

American Popular Music: Course Syllabus

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Textbook

American Popular Music: From Minstrelsy to MP3, Larry Starr and Christopher Waterman.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course; however, students lacking a basic knowledge and understanding of music fundamentals are encouraged to attend office hours for additional help.

Course Description

This course is intended to help you think creatively and critically about popular music. We will study the most significant styles of American music in chronological order, beginning with the roots and continuing through the present day. We will explore several recurring themes throughout the course:

- The interaction of European American, African American, and Latin American traditions
- The influence of mass media and technology (printing, recording, radio, video, Internet)
- The role of popular music as a symbol of identity (race, class, gender, generation)

Goals

The course will enhance your enjoyment and understanding of the music you already know, as well as introduce you to less familiar styles and genres. You will develop critical listening skills and become more informed consumers of popular music.

Learning Methods

- Classroom lectures and discussions
- Recordings—listening and analysis, film and video examples, demonstrations
- Textbook readings and listening assignments

- Pop Song Analysis Paper and Presentation—live stream presentation of a popular song and written analysis paper
- Web site—announcements, course material, links, suggested reading

Exams

There will be announced exams and take home quizzes during each quarter. Exam questions will include material taken from lectures/discussions, reading/listening assignments, and videos shown in class. The exams will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. The listening ID examples will be taken from the songs that accompany the textbook and from the recordings online. Only illness and technical issues are acceptable excuses for missing an exam and must be confirmed with written documentation. Be sure to bring a charging cable and headphones to each class.

Course Requirements

Reading/Listening. Each week, you will need to complete reading and listening assignments before coming to class. The classroom lectures and discussions are designed to reinforce the reading and listening assignments, not replace them. Be prepared.

Videos. These videos will help reinforce the material covered in lectures and readings.

Pop Song Analysis Paper and Presentation You will be required to complete a pop song analysis paper and write a 2- to 3-page typed review of a song of your choice. Along with the paper, each student will be required to present their song in class. The paper/presentation can be any style or genre of **popular** music that relates to the material covered in this class. Your song must be appropriate and must be approved by the class instructor.

Grading Procedures

Grades will be comprised of the following:

Exam 20%

Quiz 20%

Pop Song Analysis 20%

Pop Soong Presentation 20%

Participation 20%

93 = A	80 = B-	67 = D+
90 = A-	77 = C+	63 = D
87 = B+	73 = C	60 = D-
83 = B	70 = C-	0–59 = F

Course Policies

Attendance. Although perfect attendance does not guarantee an A in this course, it is essential that you attend every class. You are required to know all the material presented during lectures and discussions, including information about course policies and procedures.

Exams. Only illness and technical issues are acceptable excuses for missing an exam and must be confirmed with written documentation.

Dishonesty. Penalties for cheating in this class can include an F for the exam, assignment, or final grade.

Academic integrity is expected of all individuals in academe. Behavior beyond reproach must be the norm. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism.

Definitions

“Cheating” is using or attempting to use materials, information, or study aids that are not permitted by the instructor in examinations or other academic work. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

Obtaining, providing, or using unauthorized materials for an examination or assignment, whether verbally, visually, electronically, or by notes, books, or other means.

Acquiring examinations or other course materials, possessing them, or providing them to others without permission of the instructor. This includes providing any information about an examination in advance of the examination.

Taking an examination for another person or arranging for someone else to take an examination in one's place.

Submitting the same work or substantial portions of the same work in two different classes without prior approval of the instructor

Fabricating information for any report or other academic exercise without permission of the instructor.

“Plagiarism” is representing another person's words, ideas, data, or work as one's own.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the exact duplication of another's work and the incorporation of a substantial or essential portion thereof without appropriate citation. Other examples of plagiarism are the acts of appropriating creative works or substantial portions thereof in such fields as art, music, and technology and presenting them as one's own.

The guiding principle is that all work submitted must properly credit sources of information. In written work, direct quotations, statements that are paraphrased, summaries of the work of another, and other information that is not considered common knowledge must be cited or acknowledged. Quotation marks or a proper form of identification shall be used to indicate direct quotations.

As long as a student adequately acknowledges sources of information, plagiarism is not present. However, students should be aware that most instructors require certain forms of acknowledgment or references and may evaluate a project on the basis of form, penalizing the student in the grade assigned if citation of sources is improper.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments (This Schedule is subject to Change)

Week 1-2:	<u>Themes and Streams of American Popular Music</u>	<u>Chapter 1</u>
	1. Themes and Streams of Popular Music	pp. 1–10
	2. Streams of Tradition: European and African American Streams	pp. 10–15
	3. Streams of Tradition: Latin American Stream	pp. 15–17
Week 3-4:	<u>Popular Music of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries</u>	<u>Chapter 2</u>
	4. Minstrel Show; Stephen Foster	pp. 18–25
	5. Dance Music; Brass Bands; Birth of Tin Pan Alley	pp. 26–33
	6. The Ragtime Craze; the Phonograph	pp. 33–40
Week 5-6:	<u>Social Dance and Jazz, 1917–1935; Tin Pan Alley's Golden Age</u>	<u>Chapters 3–4</u>
	7. Technology and the Music Business; Dance Music	pp. 41–52
	8. The Jazz Craze	pp. 52–63
	9. The Golden Age of Tin Pan Alley Song	pp. 64–85
Week 7-8:	<u>Race Records and The Blues</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
	10. Exam #1	
	11. Race Records; Classic Blues; Bessie Smith; W. C. Handy	pp. 86–99
	12. Charley Patton; Blind Lemon Jefferson; Robert Johnson	pp. 99–108
Week 9-10:	<u>Early Country Music</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
	13. Early Country Music and Hillbilly Records	pp. 109–111
	14. Pioneers of Country Music: Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers	pp. 111–117
	15. Popular Music and the Great Depression	pp. 117–119
Week 11-12:	<u>The Swing Era, 1935–1945</u>	<u>Chapter 6</u>
	16. Swing Music and American Culture	pp. 120–134

	17.	Big Bands: Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Glenn Miller	pp. 135–141
	18.	Country Music in the Swing Era	pp.142–151
Week 13-14:		<u>The Postwar Era, 1946–1954</u>	<u>Chapter 7</u>
	19.	Popular Music and Technology; the Big Singers; Urban Folk	pp. 152–166
	20.	Southern Music; Rhythm & Blues	pp. 166–182
	21.	Country and Western Music	pp. 182–194
Week 15-16:		<u>Rock 'n' Roll, 1954–1959</u>	<u>Chapter 8</u>
	22.	Exam #2	
	23.	Covers, Early Rock 'n' Roll, and the Rock 'n' Roll Business	pp. 195–217
	24.	Early Rock 'n' Roll Stars: Country Side and R&B Side	pp. 217–229
Week 17-18:		<u>Rock 'n' Roll and American Pop: The 1960s</u>	<u>Chapters 8-9</u>
	25.	Women, Songwriters, and Producers of Early Rock 'n' Roll	pp. 229–235
	26.	Early 1960s: Dance Music and “Teenage Symphonies”	pp. 236–245
	27.	Motown; Beach Boys	pp. 245–254
Week 19-20:		<u>The British Invasion, Country, Soul, and Urban Folk</u>	<u>Chapters 9-10</u>
	28.	The Beatles and the British Invasion	pp. 254–268
	29.	Country; Soul	pp. 269–283
	30.	Urban Folk	pp. 284–295
Week 21-22:		<u>The Rise of Rock, Country Music, and the Pop Mainstream</u>	<u>Chapter 10-11</u>
	31.	Rock in the Late 1960s	pp. 295–311
	32.	The 1970s; Country Music; the Popular Mainstream	pp. 305–329
	33.	Rock Comes of Age	pp. 329–341
Week 23-24:		<u>The 1970s: Disco and Progressive Country</u>	<u>Chapters 11–12</u>
	34.	“Night Fever”: The Rise of Disco	pp. 341–349
	35.	The Outlaws: Progressive Country; Reggae	pp. 350–361
	36.	Exam #3	
Week 25-26:		<u>The 1970s: Outsider’s Music; 1980s: Digital Technology; MTV</u>	<u>Chapters 12–13</u>

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| 37. | 1970s Punk and New Wave; Funk | pp. 361–376 |
| 38. | Rapper’s Delight: The Origins of Hip-Hop | pp. 376–381 |
| 39. | Digital technology, MTV, 1980s Music | pp. 381–397 |

Week 27-28: **The 1980s: The Popular Mainstream; Prince and Madonna** **Chapters 13–14**

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| 40. | Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, Paul Simon | pp. 397–406 |
| 41. | Prince, Madonna, and the Production of Celebrity | pp. 406–441 |
| 42. | The 1990s: Hip-Hop and Rap | pp. 420–438 |

Week 29-30: **Hip-Hop; Alternative Music; World Music** **Chapters 14–15**

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| 43. | The 1990s: Techno and Alternative Music | pp. 438–458 |
| 44. | Globalization and the Rise of World Music | pp. 458–464 |
| 45. | Conclusions | pp. 465–476 |

Finals Week: **Check the final exam schedule for date and time**

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| 46. | Exam #4 |
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