The past two decades have witnessed tremendous political unrest in Burma/Myanmar. Minority separatist movements, economic stagnation, chronic detention of political prisoners and a multitude of other obstacles have plagued the history of this once prosperous nation. Focusing on a wide variety of cases, supplemented by numerous audio and video examples, this presentation questions what role music has played in this tumultuous history. Not simply reflective of society, the role of music in Myanmar’s politics is not neutral but has been tied to the policies of the oppressing dictatorship and the prodemocracy resistance movements.

From national unity festivals to monastic revolutions and from education policy to prodemocracy Internet campaigns, music has been a tool to both justify oppression and demand liberation and has been an active force in Myanmar’s struggles.

Distinguished Lecture Series in Musicology Presents

“The Sound of Politics: Music and the struggle for democracy in Myanmar”

Gavin Douglas
Associate Professor, Ethnomusicology
UNC Greensboro

October 19, 2015
12:20 p.m.
Natalie L. Haslam Music Center, Room G68