

American Popular Music: The Musical Melting Pot of the World
MUSC 1043 X21 Course Syllabus
MSU Texas, Department of Music
Fain College of Fine Arts

	Instructor Course Information
Instructor	Dr. Stephanie Ginnings
Time	Online
Place	Online
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Office	C117A
Office Hours	On Request
Phone	(940) 397-4000

*Note: The textbook, homework, and quizzes are **online**. Students are expected to check their official MSU email and login to the Connect 4 Education site regularly for readings, written assignments, quizzes/exams, journal entry, and group project. <https://connect4education.com/>

Course Description

The course will enhance the student's appreciation and understanding of popular music, as well as introduce less familiar styles and genres. Students will understand American popular music within the context of the history of America since 1840. Students will be able to hear a popular song, identify it by style and time period, and become more aware of how popular music is advertised, sold, and consumed in a global economy. Students will develop critical listening skills and become more informed consumers of popular music by exploring several recurring objectives throughout the course:

1. Analyze changing features of popular music in America
2. Understand elements of music that define songs by style and genre
3. Appreciate a variety of musical genres and songs
4. Interpret the influence of mass media, economy, and technology of popular music
5. Identify the role of popular music as a symbol of identity (race, class, gender, and generation).

Learning Methods

1. Recordings - listening and analysis using Spotify for full recording
2. Online Textbook readings and listening assignments
3. Online learning modules – Power Point, YouTube videos
4. Website (D2L) - announcements, course material, links, assigned reading

Reading/Listening

Assignments in the textbook include readings, listening assignments, and homework quizzes that must be completed.

*Note –Some lessons will be numerically out of order. This allows lessons to be grouped by musical style. Lessons are presented in order in the textbook, dates for the week are listed next to each chapter, and both are printed in order by date on the syllabus.

Textbook and Instructional Materials

OnAmerican Popular Music (must purchase for the class)

Purchasing Access Codes:

Students may purchase the course materials an access code from the MSU campus bookstore or through the Connect for Education online store:

[Link for Connect for Education: OnAmerican Popular Music](#)

Once you have purchased the course, you will receive an access number. Once you receive the access number, visit this site: <https://register.c4edu.org/> to register using your access number.

Register using MSU as your school, Ginnings as instructor, and *OnAmerican Popular Music* as the course.

1. Use your MSU email when registering
2. When you have been added the course, I will receive an email from the company.
3. If you need assistance in this process, please email: support@connect4education.com

Student Resources:

If you have any questions regarding the Access Code purchase/registration process or the course access process, [here is the link for the C4E Student Guide](#).

In addition to the Student Guide, a student tutorial video is another helpful tool to orient students to the course. The video can be found [here](#).

Here are [helpful FAQ articles](#) on many common processes, students may reference our Student Help Center.

Online Course Technical Support

Technical support for this course is provided through Connect 4 Education. If you are having technical problems you may contact support

- by email: support@connect4education.com
- [Student Support website](#)
- Call 703-880-1180 x200 if you would prefer to speak to a technician by phone. Support Hours: Monday through Friday 8AM - 5PM Central Time.

Technical problems are NOT an excuse for incomplete or late work. If you have computer issues, find an alternative computer to login. Both PC and Mac users must have the latest version of Flash player working on their computers. The website can be operated through Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, or Safari.

Listening Examples: Spotify

All songs can be listened in their entirety on Spotify, a free, online streaming music app and web resource. It is helpful to download Spotify onto your computer and have it open when accessing musical examples.

Course Assignments and Deadlines:

All Assignments/Quizzes are due no later than 11:59 pm CENTRAL TIME the Saturday that ends the week.

For example, Lesson 1 – American Popular Music in the Nineteenth Century (Wednesday 22 January 2025) and Lesson 2 – Tin Pan Alley and Ragtime (Fri 24 January 2025) are both due by Saturday, January 25 at 11:59 pm central time. There is flexibility in this course in that assignments for the week must be completed by Saturdays at 11:59 pm. You are not required to do the Monday lesson on Monday, the Wednesday lesson on Wednesday, etc. As long as the lessons and assessments are complete by the deadline on Saturday each week, you may work at your own pace. There will be no extensions, exceptions or delays in submitting assignments. Any assignments not completed by the Saturday evening corresponding to that week will immediately become a 0. *The 0 grade will not be changed under any circumstances. Please be aware of your time zone.*

The Monday/Wednesday/Friday structure is closely aligned with the section of this course that meets in person each week. This is a three-credit course and the workload will be the same as a class that meets in person. The only difference is that you have the time each week to set your own study and assignment completion schedule rather than having a set class.

All grades are entered into the online textbook, not into D2L. This includes assignment feedback. Grades may be found in the textbook by clicking on the Gradebook tab.

Learning Modules:

There are embedded learning modules in the textbook to help students better understand the reading and listening materials. First, complete the reading and listening assignments. Be sure to try out the “Test Yourself,” the “Discover Video,” “Keywords,” “Artist Profile,” and other modules. At times throughout the semester, I may post a video. A link will be put in D2L and emailed to your email listed in D2L.

Office Hours – I am available by appointment in person, by phone, or by Zoom. Please email for an appointment time: stephanie.ginnings@msutexas.edu.

Grading

Table 1: Course Evaluation

Assignments	Percentage of Final Grade
Quizzes	30%
Written Assignments (Rubric is in syllabus)	10%

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Journal Entry	5%
Research Project Begins March 17 Due April 1	15%

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Less than 60%

Quizzes and Exams

Quizzes and tests are open book. You may print pages in the textbook and use any resources to help you be successful.

If you are unsuccessful on a quiz, please contact me for help. We will coordinate a time in-person or over Zoom.

Keep in mind that the practice questions, found under the “Test Yourself” section in the reading are very similar to the questions on the quizzes and make for good practice!

Exams: There are two major exams for this course, a Midterm and a Final Exam. You may work ahead of the scheduled classes. This includes taking the midterm and the final exam early if that aligns with your schedule.

Written Assignments

There are four written assignments to be completed throughout the semester. Each writing assignment rubric (directions) can be found on the class day for which it is due. **Minimum of 500 Words.**

Grading Rubric for Written Assignments

90-100: Clearly written, grammar is mostly error free, and thoroughly develops/describes/answers the assignment question(s). Writing is well organized and flows throughout entry.

80-89: Clearly written, with few grammatical errors, and describes/answers to the assignment question(s), may not be completely developed. Writing is mostly organized and may have few minor lapses in flow. Has 500 words.

70-79: Has some grammatical errors but is readable. Content and information are mostly complete but underdeveloped (basic) when answering assignment question(s). Writing is not well organized and/or has lapses in flow. Has 500 words.

60-69: Has many grammatical errors and is not easy to read or follow. Content and information are incomplete and/or lack development when answering assignment question(s). Writing is poorly organized with many lapses in flow. Has 500 words.

0-59: Is unreadable and/or many grammatical errors. Content does not answer many assignment question(s) and is basic. Writing is disorganized creating difficulty to read with little flow. Less than 500 words

Journal Entry

This class focuses on American Popular music and this project is intended for you to take the opportunity to delve into your favorite music.

The Journal Entry will include:

1. Define of your favorite music genre style
2. What is it about musicians/band's music and the music of the genre in general that you find compelling?
3. Give a timeline of the genres' development, individual band members, bands and other information you deem pertinent
4. Include examples (with links as possible) of your favorite songs, with an explanation of why you chose each example and what you hear in it that makes it a favorite.

Students will:

1. Explain and define their genre
2. Give evidence for the genre's significance and contributions to music and society
3. Describe how the genre has changed over time
4. Give a perspective on their favorite artist and what influence they artists have on their lives.
5. Include musical examples to why each was chosen to be of their favorite songs, makes those examples their favorite

Group Research Project

Students must complete a student group research project. Groups will be determined through D2L. Each group will create an online study module that could be used to teach material from one of the chapters listed in your online reading using Power Point or Google Slides. The Presentation will be uploaded into D2L. Groups will choose a band or artist and will present four components:

The Presentation will include:

1. Background biography
2. Musical features of at least three songs

3. Description of how their music is representative of a particular style (by musical features)
4. Description of the social, cultural, or political aspects affecting their music or career
5. All research projects must include
 - a. At least one book source
 - b. At least one scholarly journal article.

Students/Groups will:

1. Explore an artist/band in depth
2. Complete the project on time
3. Work both as a team and individually contribute work needed to complete the project.
4. Foster a positive team climate and respond to conflict in a professional manner
5. Recognize and uphold shared ethical values and standards
6. Use terminology and other prior knowledge learned throughout the course as well as outside knowledge that can contribute to the project.

Project Deadline: Projects will be due Sunday, March 30 by 11:59 pm Central time.

Grading Criteria

- Background Biography (100 points possible)
- Musical Features of Three Songs (100 points possible)
- Stylistic Context of Three Songs (100 points possible)
- Social, Cultural, or Political Aspects Affecting their Music or Career (100 points possible)
- Teamwork (100 points possible)

Course Schedule

Assignment Date	Activities/Assignments/Exams Complete Quizzes at the end of each Lesson
January 22	Review Syllabus and Register for Course through Connect for Education
January 22	Lesson 1 - American Popular Music in the Nineteenth Century
January 24	Lesson 2 - Tin Pan Alley and Ragtime
January 27	Lesson 3 - Rural Blues and Urban Blues
January 29	Lesson 4 - Dixieland
January 31	Lesson 5 - Swing and Big Bands
February 3	Lesson 6 – Broadway and the Development of the American Musical
February 5	Lesson 7 - Hillbilly and Country and Western Music
February 7	Lesson 38 - Popular Music and Controversy After 9/11
February 10	Lesson 17 – Bluegrass
February 10	Written Assignment 01 - due February 10
February 12	Lesson 8 - Traditional Pop in the 1940s and 1950s
February 14	Lesson 9 - Doo-Wop and Rhythm and Blues

February 17	Lesson 10 - Early Rock and Roll
February 19	Lesson 11 - Rockabilly
February 21	Lesson 12 - Teen-Styled Rock Music in the Early 1960s
February 24	Lesson 13 - The Record Producer and the Rise of Surf Rock
February 26	Lesson 14 - Soul
February 28	Lesson 15 - The British Invasion
March 3	Lesson 16 - American Reactions to the British Invasion
March 3	Written Assignment 02 - due March 3
March 5	Lesson 18 - Folk and Folk Rock
March 7	Lesson 19 - Psychedelic Rock
March 16	Lesson 20 – Midterm Exam – due March 16
March 17	Start Group Project – due Sunday, March 30
March 19	Lesson 21 - Country Rock and Southern Rock
March 21	Lesson 24 - Country Music Goes Mainstream
March 24	Lesson 22 - From Soul to Funk
March 26	Lesson 23 – Funk
March 28	Lesson 26 - Disco
March 30	Group Project – due March 30
March 31	Lesson 25 - Hard Rock and Heavy Metal
April 2	Lesson 30 - Heavy Metal in the 1980s
April 7	Lesson 27 - Punk Rock and New Wave
April 7	Written Assignment 03 – due April 7
April 9	Lesson 29 - MTV
April 11	Journal Entry – due April 11
April 14	Lesson 31 - Hip-Hop's Roots and Origins
April 16	Lesson 32 - Hip-Hop Comes of Age
April 21	Lesson 35 - Hip-Hop in the 1990s
April 23	Lesson 33 - The Rise of Alternative Rock
April 28	Lesson 34 - Alternative and Metal in the 1990s
April 30	Lesson 36 – Hybrids and Genres Without Definition
May 5	Lesson 37 - Country Music in the 1980s and 1990s
May 7	Lesson 39- Music Creation and Distribution in the 21 st Century
May 9	Written Assignment 04 – due May 9
May 14	FINAL Exam – due May 14

***All assignments (including the midterm and final) must be turned in by 11:59 pm Central Time on the day they are due.**

Schedule of Assignments

Please refer to the chart above or the calendar on the homepage of the textbook for a full schedule of reading assignments, listening assignments, quizzes, written assignments, exams, and projects.

How to be successful in the class:

In an online class setting, timely and active participation is one of the most important aspects of the course. Understanding the concepts requires practice and discipline to complete all class assignments on a regular basis.

A lot of hard and intense work is expected! It is estimated that students will have to spend as much as 9-12 hours or more each week for this class. When completing the assignments, you may have questions and could need professor guidance. I will be happy to help. However, start your work EARLY; otherwise, I will be unable to reply on time to help you.

I check my email every day, so you can usually expect a response within 24 hours during the week. On the weekends, I check my email on Saturdays. Please do not message me on D2L, I may not see it in a timely manner. If you need my help or feedback, it is your responsibility to contact me no less than 48 hours before the pertinent due date, so I can provide you with timely feedback or help.

All students are encouraged to use the writing center if assistance is needed on writing the reading and listening reports. The MSU Writing Lab located in 224 Bea Wood. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they will provide you with specific suggestions for improving your writing. Alternatively, instructions to use this service for online courses can be found [here](#).

Some examples for a faculty initiated drop with a grade of F (or given a final grade of F without being dropped) include, but are not limited to, Academic Dishonesty, as described in the appropriate university policies referenced in this syllabus under *Academic Dishonesty and Student Honor Creed*, poor performance in the class, absenteeism, or disruptive conduct, as specified below. The instructor may use, at his discretion, the options of an Academic Drop as outlined in the Student Handbook policies. A student dropped by a faculty member for the reasons defined above has the right to a timely appeal by the Student Conduct Committee through the Dean of Student's Office.

Academic Changes:

The instructor reserves the right to adjust or cancel grading ranges, assignments, reports, projects, exams, assignments dates, due dates, and other as the course progresses; and to modify, extend, or correct the present syllabus by providing students with a three days' notice, or shorter in case of emergencies.

Academic Dishonesty and Student Honor Creed:

The university policy and procedures for academic dishonesty are outlined in the current Student Handbook in Appendix E. No cheating, collusion, or plagiarism will be tolerated in this class. Any student engaging in an academic dishonest act will be sanctioned appropriately.

Enrollment in this class constitutes an acceptance to adhere to the Student Honor Creed and all other student conduct policies outlined in the university [Student Handbook](#).

Conduct statement:

Behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to benefit from the instruction will result in the instructor's removing the disruptive student(s) from the class, either temporarily or permanently (instructor drop), and receive a final lower grade, up to and including an F.

Electronic communication imposes a higher threshold of civility, responsiveness, and clarity. Students that engage in uncivil, untimely, or inappropriate communication may be sanctioned at the instructor's discretion, with penalties that may include lowering of the student's grade, up to and including an F.

Disability Statement and Special Needs:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 397-4140.

Social Justice:

Social justice is one of Midwestern State University's core values, and the professor considers the classroom a place where students are treated with respect as human beings, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Moreover, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided the students can agree to disagree. The professor's expectation is that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

Campus Carry:

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the university's webpage on [campus carry policies](#).

Privacy Statement:

Midwestern State University adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Accordingly, and for the purposes of this class, the instructor is limited in his ability to discuss or release student's academic progress records and information to outside parties, and only as permitted by law.

Core Class Requirement:

The present class is part of the MSU core curriculum in the area of creative arts. As part of the assessment required in this class the following areas will be evaluated using the different assignments, tests, and activities: critical thinking, communication skills, teamwork, and social responsibility.

Appendix 1

TExES Domains and Competencies

Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES)

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for Music Appreciation link to the following EC-6 TExES domains and competencies necessary to become a music educator in the state of Texas:

Standard I: The music teacher has a comprehensive visual and aural knowledge of musical perception and performance.

Teacher Knowledge: What Teachers Know

- 1.1k the standard terminology used to describe and analyze musical sound*;
and
- 1.2k how to demonstrate musical artistry both through vocal or instrumental performance and by conducting vocal or instrumental performances*.

Application: What Teachers Can Do

- 1.1s Identify and interpret music symbols and terms*
- 1.2s Perceive performance problems and detect errors accurately*;
- 1.3s Identify vocal and instrumental sounds*;
- 1.4s Use standard music terminology*;
- 1.5s Distinguish among timbres*;
- 1.6s Identify different rhythms and meters*;
- 1.7s Use appropriate techniques of musical performance for instruments and voice*;
- 1.8s Recognize and describe melody, harmony, and texture of a musical work*;
and
- 1.9s Identify music forms*.

Standard V: The music teacher has a comprehensive knowledge of music history and the relationship of music to history, society, and culture.

Teacher Knowledge: What Teachers Know

- 5.1k music of diverse genres, styles, and cultures;
- 5.2k how music can reflect elements of a specific society or culture*;
and
- 5.3k various music vocations and avocations*.

Application: What Teachers Can Do

- 5.1s Analyze various purposes and roles of music in society and culture*;
- 5.2s Explain a variety of music and music-related career options*;
- 5.3s Recognize and describe music that reflects the heritage of the United States and Texas*;
and
- 5.4s Identify concepts from other fine arts and their relationships to music concepts*.

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