

Course Syllabus

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Music 80P Popular Music in the United States

Overview

Instructor

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Teaching Assistants

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Course Meeting Times

Monday and Wednesdays from 1:00 to 4:30 from 7/25 to 8/24.

*Our last meeting, Wednesday 8/24, will be rescheduled. A recording will be posted by 1pm on Wednesday 8/24.

Office Hours

Myself and your TAs will hold office ours by appointment. If you'd like to set up a time to meet via Zoom please get in touch with your assigned TA through email/canvas messenger or myself through email.

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.w How can we situate music in specific historical contexts and how has material and social history informed popular music practices? How does popular music both 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 Objectives

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 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 **Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:00PM to 4:30PM PST** starting on **July 25th**. I may not always use the entire three and a half hours allotted for lectures 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 will post recordings of lectures, readings, quizzes, and assignments (see below for more detail about each of these). New modules will be available no later than 1:00PM PST on Mondays of each week. Readings for the following week will be posted in advance so you have adequate time to read them before lecture.

Lectures

Starting on **July 25th** I'll present live virtual lectures on **Mondays and Tuesdays from 1:00PM to 4:30PM PST**. **The last lecture of this class, Wednesday 8/24, will be rescheduled to an earlier date/time**. 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 will pose questions to the class and try to answer questions by monitoring the chat feature on Zoom. 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 other assignments will all draw on material from lectures and attending lecture will help you prepare for your final paper and reading responses. Lectures 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." Recordings of past lectures can be found by clicking on "Modules" from the menu on the left side of the screen and scrolling to the appropriate module (lectures from the first week will be in Module 1, etc).

Readings

There are no textbooks you have to buy for this class. The two textbooks cited below have been invaluable in structuring my lectures for this course and you may purchase them if you'd like to supplement your comprehension of lecture materials.

Garofalo, Reebee and Waksman, Steven. *Rockin' Out: Popular Music in the U.S.A.* 6th Edition. New York: Pearson. 2017.

Starr, Larry and Waterman, Christian. *American Popular Music: From Minstrelsy to MP3.* 5th Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2018.

All of the readings will be posted as PDFs in each module. A breakdown of the readings by class is available below. 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 Monday 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 (lecture slides with quiz info are marked with red pencils). Quizzes are open book and are due before class (1pm) on the following Monday. 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 submit quizzes late or make them up** (but there will be extra credit opportunities, see below).

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 Mondays).

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. Each reading response will have a unique prompt that I recommend looking at before you start the reading. **Your first reading response is due on Monday 8/8 by 1:00 PM.** For your first response, please select one of the first five reading prompts. **Your second reading response is due on Monday 8/22 by 1:00PM.** For your second response, please pick one of the latter five readings assigned in the class. Of course you are welcome to submit both responses earlier if you wish. I encourage you to attend the lectures that correspond to the readings you're interested in so that you may 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 8/26.** 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. 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. A primary source is something and directly-related to your topic such as a newspaper or magazine article/review from the era of your topic, an interview with an artist, an autobiography, album liner notes, etc. A secondary source is something that analyzes, assesses, or interprets your topic, usually from an outside vantage point. Your secondary source could be an article from an academic journal, an essay from an anthology,

or a book (a chapter or except from a book works too). [Click here](#) [Links to an external site.](#) for more information on the difference between primary and secondary sources. I will discuss primary and secondary sources in more detail in class and a list of resources will be available on Canvas.

A more detailed grading rubric and template for your paper is available in the [assignment description](#). 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 **Monday August 15th**. The proposal should include an abstract (approximately 200 words) with a clear thesis statement, a short description of your topic, and how you plan to advance your argument. To flag your thesis statement, please start it with, "In this paper I argue..." Your proposal should also include citations for two primary

sources and two secondary sources. [Click here](#) [Links to an external site.](#) for more on the distinction between primary and secondary sources.

Citations should be in the [Chicago style format](#) [Links to an external site.](#)

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 beyond the two that are 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

Monday 7/25

Lecture - Introduction and Pre 20th Century American Music: Syllabus, What is Popular Music, The Early Sheet Music Industry, Blackface Minstrelsy

Reading: Lott, Eric. "Love and Theft: The Racial Unconscious of Blackface Minstrelsy." *Representations*, No. 39 (Summer 1992): pp. 23-50

Wednesday 7/27

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music from the 1900s to the 1940s: Records, Radio, ASCAP, BMI, Tin Pan Alley, Race Records, Hillbilly Records.

Reading: Reading: Davis, Angela. "I Used to Be Your Sweet Mama: Ideology, Sexuality, and Domesticity in the Blues of Gertrude 'Ma' Rainey

and Bessie Smith." In *Sexy Bodies: The Strange Carnalities of Feminism*, Edited by Elizabeth Grosz and Elspeth Probyn. New York: Routledge, 1995, pp. 231-265

Assignments: Listening Response 1 and Quiz 1 due before 1:00pm on Monday 8/1

Week/Module 2

Monday 8/1

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music from the 1940s to the 1960s: The AFM Recording Ban, R&B and C&W, Rock 'n' Roll and The Decentralization of the Music Industry

Reading: Roberts, Michael James. "Solidarity Forever? The Musicians Union Responds to Records and Radio." In *Tell Tchaikovsky the News: Rock 'n' Roll, the Labor Question, and the Musicians' Union, 1942-1968*, pp. 19-40. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014

Wednesday 8/3

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music in the 1960s: The Brill Building, Motown and Stax, British Invasion, Folk Rock, The Counterculture, Music Festivals (Monterey Pop, Woodstock, The Altamont

Reading: Lipsitz, George. "Cruising around the Historical Bloc: Postmodernism and Popular Music in East Los Angeles." *Cultural Critique*, No.5 (Winter 1986-1987), pp. 157-177.

Assignments: Reading Response 1 and Quiz 2 due before 1:00pm on Monday 8/8

Week/Module 3

Monday 8/8

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music in the 1970s: The Fragmentation of Pop, Album-Oriented Rock, Art Rock, Heavy Metal, Glam, Country Rock, Soft Rock, Punk Rock, New Wave, Progressive Country, Reggae, Salsa, Funk, Disco, Women's Music, and Early Hip Hop

Reading: Friedman, Ted. "Making It Funky: The Signifyin(g) Politics of George Clinton's Parliafunkadelicment Thing." Unpublished manuscript, March 1 2005.

Wednesday 8/10

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music in the 1980s: MTV, The Rise of the Superstar, Mega-Events, Charity Rock, The Internationalization of the Music Industry, World Beat, Appropriation, Hip-Hop, Heavy Metal, and Censorship

Reading: Hamm, Charles. "Graceland Revisited." *Popular Music* Vol. 8, No.3 (October 1989), pp. 299-304

And

Feld, Steven. "Notes on World Beat." *Public Culture* Vol. 1, No.1 (1988), pp. 31-37

Assignments: Research Paper Proposal, Listening Response 2, and Quiz 3 due before 1:00pm on Monday 8/15

Week/Module 4

Monday 8/15

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music in the 1990s: Gangsta Rap and Censorship, Techno, Alternative, Latin Pop, Mainstreaming the Counterculture, MP3s, Corporate Radio

Reading: Gates Jr., Henry Louis. "2 Live Crew Decoded." *New York Times*. June 19, 1990.

And

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Beyond Racism and Misogyny: Black Feminism and 2 Live Crew." In *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*, Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers. New York: Routledge, pp. 246-263

Wednesday 8/17

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music in the 2000s: Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga, Beyonce, The Post-Napster Music Industry, The Post 9/11 Politics of Popular Music

Reading: Fox, Aaron A. "'Alternative' to What? O Brother, September 11, and the Politics of Country Music." In *Country Music Goes to War*, Edited by Charles K. Wolfe and James E. Akenson. University of Kentucky Press, 2005, pp. 164-191

Assignments: Reading Response 2 and Quiz 4 due before 1:00pm on Monday 8/22

Week/Module 5

Monday 8/22

Lecture - U.S. Popular Music in the 2010s: Music Streaming, Latin Trap, EDM, DJs as Stars, Multimedia Stardom, Globalization, and the Future of Popular Music

Reading: Yong, Jin Dal. "The Critical Discourse of K-Pop within Globalization." In *New Korean Wave: Transnational Cultural Power in the Age of Social Media*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2016, pp. 111-130.

Wednesday 8/24 *Rescheduled Date TBA*

Lecture - Reflections and Contemporary Issues in Popular Music: Spotify, Sampling, Labor, Copyright, The "Loudness Wars," and Critiques of the Culture Industry

Assignments: Final Research Paper due by Friday 8/26 before midnight. Listening Response 3 and Quiz 5 due on before 1:00pm on Monday 8/29.

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> [Links to an external site.](#)

Title IX:

The [Title IX Office](#) [Links to an external site.](#) 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.](#) [Links to an external site.](#) For questions about making a report, your reporting responsibilities, and/or questions about the [UC Policy on](#)

[Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#)
831-459-2462.

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