LIT 80i - Topics in American Culture:
Literature, Identity, and Musical Genres

Course Essentials

Meetings Details

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am - 12:30 pm PST

zoom link and passcode on Canvas

Instructional Team

	Instructor	**Teaching Assistant**	**Reader**
Who	Morgan Gates	Katherine Rogers	Kendall Grady
Call me	Morgan (she / hers)	Katherine (she / hers)	Kendall (they / them / she / her)
Open Hour day & time	Wed 1 pm - 2 pm PST and by appointment	By appointment	none
Open Hour location	link and passcode on Canvas	TBD	none
email	megates@ucsc.edu	krogers1@ucsc.edu	kegrady@ucsc.edu

Navigating the Syllabus

This syllabus is your *first* resource for questions. Use the outline to the left to navigate. Click a topic in the outline or scroll down.
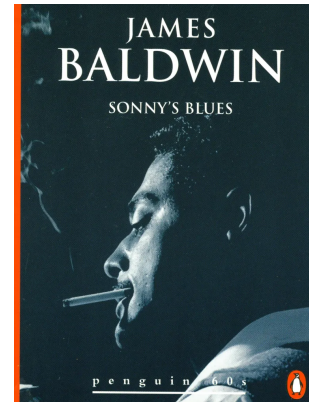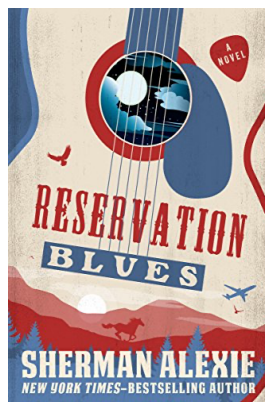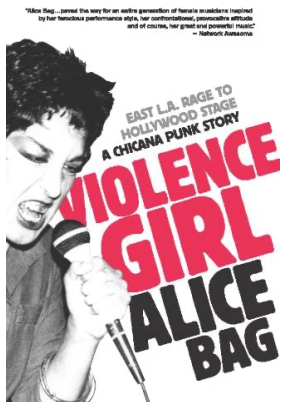
Academic Planning

This is a lower division literature course. You are welcome in this course no matter what your major is or if your major is undeclared. This course satisfies

- the General Education requirement "Ethnicity and Race" or "ER" and / or
- lower-division requirements for the literature major or minor.

Course Description

Our love of popular musical genres shapes our language, communities, aesthetics, and identities. Many of the genres we love are unique products of U.S. American history, society, and culture -- often with deepest roots in working class communities and communities of color. For some Indigenous rockers, queer avant garde composers, Chicana punks, African American blues singers, and Asian American / Pacific Islander rappers musical genre has been a way to navigate racial and ethnic identity, a way to survive historical and personal trauma, a way to process anger and joy, a way to form community. This class uses literature and media as instruments to explore relationships between musical genres and American identities. It is equally interested in surveying music as a subject of literary expression, and underscoring how musical genres have cultivated literary genres.

In this class, you'll survey some quintessential nonfiction forms associated with musical genres, like rock documentaries and autobiographies. You will appreciate how fictional literary genres (poetry, novels, short stories) are vital parts of a tradition linking music with identity. Though you will prioritize literary texts and the study of literature, you will also use literary studies techniques to analyze media, listen critically to playlists, and make observations about your multisensory experiences of music. Many (most) of our authors / artists / texts emerge from a U.S. American social and historical context, but this class is for anyone interested in thinking about musical genre, literature, and identity. No traditional musical skills or knowledge required.

Course Learning Objectives . . . *and Goals*

You will become familiar with some of the defining qualities of some popular musical genres . . . *so that you can identify the relationships between music and literature that you encounter beyond this classroom.*

You will understand how categories of race and ethnicity have been deployed to justify forms of enforced inequality *. . . so that you communicate how creative forms document and resist inequality.*

You will produce course work in a variety of modes, such as by speaking, writing, and creating visuals *. . . in order to build communication skills where needed or identify methods of communicating that are most generative for you.*

You will understand the role popular music plays in the social construction and maintenance of categories of ethnicity and race *. . . so that you can recognize and / or challenge racial and ethnic stereotypes about popular music and musicianship.*

You will explore how ethnicity and race intersect with identity categories (such as gender, class, or sexuality) to shape patterns of human interaction and self-understanding *. . . so that you better understand experiences that may or may not overlap with your own.*

You will explore the roles that cultures of musical genre and ethnicity and / or race play in identity construction *. . . in order to be a more conscious member of communities organized around musical genres and consumers of music.*

You are invited to appreciate the contributions of ethnically and racially defined groups to American popular music culture *. . . so that you become a more conscious consumer of culture.*

Craft your own goal:

[**Something you want to do within the course** *. . . and what you think you will gain or achieve when you do it.*]

Course goals are achieved in different proportions according to individual engagement.

About Morgan

I'm a first generation PhD Candidate. I teach literature classes on listening and music, sound and speculative fiction, writing, research, and rhetoric. My musical tastes have extremes now, but the genres that I called my own include skate punk, third-wave ska, emo, and -- it will become apparent in this class -- any 90s music. *[Image: a meme. Text: Me, waiting for my friends to finish discussing their favorite respectable musical genres. Image description: Grogu, Baby Yoda, looking up innocently. Grogu is wearing a brown robe, a loosely tied black tie, checkered Vans slip-ons, and a black and white fedora.]*

Me, waiting for my friends to finish discussing their favorite respectable music genres:

MG's Course Philosophies

I understand we all live complex lives. I strive to be sensitive to the needs of folks who are differently abled, are undocumented, or are in otherwise precarious situations. I do my best to consider this ahead of time, but I am imperfect and always learning along with you. I invite you to collaborate with me to make useful revisions to the course.

For this course, I gathered materials from diverse communities to explore identity. In nearly all cases, I do not belong to these communities, nor do I claim these identities. I do not speak for these communities. I am eager to engage creative work, words and sounds from within these communities, so that you and I can learn and grow. I do my best to honestly recognize my identity, positionality, and relationship to teaching these materials. I do not claim to be the only one who possesses knowledge, nor do I consider myself a final authority. I believe people from all backgrounds benefit from studying these materials for reasons outlined in "Course Objectives . . . and Goals."

How can I talk with Morgan?

emailing

My preferred mode of communication is my ucsc email: megates@ucsc.edu. Put "LIT 80" in the email subject. Feel free to address me by my first name: Morgan (she / hers). Expect that my response may take 48 hours, perhaps more on weekends or holidays.

Open Hours

Open Hours are times when I am available to discuss anything course-related. Drop in Wednesdays from 1 pm - 2 pm PST. I can also meet by appointment. Email me to set up an alternative Open Hour appointment. Use the Open Hour zoom link on Canvas.

Texts FAQs

What texts do I acquire?

There are TWO required texts that YOU are responsible for acquiring in any edition:

- *Reservation Blues* (1995), Sherman Alexie
- *Violence Girl: East L.A. Rage to Hollywood Stage, a Chicana Punk Story* (2011), Alice Bag

Where can I acquire texts?

Purchase texts wherever and however. The total cost for the above texts is approximately $12.00 - $35.00. Here is a link to the UC bookstore for purchasing: https://ucsc.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php?action=browse#books/3867316/ You may be able to borrow copies of these texts in university or public libraries.

When do I need these texts?

Immediately.

Are there other course texts?

Yes. They are already available on Canvas as Files, as website links, or UCSC Library links (sometimes through Kanopy). Examine the course schedule to explore all course materials or view this LIT 80i Complete Course Materials List.

Content Notifications

Some of the texts we read / view / listen to include subject matter that you may need to avoid to care for yourself. You do not have to read / listen / view anything that may cause you harm. If self care dictates that you need to omit a course text from your plan of study, simply let me know, via email, which text/s. You do not have to tell me why. Then, we will agree upon alternate text/s, and I will provide any further and necessary alternate assignment directions. It is impossible for me to know what will be harmful to you. I have prepared a document that notes potentially useful content notifications for each text. Understand that this is a growing and imperfect document that may not yet speak to certain notification needs. To check in on content notifications before engaging with a text, navigate to [LIT 80i Course Materials + Content Notifications List](#).

Grade Assemblage

After R / V / L Discussion Posts	20%
In-class Activities	30%
Weekly Reflections (5 x 10% each)	50%
Wiggle Points	3% max.

Assignments

After Reading / Viewing / Listening Activities

After Reading / Viewing / Listening Activities are low stakes, prompted responding activities. Expect one assigned and due to Canvas before each class meeting. They are not graded on mechanics or style. They are assessed complete / incomplete or unsatisfactory. Find them on Canvas > Modules or Assignments.

In-class Activities

In-class Activities are low stakes learning activities completed individually and / or with peers. Expect one per class meeting. They are assessed complete / incomplete or unsatisfactory. They typically require some documentation via Canvas.

Weekly Reflections

Each week culminates in the submission of polished Reflection. They are due Sunday nights. They have prompt and submission options to help you target different learning goals. Prompts and Rubrics can be found on Canvas > Modules or Assignments.

Final Exam

There is no Final Exam in this course.

Wiggle Points

Wiggle Points are opportunities to wiggle your grade up 1-3%. They help me assess learning goals in alternative ways. Wiggle Points can be found on Canvas > Modules.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments are submitted to Canvas ONLY. If you encounter an issue uploading a file type to Canvas, reach out and we will get it on Canvas together. Most assignments allow you to submit in writing or by recording. Here is guidance on submission options:

	Audio or Video Recordings	**Writing**
What	Deliver work orally.	Deliver work in writing
Use for	After R / V / L Activities Reflections	After R / V / L Activities Reflections
How	Upload an audio or audio-visual file type. Or record directly in Canvas discussions. Open the discussion. Click the reply button to begin. Click the camera / music note icon. Select record.	After R / V / L Activities can be submitted in the text box or it can be submitted as a file (pdf or docx). Written reflections must be submitted as a formatted file (pdf or docx).
Tips	Work from a prepared **outline**.	Use a familiar style guide (MLA, APA)

What about late work?

All assignments have a due date. There is no penalty for late work. There are reasons for all due dates (ex. scaffolding, assessment workloads, final grade deadlines, etc). There are consequences for not meeting the due dates. Some consequences may impact you (ex. delayed receipt of feedback, grades not up to date, etc). **Reflections and After "Reading" Activities** are flexible. If they are a few minutes late, no worries. If they are a few hours late, no worries. If they are a day late, no worries. If more than a day late, reach out to Morgan via email. All After "Reading" Activities and Reflections are open for submission until 9/1/23. **In-class activities** are a little different. They are meant to be completed within the timeframe of class meetings. Reach out to Morgan via email to discuss issues with timely submission of In-class activities. **For folks with official accommodations**, follow policies and plans we have agreed upon.

What about absence and "make-up" work?

If you miss a class meeting and therefore miss an In-class activity, you may utilize up to three Wiggle Points to compensate for one missed In-class Activity OR, considering extraordinary circumstances, you may be able to recover those points by meeting with me during Open Hours to discuss the missed activity.

Course Guidance FAQs

How does the course work?

There are five weeks of instruction and five units in the course. One unit per week. All course units are found in Canvas > Modules. Each week / unit examines a different musical genre + identity + texts. Each week / unit, Modules guide you to

- read / listen / view assigned course texts
- complete After Reading / Listening / Viewing Activities
- attend class virtually
- engage in In-class activities
- complete a Weekly Reflection
- receive some feedback and growth strategies

How to succeed in LIT 80?

schedule your workload

A 5-unit Summer Session course requires about 20 hours per week devoted to this course. Those hours should look something like this:

- 8 hours per week for reading / viewing / listening course texts
- 7 hours per week to attend class (and engage in-class activities)
- 1-2 hours per week to review materials, make notes, or meet with me
- 1-2 hours per week for After Reading Activities
- 2 hours per week for Weekly Reflection drafting, revision, and proofreading

Below is a suggested plan, which should be customized for your needs. Feel free to copy and paste to adopt or adapt. Move tasks to fit your schedule or designate a specific time frame for each task. Manage time by setting up a schedule. Set alarms.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	S	S
Complete reading / listening / viewing X.1 material (2 hrs)	**Begin reading / listening viewing X.2 material** (2 hrs)	**Complete reading / listening / viewing X.2 material** (2 hrs)		**Begin reading / listening / viewing X.1 material** (2 hrs)		
Review X.1 material (.5 -1 hour)		**Review X.2 material** (.5 -1 hour)				
Complete After reading discussion post X.1 (.5 -1 hour)		**Complete After reading discussion post X.2** (.5 - 1 hour)				
	Attend class (3.5 hrs)		**Attend class** (3.5 hrs)			
			Draft, revise, proof, and submit	**Draft, revise, proof, and submit**		

			Reflection X (1.5 hrs)	Reflection X (1.5 hrs)		

read / listen / view actively

In this class reading / viewing / listening are the most important and foundational actions for success. In this class they are more or less interchangeable terms. In a literature class reading / listening / viewing means more than just passively using your eyes, hands, or ears to consume a text's contents. Reading / listening / viewing involves doing those things WITH a disciplined practice of observing thoughts and feelings, asking questions, examining the little parts of a text that contribute to its meaning (close reading), and drawing connections across texts (textual synthesis). This class is all about how YOU read and interpret the assigned texts.

maintain academic integrity

Academic integrity can be maintained in two key ways within this class. *One* is ensuring to read / view / listen to assigned material. If you are struggling to read / view / listen, please feel empowered to reach out to me and we can strategize. The *second* way academic integrity can be maintained is by taking care to clearly present the words and ideas of others in ways that mark them off from your own language. This includes the words and ideas of your classmates. Writing in this class often requires presenting words and ideas that are not your own in order to support your ideas and words. We honor the work of others by citing them. If you are unsure of how to work with material that is not your own, or if you have questions about collaborating with classmates, or if you have any questions about plagiarism, there are helpful resources, including library resources: https://guides.library.ucsc.edu/writing/cite_sources. You can also speak with me or a writing tutor. Find information about writing tutors below in the "Access Supportive Resources" section of the syllabus. To learn more about plagiarism, you can easily check the University's plagiarism policy: http://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_integrity

monitor your progress

All personal learning goals are valid, but people often have grade-related goals (i.e. to pass the class or to achieve a certain GPA). Grades-in-progress are viewable in Canvas. Note: until an assignment is submitted and assessed, Canvas will not factor that grade into calculations. If you are not progressing through the course in a way that aligns with your grade-related goals, reach out via email or Open Hours.

sustain a learning community

Here are guidelines for sustaining a learning community. We'll discuss texts, topics, and concepts that people sometimes resist or have biases about. To foster learning

- Communicate with respect and courtesy.
- Be prepared to follow up claims with reasoning, evidence, and explanation.
- Be open to making mistakes, not knowing, and asking for clarity.
- Try to learn from other people and perspectives, even if we do not agree with them.
- Critique and analyze ideas and texts, never individuals.
- Share responsibility for including all voices in discussions.
- Share responsibility for staying focused.
- Speak out or up about community guideline breaches.
- If speaking out about breaches is urgent, alert me, and we will practice balancing respectfully calling out with thoughtfully calling in.

If I am (made) aware that there is a breach in community guidelines, expect that I will address the situation, take action, and moderate with a community discussion activity.

access supportive resources

For learning to happen all kinds of needs must be prioritized and met. As a UCSC student you are entitled to access a variety of supportive resources. There are services for basic needs like food, housing, or financial insecurity. Wellness services provide routine medical care and therapeutic support. There are services that protect students from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and

gender-based harassment and discrimination. There are services to support you through experiences of sexual assault, dating, violence and stalking. There are services to help you with learning technologies. There are resources to help you with skill building, especially writing skill development and guidance. There are community resources dedicated to the needs of Native American, queer, Latinx & Chicanx, African American, Asian American & Pacific Islander, and womxn at UCSC. If any of this sounds like what you might need to be successful in this course, find more information here: [LIT 80i UCSC Student Resources](#).

access accommodations with the Disability Resource Center
If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, *it is your right to utilize accommodations*. If you suspect you might be a student with a disability that requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course and you do not yet have a diagnosis, the Disability Resource Center can help you access temporary pre-diagnostic accommodations. Please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me through the recommended system in place at the DRC. Reach out at any time to discuss your letter. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Remote Learning Guidance FAQs

What is the course mode?
The mode of instruction is remote synchronous. Instruction is delivered remotely via zoom during the designated hours (as opposed to in-person and on campus).

3.5 hours on zoom?!
Yes and no. There will be a conscious mix of brief lectures followed by discussions and in-class activities, many to be completed synchronously but off-camera.

What's each meeting like?
The typical 3.5 hour class flow is below. All times are PST (9:00 am → 12:30 pm).

09:00 - 10:00 = Lecture & discussion

10:00 - 10:15 = BREAK

10:15 - 11:15 = lecture / discussion or in-class activity

11:15 - 11:30 = BREAK

11:30 - 12.30 = lecture / discussion or in-class activity

Essential strategies for remote learning

Screen Hygiene

Clear your screen of unnecessary tabs and open applications before we meet. Make accessible Canvas and any other files you may need for the class meeting.

Microphone

As you enter class, zoom will mute you. Using the hand raise + microphone to communicate is the norm for the class. Feel free to remain muted until speaking. Use a headset or earbuds or work in a place where distracting background noise is as minimal as possible. Please reach out about accommodations.

Audio

Be sure that you are able to listen. Use a headset or earbuds. If you don't use earbuds or headphones, ensure you are in a space where you can play audio at a volume that works for you. Take steps to maintain a learning community by minding the auditory privacy of classmates. Please reach out about accommodations.

Camera

As you enter class, zoom may default to camera-off. Camera-ON is the norm once class begins. Camera-ON is strongly encouraged for discussion and activities. [Research](#) shows that camera-on "increases engagement without increasing [zoom] fatigue." [Research](#) also shows that students who are unsure of their abilities in particular learning situations "will benefit from the use of a web camera in synchronous distance learning and will experience higher levels of positive emotions" about their academic

potential. I know I am a more effective instructor when I can see you. Feel free to lift judgment off of yourself and use the camera as a learning tool. Feel free to point your camera away from your face or at the ceiling as needed. Backlight yourself and appear in a dramatic silhouette. Use a virtual background. Use one of those funny zoom features like a silly hat or Zorro mask if it makes you feel more comfortable. Pets are always welcome on camera. Turn cameras off to manage bandwidth, privacy, and distractions. Please reach out about accommodations.

Chat

Chat usage is encouraged as a supplement to the camera and microphone as a learning tool. Use it to ask and answer questions, make observations, and help build community. You can private message me via the chat. I will monitor and highlight the chat to the best of my ability. Check recipient settings before sending a chat out.

Unstable Internet and Crashes

If your presence in the class is disrupted by unstable internet or zoom or browser crashes, do not panic. Troubleshoot. Check / reset your internet connection. Attempt to log back into zoom and / or canvas. If you were in the midst of an In-class activity, do your best to rejoin and complete the activity as best you can OR email me to let me know what happened and, if needed, we can strategize for completion after class.

Land Acknowledgement

The land on which we gather is the unceded territory of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi Tribe. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, comprised of the descendants of indigenous people taken to missions Santa Cruz and San Juan Bautista during Spanish colonization of the Central Coast, is today working hard to restore traditional stewardship practices on these lands and heal from historical trauma.

The land acknowledgement used at UC Santa Cruz was developed in partnership with the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band Chairman and the Amah Mutsun Relearning Program at the UCSC Arboretum. A land acknowledgement is a statement that recognizes the

history and presence of Indigenous peoples and their enduring relationship to their traditional homelands. Land acknowledgements help create awareness of the cultural erasure of Indigenous peoples and the processes of colonization and subjugation that have contributed to that erasure.

Course Schedule

This schedule is organized by week and meeting. Ex. 1.1 = Week One, Meeting One. It communicates topics and assignment flow. Assigned readings by week and day can be found on Canvas > Modules or this detailed checklist-style course schedule handout: [LIT 80i Detailed Course Schedule Checklist](#).

1.1

Topic: writing music, musicianship, and experimental music

Workload: 22 pages of reading, 10 mins. of viewing,

Due Tuesday: In-class Activity 1.1
Due Tuesday: After Reading Activity 1.1

1.2

Topics: writing music, musicianship, and experimental music

Workload: 22 pages of reading, 10 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Thursday: In-class Activity 1.2
Due Thursday: After Reading Activity 1.2
Due Sunday: Experimental Reflection

2.1

Topics: blues poetry, intersectional Black identities, and the blues

Workload: 24 pages of reading, 42 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Tuesday: In-class Activity 2.1
Due Tuesday: After Reading Activity 2.1

2.2

Topics: blues prose and mythology, Black identities, and evolutions in Black music

Workload: 56 pages of reading, 16 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Thursday: In-class Activity 2.2

Due Thursday: After Reading Activity 2.2

Due Sunday: Blues Reflection

3.1

Topics: postmodern novel and epic poem, Indigeneity, and rock and roll

Workload: 70-200 pages of reading, 10 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Tuesday: In-class Activity 3.1

Due Tuesday: After Reading Activity 3.1

3.2

Topic: postmodern novel and rock documentary, Indigeneity, and rock and roll

Workload: 70-200 pages of reading, 1.5 hours of viewing / listening

Due Thursday: In-class Activity 3.2

Due Thursday: After Reading Activity 3.2

Due Sunday: Rock Reflection

4.1

Topics: hybrid genres, Asian / Asian American / Pacific Islander Identities, and hip hop

Workload: 30 pages of reading, 15 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Tuesday: In-class Activity 4.1

Due Tuesday: After Reading Activity 4.1

4.2

Topics: spoken word, Asian / Asian American / Pacific Islander Identities, and hip hop

Workload: 30 pages of reading, 15 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Thursday: In-class Activity 4.2

Due Thursday: After Reading Activity 4.2

Due Sunday: Hip Hop Reflection

5.1

Topics: autobiography and documentary film, Chicanisma, and punk

Workload: 70 pages of reading, 2 hrs 15 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Tuesday: In-class Activity 5.1

Due Tuesday: After Reading Activity 5.1

5.2

Topics: music videos and zines, feminisms, and riot grrrl

Workload: XXXX pages of reading, 2 hrs 15 mins. of viewing / listening

Due Thursday: In-class Activity 3.2

Due Thursday: After Reading Activity 3.2

Due Sunday: Punk Reflection