post-Conflict’: Nostalgia for Tourism and the Ownership of Nomadic Culture in Niger.” Paper, British Forum for Ethnomusicology one-day meeting “Beyond Memory and Reconciliation: Music, Conflict and Social Manipulation in Post-Conflict Contexts,” Keele University (UK), Nov 3. |

- 2018 “Creative Waiting: Digital Sociability and Musical Exchange among Tuareg Youth in Niger.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology Southern California and Hawai’i Chapter annual meeting, Pomona College, Feb 25.
- 2017 “Creative Waiting: Everyday Musicking and Digital Sociability among Tuareg Youth.” Paper, African Studies Association annual meeting, Chicago, Nov 16.
- 2017 “Making *Purple Rain* in the Sahara: Sahel Sounds and the Telling of a ‘Universal Story’ in a Particular Place.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting, Denver, Oct 26. *Winner, African Libraries Student Paper Prize.*
- 2017 “Reckoning with Value in the Global Circulation of Sahel-Saharan Music.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology Southern California and Hawai’i Chapter annual meeting, California State University, Fullerton, Feb 18. *Honorable Mention, Ki Mantle Hood Student Paper Prize.*
- 2015 “Tuareg Music and the Negotiation of Nomadic Identities in the Sahara.” Paper, Society for Ethnomusicology Southern California and Hawai’i Chapter annual meeting, University of San Diego, Feb 28.
- 2012 “For Better Ethnomusicology and a Better World, Archive It!” Panelist, Society for Ethnomusicology Southern California and Hawai’i Chapter annual meeting, Loyola Marymount University, Feb 25.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology, Babson College

Global Pop • Fall 2025

Lecturer, SMU Department of Musicology

Introduction to Music in World Societies • Spring 2024 (2 sections), Fall 2023 (2 sections)

Introduction to Music in History and Culture • Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Introduction to Graduate Studies • Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Adjunct Assistant Professor, BU Department of Musicology and Ethnomusicology

Music of Africa • Spring 2023 (in person), Spring 2021 (hybrid synchronous)

Adjunct Assistant Professor, BU Pardee School of Global Studies

Africa Today: The Beat of Popular Culture • Fall 2020 (hybrid synchronous)

Teaching Fellow, UCLA Department of Anthropology

Culture and Society • 2018

Teaching Fellow, UCLA Department of Ethnomusicology

Jazz in American Culture • 2013, 2015

African American Musical Heritage • 2014

Chicano/Latino Music in the US • 2014

Introduction to Music: History, Culture, Creativity • 2012–13

- 2003–11 Private Instructor, Scottish highland bagpipe and saxophone
- 2007–09 Teaching Assistant, Janney Elementary School Band, Washington, DC
- 2007 Instructor, “Saxophone at Strathmore” summer program, Levine School of Music,
Washington, DC

EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE

Peer Reviewer, *Ethnomusicology*

Peer Reviewer, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*

Editorial Board, *Ethnomusicology Review*, 2011–22

Managing Editor, *Ethnomusicology Review Sounding Board* (blog), 2014

Reviews Editor, *Ethnomusicology Review*, 2013

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Digital Media and Metadata Specialist, “Digital Preservation of Fuuta Jalon Scholars’ Arabic and Ajami Materials in Senegal and Guinea,” Endangered Archives Programme EAP1430, British Library, BU, 2023. <https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP1430>

Administrative Coordinator, African Ajami Manuscript Digitization Projects, BU, 2019–23

“Ajami Literature and the Expansion of Literacy and Islam: The Case of West Africa.” National Endowment for Humanities Collaborative Research Grant. <https://sites.bu.edu/nehajami>

“Digital Preservation of Dagbanli Ajami and Arabic Manuscripts of Northern Ghana.” African Ajami Library, BU Libraries. <http://hdl.handle.net/2144/32937>

Grant Manager, African Studies Center, BU, 2018–23

US Department of Education, Title VI National Resource Center and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Programs (\$4.6m)

National Endowment for Humanities, Collaborative Research Grant (\$250k)

Graduate Student Researcher, Hausa musical and poetic meter project, Russell Schuh, Department of Linguistics, UCLA, 2015

Intern, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, 2009

Intern, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 2009

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Curriculum Reviewer, Teaching Africa K-12 Teaching Certificate Program, African Studies Center, BU, 2024

First-Generation Student Advocacy Training, “Terrier FIRSTS” Program, BU, 2022

Management Training, “Choose to Manage” Program, BU, 2018

Coordinator, “Fowler Out Loud” concert series, Fowler Museum, UCLA, 2014–15

Assistant Music Curator, “Tonight in the Lounge” pre-show speaker series, Center for the Art of Performance, UCLA, 2012–14

Photography/Participatory Video Consultant, Rain for the Sahel and Sahara, Niger, 2012

SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

Professional Organizations

Co-Chair, African and African Diasporic Music Section, Society for Ethnomusicology, 2024–
Vida Chenoweth Prize Committee, Society for Ethnomusicology – Southern Plains Chapter, 2024

Chair, Association of African Studies Programs, 2023–24

Vice Chair, Association of African Studies Programs, 2021–22

Social Media Editor, African Music Section, Society for Ethnomusicology, 2017–20

Alumni Panelist, US Fulbright Sub-Saharan Africa Pre-Departure Orientation, Washington, DC, 2017

Applicant Interviewer, Fulbright Visiting Student Program, US Embassy, Niger, 2016

Web Editor, Society for Ethnomusicology – Southern California and Hawai‘i Chapter, 2012–14

Campus Committees

Member, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, Pardee School of Global Studies, BU, 2021–23

Member, Campus Review Committee, Fulbright US Student Program, BU, 2020–23

Member, Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship Committee, African Studies Center, BU, 2018–23

Graduate Student Representative, Faculty Executive Committee, UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture, 2013, 2014–15

Conferences and Seminars

Co-Organizer, Association of African Studies Programs annual spring meetings. Howard University, Washington, DC (2024) and on Zoom (2022, 2023)

Co-Organizer, Walter Rodney Seminar Series. African Studies Center, BU, 2020–23

Organizer, “LGBTQIA+ Activism in Africa and the Diaspora: Transnational Perspectives on Community and Solidarity,” Learn More Series webinar. Office of Diversity & Inclusion and African Studies Center, BU, Oct 19, 2022

Co-Organizer, “Education in Morocco: An Evolving Landscape,” Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad Pre-Departure Orientation. BU, Jun 9-11, 2022

Organizing Committee Member, Second International Colloquium on African Studies. Organized by Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, University of Massachusetts–Boston, and BU. Zoom, 2020–21

Co-Chair, Local Arrangements Committee, African Studies Association 2019 annual meeting. Boston, MA, 2018–19

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

<i>American old time music</i>	Performed banjo and sang with UCLA Old Time String Band, additional study at Passim School of Music (Cambridge, MA).
<i>Irish traditional music</i>	Performed tin whistle and <i>bodhrán</i> (frame drum) in Los Angeles-area sessions and with the UCLA Irish Music Ensemble.
<i>Jazz</i>	Performed saxophone and flute, wrote arrangements, and led combos at AU; performed throughout Washington, DC area. Jazz piano lessons at AU.
<i>Middle Eastern music</i>	Performed ‘ <i>ūd</i> (fretless lute), sang, and transcribed music for Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble and UCLA Music of the Near East Ensemble. Studied Arab <i>maqam</i> (modal) theory through graduate coursework with A.J. Racy.
<i>Scottish highland bagpipe</i>	Over 20 years of experience as soloist and in bands including Central Coast Pipes & Drums, Monterey Bay Pipe Band, and UCLA Irish Music Ensemble.
<i>West African music</i>	Played various percussion instruments, sang, and danced with UCLA Music and Dance of Ghana Ensemble; privately studied <i>gurimi</i> (Hausa plucked lute) and calabash (hand percussion) in Niger.
<i>Western art music</i>	As tenor saxophonist, finalist in 2007 American University Concerto Competition; performed with AU Saxophone Quartet at Woodrow Wilson House and International Navy Saxophone Symposium. Classical piano lessons at AU.

LANGUAGES

French	Advanced reading, writing, and speaking
Hausa	Intermediate reading, writing, and speaking
Arabic (MSA)	Novice reading, writing, and speaking
Spanish	Intermediate reading, novice writing and speaking

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

African Studies Association

International Council for Traditional Music and Dance

Phi Beta Kappa

Society for Ethnomusicology

West African Research Association