Syllabus MUS 81A – Survey of Rap and Hip Hop Music – Summer 2018

Basic Course Information:

Music 81A - Survey of Rap and Hip Hop Music
Instructor: James "Ike" Minton
Time: Tuesday & Thursday – 100 P – 430 P   Beginning July 31st, 2018 – Ending
             August 31st, 2018
Room: Music Center 131
Credits: 5 Units
Prerequisites: None
Required Review Sessions: None, Any Review Sessions are Optional and Announced
        at a Later Date
Required Discussion Sessions or Labs: None
Online Course Materials: Distributed through Canvas throughout the Quarter

Information about Instructor and Teaching Assistant(s):

Instructor name: James Minton – please call me "Ike"
Pronouns: he/him/his
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1130-1230 and 6-7
Office Location: Either Music Center 131 or Music Center 154 (Graduate Student Area)
Office Phone: I can be available by phone if necessary and will provide phone number
        accordingly.
Email Address: jiminton@ucsc.edu
Student-Instructor Communication Plan: During the week M-F I'm pretty good about
responding to email inquiries the day I receive them, however, if it is after 10 pm, it
might be the next day until I can respond. On the weekends, I am less available,
sometimes this might mean a next day response.

Teaching Assistant: Madison Heying
Pronouns: she/her/hers
Office Hours: By appointment
Office Location: DARC 334
Email Address: mheying@ucsc.edu

Course Materials, Description, and Learning Outcomes:

Brief list of reading materials:

- Available on Canvas as PDF –

- Cube, Ice, and Angela Y. Davis. "Nappy happy." *Transition* 58 (1992): 174-192.

- Neal, Mark Anthony. *That's the joint!: the hip-hop studies reader*. Psychology Press, 2004.

- Rose, Tricia. "Orality and technology: Rap music and Afro-American cultural resistance." *Popular Music & Society* 13, no. 4 (1989): 35-44.

Optional Reading - available on reserve at McHenry Library, physical copies and online copies

- *Rose, Tricia. *Black noise: Rap music and black culture in contemporary America*. Vol. 6. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1994.

Videos / films for in-class discussion and extra credit available on Kanopy through McHenry Library, Reserve Desk in McHenry Media Center, or Netflix:

- Ahearn, Charlie, F. Braithwaite, and J. Dickson. *Wild Style*. New York: First Run Features 1982.

- Lee, Spike. *Bamboozled.* Roadshow Entertainment, 2001.

- Perez, Rene. *Residente.* Paraiso Pictures. Story House Entertainment, 2017.

- Riggs, Marlon. *Black is... black ain't: a personal journey through black identity*. California Newsreel, 1995.

- Sandler, Kathe, and Luke Charles Harris. *A question of color*. California Newsreel, 2006.

YouTube channel for: Mus81a – google search or "you tube mus81a ucsc" –static URL also available through Canvas or email.

Potential Songs for Focused Class Discussion:

Grand Master Flash & the Furious Five	"The Message"
Childish Gambino	"This is America"
Joyner Lucas	"I'm not Racist"
BROCKHAMPTON	"Junky"
Dumbfoundead	"Safe"
Kendrick Lamar	"Humble" "Fuck Your Ethnicity"
Logic	"1-800-273-8255"
Snow tha Product, K'naan, Riz MC, Residente	"Immigrants (We Get the Job Done)"
Calle 13	"Latinoamerica"
Bohemia	"Punjabi Rap Star"
Cazwell and Peppermint	"Blend"
A Tribe Called Quest	"Space Program"
Post Malone	"White Iverson"
Macklemore	"Same Love"
Queen Latifah	"U.N.I.T.Y."
Nicki Minaj	"Anaconda"
Lauryn Hill	"Doo Wop (That Thing)"
Deen Squad	"Muslim Man"

Other Websites and resources to consider –
> Genius.com – for song lyrics, videos, and annotations – many times, by the
> artists themselves
> WhoSampled.com – for finding samples from past songs

Course Description: This course involves examination, evaluation, performance, and discussion of rap music and its relation to hip hop culture. We will look at three primary areas: historical periods of rap, aspects of performance practice, and lyrical content related to issues in contemporary society. We will engage in listening exercises, performances and presentations, and discuss the placement of rap in an academic setting. No prior musical knowledge is required. The organization of this course during the first half is to provide a historical context for rap and hip hop music. During the second half of the course, we will survey different social communities and artists from these communities involved in the production of rap and hip hop music while discussing contemporary issues surrounding rap and hip hop at various social levels.

Learning Outcomes – This course aims to critically challenge students in three primary ways: 1) describe some of the historical narratives associated with lyrical content in rap music and how they manifest in contemporary practice 2) identify aesthetic qualities of certain styles (historical and contemporary) of rap and hip hop 3) describe through the written word (or project) how to engage dialogue and discussion surrounding rap and hip hop music through your own perspectives and other author's perspectives.

Course Policies and Expectations for Student Responsibilities:

Grading Scale: The final letter grades for courses at UCSC are A (excellent), B (good), C (fair), D (poor), F (fail). The grades of A , B, C, and D may be modified by a plus (+) or minus (-).

You will not earn any credit toward graduation for a course in which you receive a final grade of F. Courses in which you receive a grade of C-, D+, D, or D- earn credit toward graduation, but cannot be used to satisfy a major requirement or a general education requirement, and cannot satisfy a prerequisite for another course. The courses in which you receive final letter grades (and only those) are used to calculate your grade point average (GPA). See the section on Grade Point Averages for details.

There are a few courses that are offered only for Pass/No Pass grading. This limitation is noted in the Schedule of Classes and the UCSC General Catalog. The final grades in these courses are not used in calculating your GPA.

Graded Course Requirements: The final grade will be based on 3 primary factors:
1) 2 tests - a midterm (30%) and a final (30%)
2) 1 Written Assignment – Song / Work Review – These are written responses to selected reading material or song examples (30%)
3) Attendance and Participation (10%)

Potential Extra Credit
Students can turn in a review of any or all of the films listed above for a total of two points per film review added to their final grade. Maximum possible points for all film reviews is 10 points.

Policy on attendance and tardiness –
Regular attendance is expected and is part of your overall grade. A check-in question will be asked at the beginning of class and turned in. Attendance will be recorded from this question by the TA or instructor during the class period. Students must stay for the entire class period in order to receive full attendance credit for that class period. At the end of the class period check-in questions will be handed back. Those who do not collect their quiz at the end of the class will not get credit for the period. There are no make ups for in class quizzes due to absence or tardiness.

Policy on missed or late exams and assignments –
Attendance for exams and turning assignments in on time is expected. Things and situations, however, can come up. If you know of any conflicts ahead of time, please notify the instructor and we can potentially arrange an alternative resolution without penalty. For any late work submitted, there is a sliding scale. For the first two days there is an overall 5% reduction of the total score. After the first two days, your grade will be reduced by a single letter grade for each day late.

Academic Misconduct Policy for Undergraduates – this is especially relevant to this course because one of your major assignments is a writing assignment.

The cornerstone of intellectual life at UC Santa Cruz is a commitment to integrity in all forms of teaching, learning, and research. Misconduct violates the standards of our community and is punishable by warning, suspension, dismissal, or revocation of degree.

This document states campus policy concerning academic misconduct by undergraduates and describes the process that will be followed once an instructor or teaching assistant suspects that misconduct has occurred. All students who are charged with misconduct will be invited to discuss the matter with their instructors and with the provosts of the colleges with which they are affiliated. They are also entitled to bring their cases to the Academic Tribunal. Each of these stages of the process is described below.

In cases of academic misconduct, the instructor of record has sole discretion to determine *academic sanctions* (e.g., grade for the work in question, the student's final grade for the course). College provosts, Academic Tribunals, and the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE) share discretion for determining *disciplinary sanctions* (including warning, suspension, dismissal, and revocation of degree).

Both students and faculty bear responsibility for preventing academic misconduct. Students are responsible for becoming familiar with Sections 102.01–102.016 and 105.15 of the *UC Santa Cruz Student Policies and Regulations Handbook*. These sections include a listing of the many types of academic misconduct covered by this policy. Students need to avoid academic misconduct themselves and are enjoined to report any cases of academic misconduct that are known to them. Students making such reports may maintain anonymity. Instructors should clearly explain the University's academic misconduct policy in the context of their courses and specify the academic sanction for misconduct (e.g., no credit for the work in question, failing grade for the course). Failure to include this information in the course syllabus, however, does not excuse students from knowing and being accountable for adherence to the precepts of academic honesty and the policy of the University.

ADA Compliance:

UC policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Students, academic and staff employees, and members of the public who believe they have been denied access or discriminated against due to their disability are encouraged to bring their concerns to the attention of the appropriate party who will make every attempt to address the issues raised and/or will refer the matter for investigation per campus policies and procedures. Please use the links on the left for more information. UC policy also prohibits retaliation against those requesting disability accommodations and those raising issues and concerns regarding possible disability discrimination or failure to accommodate.

More Course Resources:

Policy on Classroom Decorum and Academic Discourse: UCSC Principles of Community

More Campus Resources:

UCSC Resource Center: https://resourcecenters.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Title IX Office: https://titleix.ucsc.edu/

UCSC CARE Office (Campus Advocacy Resources and Education): https://care.ucsc.edu/

UCSC CAPS Office (Counseling and Psychological Services) : https://caps.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Disability Resource Center: https://drc.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Learning Support Services: https://lss.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Educational Opportunity Programs: https://eop.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Office of Emergency Services: https://oes.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: https://diversity.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Lionel Cantú Queer Center: https://queer.ucsc.edu/

UCSC STARS: https://stars.ucsc.edu/

UCSC Financial Aid: https://financialaid.ucsc.edu/

UCSC SOAR: http://soar.ucsc.edu/v2/

UCSC Student Health Center: https://healthcenter.ucsc.edu/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

<u>Offensive Material Warning</u> –

Students should be told upfront that this class will engage in lyric material, imagery, and subject matter that some consider, racist, obscene, profane, sexist, misogynistic, homophobic, and offensive. There will not be an attempt to censor material as it is the instructor's belief that while the body of work that is rap includes these things it is not limited to them. This class is not intended to offend anyone but rather to engage the material as the creators intended – uncensored.

<u>Perception, Context, and the Nature of Obscene, Profane, Offensive -</u>

Rap and hip-hop music directly confront topics that include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Depending on the listener's familiarity with the context of a rapper's delivery, style, and thematic material there are a wide range of affects and effects that can be associated with what the listener is hearing. Topics, lyrics, artists, and even the entire genre of rap and hip hop have sometimes been labeled as derogatory, inflammatory, racist, misogynistic, sexist, homophobic, obscene, profane, offensive, and even immoral.

To many rap and hip-hop practitioners and audiences, these themes and styles of delivery are nothing new; they are part of an aesthetic and a tradition that precedes them. As rap and hip hop continue to gain popularity in contemporary society, many audiences are unfamiliar with its thematic, stylistic, and aesthetic origins. Artists, and many times the entirety of an art form, are judged on a different set of aesthetics than those used by its practitioners to create the art, its content, and learn traditional approaches to aesthetics within the art form. Thus, it is no surprise that some of the aforementioned labels have emerged to describe the themes and content in rap and hip hop as well as its style of delivery. Notwithstanding this arguably misaligned aesthetic judgement, at times some of these labels can be accurate. One of the goals of this course is to challenge students to be aware of different sets of aesthetic criteria, particularly in art, and the epistemological constructs from where these criteria may emerge.