

Music 80P Popular Music in the United States

Overview

Instructor

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Teaching Assistants

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Course Meeting Times

Tuesday and Thursday from 1:00 to 4:00

Course Description

This course is a survey of popular music in the United States from the beginnings of mass media in the 19th century to today. Throughout this course we'll ask what is popular music at different historical moments for different social groups? How can we situate music in specific historical contexts and how has material and social history informed popular music practices? How does popular music shape and become shaped by fluid notions of race, gender, and class? How have changes in technology and the music industry affected the ways we interact with music? How can we develop a vocabulary to discuss popular music and its aesthetics?

Course Objects

1. Identify key figures, events, and musical features in the history of popular music of the United States
2. Situate popular music in historical context
3. Develop a technical vocabulary for writing about pieces of music.
4. Discuss different aesthetic criteria for how music is evaluated.
5. Use secondary and primary sources to construct an original argument about popular music in the United States.

Course Structure

This course will be conducted synchronously. We will meet through Zoom each week on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00PM to 4:30PM PST** starting on **July 27th**. We will likely not use the entire three and a half hours allotted for the course and we will take regular breaks. The lectures will be recorded and posted on Canvas ASAP and you will NOT be graded on attendance, but I encourage you to attend live lectures as often as you are able.

This course is divided into 5 modules (1 per week) which you can view by clicking on the "Modules" tab in Canvas. In each module I'll post recordings of lectures, readings, quizzes, and assignments (see below for more detail about each of these). New modules will open at 1:00PM PST on Tuesdays of each week starting on 7/26. Readings for the following week will be posted in advance so you have adequate time to read them before lecture.

Lectures

Starting on **July 27th** I'll present live virtual lectures on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00PM to 4:30PM PST**. **The last two lectures of the course will be held from 1:00 to 4:30 PM PST on Monday August 23rd and Wednesday August 25th**. In addition to discussing the material and social history of popular music we'll also listen to a number of musical examples and analyze them as a class. Throughout lectures I'll pose questions to the class and try to answer questions by monitoring the chat feature on Zoom. The lecture will last no more than two hours (including at least one break). After the lecture has concluded, we'll take a short break and reconvene to discuss the assigned reading for no more than one hour. We won't be grading for attendance, however, listening to and participating in class lectures will be extremely helpful in completing your assignments. Weekly quizzes and assignments will all draw on material from lectures and they'll help you prepare for your final paper and reading responses. Lectures and reading discussions will be recorded and posted to Canvas ASAP.

How To Access Lectures

When you log onto Canvas and access this class, you should see a "Zoom" icon on the left. To attend lectures for the class, click on the Zoom section, find the date of our lecture, and click "Join."

Readings

There are no textbooks you have to buy for this class. All of the readings will be posted as PDFs in each module. A breakdown of the readings by class will be available in this syllabus once I've finalized them. There will be one reading per class (two per week) for a total of ten. To get the most out of this class I encourage you to read as much of the assigned material as possible and to attend the reading discussion portion of the

lectures. That being said, **you are only required to respond to 2 of the assigned readings.**

Assignments

Weekly Quizzes

Each week on Tuesday I will post a quiz on Canvas asking multiple choice questions that draw on material from the week's lectures. I will be fairly obvious about what will be included in the quizzes during lecture. Quizzes are open book and are due before the following Tuesday. You will only be able to take each quiz once, so be sure to allot some time before opening the quizzes on Canvas. We'll go over quiz answers on Tuesdays so there won't be an opportunity to make them up (but there will be extra credit opportunities).

Weekly Listening Responses

Each week you'll write a response to one of the pieces of music discussed in class (a list of songs will be included in each module). You may choose any of the songs listed in the module. Responses should be between 150 and 250 words long and should:

- Briefly provide some context for the music. Who wrote it/performed it? When and why? What are some notable musical features? For this section you can use information discussed in lecture.
- Discuss your personal reaction to the piece. Are there certain musical features or points in the song that stand out to you (e.g. "I liked how the drummer responded to the saxophonist at 1:34")? Did you like it? Why or why not? What do you feel was being communicated musically?

What we'll be looking for when grading is 1) terms and information from lectures and 2) evidence that you listened to the piece closely. Your assigned TA will leave brief comments explaining your grade and how you can improve your future responses. A sample response and grading rubric will be available in Canvas. Your listening responses are due before the beginning of the next module (1 PM on Tuesdays). Note that your **final listening response will be due on Friday August 27th instead of Monday.**

Reading Responses

You will have the chance to dive deeper into specific aspects of American popular music by writing responses for two of the assigned readings (roughly 300 words a piece).

Each reading response will have a unique prompt that I recommend looking at before starting the reading. You can submit reading responses on Canvas anytime before **Friday 8/27**, though I recommend that you submit them earlier so that you can focus on your research paper. I also encourage you to attend the lectures that correspond to the readings you're interested in so that you can ask questions and discuss them with me and other students.

Research Paper

You will have the opportunity to engage course material with your own critical insights by writing a 1,000-1,250 word (about 4-5 pages double spaced) paper on a class-related topic of your choice due no later than **Friday 8/27**. Topics can include but are not limited to an artist, an album, a song, a musical period, or a record label. Sample paper topics will be available on Canvas which you are free to use if you wish. You can also listen to tracks from all the lectures in the course using the [Master Listening List](#) for inspiration. In the paper I ask that you do three things:

- 1) Make an argument and critically engage with your topic. We won't be grading on whether or not you got it "right," but on your ability to draw on course material and your own research to synthesize a persuasive original argument.
- 2) Include in your paper at least one musical example. Try to describe what's happening, and to relate it to your larger topic..
- 3) Include at least two written primary sources and two secondary sources and discuss them (you can use the readings from class as secondary sources). The primary source could be a review, an article, an interview, or album liner notes. The secondary source could be an article from an academic journal, an essay from an anthology, or a book (a chapter or excerpt from a book works too). I will discuss primary and secondary sources in more detail in class and a list of resources will be available in Canvas.

A more detailed grading rubric will also be provided in Canvas. If you need help in selecting a paper topic, please feel free to email myself or your assigned TA.

Paper Proposal

To prepare for your paper, you'll submit a written proposal for your paper by **Tuesday August 17th**. The proposal should include a description of your topic and the themes and questions you'll be investigating (approximately 200 words) . It should also include citations for two primary sources and two secondary sources. Citations should be in the [Chicago style format](#).

Late Policy

There will not be an opportunity to make up weekly quizzes. For your weekly listening responses, reading responses, paper proposal, and research paper we will deduct 10% of your grade for each day late. If you submit your paper more than 4 days late, you will still be able to receive a 60% on assignments.

Grading Breakdown

Weekly Quizzes = 20%

Weekly Listening Responses = 20%

2 Reading Responses = 20%

Paper Proposal = 10%

Research Paper = 30%

Extra Credit Assignments

Additional Reading Responses

You may submit one or two additional reading responses on top of the two required. Each additional response is worth 5% extra credit towards your overall grade.

In-Class Presentation

You can give a 10-15 minute in-class presentation on a course-related topic of your choosing for 10% extra credit towards your overall grade. Your presentation should include a script (roughly 800-1,000 words), relevant images/videos, and at least one analysis of a piece of music. If you are interested in giving a presentation please email me a proposal and your TA and I will work with you on scheduling and developing your topic.

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week/Module 1

Tuesday 7/27

Lecture: Class Overview, What is Popular Music?, U.S. Popular Music in the 19th Century

Thursday 7/29

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music from the 1900s to the 1940s

Week/Module 2

Tuesday 8/3

Week 1 Listening Response and Quiz due before class

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music from the 1940s to the 1960

Thursday 8/5

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music in the 1960s

Week/Module 3

Tuesday 8/10

Week 2 Listening Response and Quiz due before class

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music in the 1970s

Thursday 8/12

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music in the 1980s

Week/Module 4

Tuesday 8/17

Week 3 Listening Response and Quiz due before class

Paper Proposal due before class

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music in the 1990s

Thursday 8/19

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music in the 2000s

Week/Module 5

Monday 8/23

Lecture: U.S. Popular Music in the 2010s

Tuesday 8/24

Week 4 Listening Response and Quiz due before 1 PM PST

Wednesday 8/25

Lecture: Reflections and U.S. Popular Music Today

Friday 8/27

Research Paper and Reading Responses due before midnight.

Important Summer Session Remote 2021 Deadlines:

Session 1:

Drop: Monday, June 28 (tuition reversal)

[Request for "W"](#): Friday, July 9 (NO tuition reversed)

Session 2:

Drop: Monday, August 2 (tuition reversal)

[Request for "W"](#): Friday, August 13 (NO tuition reversed)

8-Week:

Drop: Monday, July 5 (tuition reversal)

[Request for "W"](#): Friday, July 23 (NO tuition reversed)

10-Week:

Drop: Monday, July 5 (tuition reversal)

[Request for "W"](#): Friday, July 23 (NO tuition reversed)

Summer is unique. **You will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment.**

You

must drop yourself. Dropping before the deadline results in a full-tuition reversal/refund.

Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund). You cannot

withdraw from a course in your portal, you must fill out the [DocuSign form](#) on the summer website.

For all dates and deadlines, including 'change of grade option' (P/NP) and grades due, here is the summer academic calendar: <https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html>

For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email summer@ucsc.edu.

DRC Remote Accommodations:

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more

about DRC services to contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Small Group Tutoring

Small Group Tutoring (SGT) supports students academically to advance educational equity by designing inclusive learning environments outside of the classroom. In SGT, you can expect the Tutor to facilitate cooperative group activities designed to have students work together on the course content and develop study skills for the course. SGT is offered at least three times each week for the entire quarter. The Tutor is an undergraduate student who took the class, did well, and is trained to facilitate group sessions to focus on students' needs to succeed in the course. SGT is open to all students enrolled in the class and they must sign up on our online system: TutorTrac. When students sign up for SGT, they are committing to attend every week.

Details at: <https://lss.ucsc.edu/index.html>

Title IX:

The [Title IX Office](#) is committed to fostering a campus climate in which members of our community are protected from all forms of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment and discrimination. Title IX is a neutral office committed to safety, fairness, trauma-informed practices, and due process.

The Title IX Office is working remotely and is conducting meetings and interviews via zoom and phone. If you want to make a report or request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using their [online reporting link](#). For questions about making a report, your reporting responsibilities, and/or questions about the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#) call 831-459-2462.