

Course Syllabus: American Popular Music
Department of Music
College of Fine Arts
MUSC 1043 – X11
Fall 2023

Contact Information

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Instructor Response Policy

I will make every attempt to respond to email and phone messages in a timely manner. If you email me at 5:00 pm on Friday, I will not promise to get back to you until Monday morning unless it is an emergency.

***Note: The textbook, homework, and quizzes are online. Students are expected to check their official MSU email and log in to the Connect 4 Education site regularly for readings, homework, and announcements. <https://c4elink.org/login/index.php>**

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 and be able to identify it by style and time period, 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 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. Online Recordings—listening and analysis through Spotify
2. Online Textbook readings and listening assignments
3. Online Learning Modules – PowerPoint lectures, YouTube videos
4. Web site—announcements, course material, links, assigned reading

Reading/Listening

There are 25 lessons for this semester which including readings, listening assignments and homework quizzes that must be prepared before each class.

*Note –Some lessons will be numerically out of order. This is to be able to group lessons by musical style.

Textbook and Instructional Materials

Are all available through the course website.

Go to: <https://store.connect4education.com/product/onamerican-popular-music/?dids=2>

Or, access cards are available in the campus bookstore for purchase.

****Please use your official MSU Texas email address when registering for the site!**

Online Course Technical Support

Technical support for this course is provided through Connect 4 Education. If you are having technical problems you must **first contact support by clicking “Technical Support” on the tab to the left**, or at support@connect4education.com or the Student Support website. Support can also be reached at 703-880-1180 x200 if you would prefer to speak to a technician by phone. Support Hours: Monday through Friday 9AM - 6PM Eastern Time.

Technical problems are not an excuse for incomplete or late work. It is the students’ responsibility to make sure that the computer they choose to use for this course is in good working condition and meets the website requirements. **If a student’s personal computer is not working, it is expected that the student will find one that is working.** 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 to through 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.

Time Zone Requirements:

Students are expected to complete all quizzes, exams, assignments and projects by 11:59 pm Central Standard Time. Even if a student is currently living in a time zone other than Central Time, their assignments are still due by 11:59 pm Central Standard Time. Please take note of the differences between your time zone and Central Time Zone.

Learning Modules:

There are added learning modules 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.

Attendance Policy:

This is an online course and I will be keeping track of how often (and for how long) your login for the course. I expect that you will login at least twice a week (2 times a week for 15 weeks = 30 logins). Any student who misses more than 3 classes will have their letter grade dropped by 1

letter at the end of the semester no matter what the letter grade is. An additional letter grade will then be dropped for each absence following 4. 4 absences= 1 letter grade, 5= 2 letter grades, 6=3 letter grades, 7= 4 letter grades.

Grading

Assignments	Percentage of Final Grade
Quizzes	30%
Written Assignments (2)	10%
Listening Assignment (Midterm)	20%
Research Essay (Final)	25%
M ³ Project (Group)	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

There are quizzes for each lesson that we will cover in this class. Quizzes match up with the chapter content. I will open all lessons/quizzes on the first day of class and all must be submitted by May 3, 2024, no later than 11:59 pm. This is a self-paced course with some specific due dates. Please see each assignment for specific submission information.

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:

Midterm Assignment

Listening Assignment outlined within the course. This project will combine your ability to think critically about music and communicate using musical terms learned throughout the course.

Final (Research Essay)

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 Research Essay will include:

1. A definition of your favorite music genre/style.
2. What is it about the musicians’/band’s music and the music of the genre in general that you find compelling?

3. You will give a timeline of the genres' development, individual band members, bands and other information you deem pertinent.
4. You will 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 the artists have on their lives.
5. Include musical examples as to why each was chosen to be one of their favorite songs, make those examples their favorite

Final Research Essay Deadline: The Essay will be due **May 5, 2024 @ 11:59pm**

Written Assignments

There are **two** written assignments to be completed throughout the semester. Each writing assignment rubric (directions) can be found on the class day for which it opens. **Minimum of 500 Words, 12 pt. Times New Roman, and must include your Name!**

Group Research Project M³

As already outlined in your syllabus, all students enrolled must complete a student group research project. In doing so, each student group will pick a scene from a movie that everyone in the group agrees upon and describe what is happening in the scene as well as the music playing in the scene (links to specific scenes with time stamps would be helpful). Then you will choose a different song, that will entirely change the mood, from any of the genres that we have or will be studying. This song or piece of music must make sense within the film and must change the mood of the scene entirely.

For example, if you were to find a scene on YouTube of Jaws where the shark is stalking his prey from beneath the water: go to .45 seconds and pause the video (turn off the audio) then go open another YouTube video and find your song in this case "Water" by Brad Paisley go to about 1 minute and then toggle back to the Jaws scene and press play... This changes the mood!

There will be a few examples on your D2L class from past projects.

Create a PowerPoint presentation with the following information:

Sections/Slides

1. Title Slide with your name: Make the slides match either your movie or the mood of the movie (dark=scary, bright=happy, etc.)
2. Title, Director, and Year of the movie that you have chosen:
3. Description of the scene that you have chosen to analyze (not the entire premise of the movie!):

4. Description of the music involved in the scene: (include tempo, timbre, dynamics, etc.)
Description of the instrumentation used: (Full orchestra, one instrument, marching band, choir, etc.)
5. Overall feeling invoked by the music: explain what the director of the movie wanted (i.e. fear, joy, suspense, etc.)
6. NOW, take the exact same scene and change the music to invoke the opposite mood (this must make sense...you cannot go just pick a random piece! Jaws has to do with Water...).
 - a. You do not have to write music, you can go find music that you could envision that could be played instead of the original music. Please include a link to the music with the time stamp that you have chosen (see example above).
 - i. For example: take a horror scene and put the music “Happy” by Pharrell Williams OR take an emotional scene and put “Master of Puppets” by Metallica.

Project Deadline: The project will be Due **April 21, 2024, @ 11:59 pm**

Course Schedule

***Note: Everything except the Midterm and Final opens on the first day of class.
Pay attention to due dates.**

Lecture Date	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due
1/16/2024	Review Syllabus and Register for Connect for Education	
1/16/2024	Lesson 1 - American Popular Music in the Nineteenth Century	Unit 1 5/3/2024@ 11:59pm
	Lesson 2 - Tin Pan Alley and Ragtime	
	Lesson 3 - Rural Blues and Urban Blues	
	Lesson 4 - Dixieland	
	Lesson 5 - Swing and Big Bands	
	Lesson 8 - Traditional Pop in the 1940s and 1950s	
	Lesson 9 - Doo-Wop and Rhythm and Blues	
1/16/2024	Written Assignment 01	1/28/2024@ 11:59pm
	Lesson 6 - Hillbilly and Country and Western Music	Unit 2 5/3/2024@ 11:59pm
	Lesson 7 - Bluegrass	
	Lesson 11 - Rockabilly	
	Lesson 16- Country Rock and Southern Rock	
	Lesson 17 – Country Music Goes Mainstream	
	Lesson 18 - Country Music in the 1980s and 1990s	
1/16/2024	Written Assignment 02	2/25/2024 @ 11:59 pm
	Lesson 13 - The British Invasion	Unit 3 5/3/2024@ 11:59pm

	Lesson 16 - American Reactions to the British Invasion (no quiz)	
	Lesson 14 - Folk and Folk Rock	
	Lesson 19 - Psychedelic Rock	
	Lesson 19 – Early Rock and Roll	
3/03/2024	– Midterm Exam – Listening Assignment	3/24/2024 @ 11:59 pm
1/16/2024	Lesson 12 - Soul	Unit 4 5/3/2024@ 11:59pm
	Lesson 19 - From Soul to Funk	
	Lesson 20 – Funk	
	Lesson 21 - Punk Rock and New Wave	
	Lesson 22 - MTV	
	Lesson 23 - Hard Rock and Heavy Metal	
	Lesson 24 - Heavy Metal in the 1980s	
	Lesson 25 - Alternative and Metal in the 1990s	
1/16/2024	Group Project: Movies, Music, and Mood	4/21/2024 @ 11:59 pm
1/16/2024	Lesson 26 - Hip-Hop's Roots and Origins	Unit 5 5/3/2024@ 11:59pm
	Lesson 27 - Hip-Hop Comes of Age	
	Lesson 28 - Hip-Hop in the 1990s	
	Lesson 29 - The Rise of Alternative Rock	
	Lesson 30 – Hybrids and Genres Without Definition	
	Lesson 32- Music Creation and Distribution in the 21 st Century	
4/7/2024	FINAL Research Essay	5/5/2024 @ 11:59 pm

Schedule of Assignments

Please refer to the home page or the calendar on the course website for a full schedule of reading assignments, listening assignments, quizzes, written assignments, exams, and projects.

Late work will not be accepted without documentation stating an excuse to miss the work. (i.e doctors note, university activities, etc.)

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2023-2024](#)

COVID-19 Information

<https://msutexas.edu/coronavirus/>

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 an F. In addition, and depending on the nature of the behavior or conduct, the student(s) may be subject to further disciplinary actions as per MSU policies.

Academic Dishonesty Statement

Plagiarism is (1) the use of source material of other persons (either published or unpublished, including the Internet) without following the accepted techniques of giving credit or (2) the submission for credit of work not of the individuals to whom credit is given. If a student in the class is caught plagiarizing, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The Student Creed developed and adopted by the MSU Student Government reinforces the discouragement of plagiarism and other unethical behaviors. The first statement of the Creed reads, "As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else to do so." Plagiarism is lying, cheating, and stealing.

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

If the professor suspects that an assignment contains AI-generated or plagiarized content, the student will be informed and have **3** days to schedule an online appointment via Zoom or a face-to-face appointment to discuss the content. If the student fails to respond by the **3rd** day, then a 0 will be issued for the assignment. Two or more 0s issued for suspected academic dishonesty will result in an automatic failure of the course.

Student Privacy Statement

EXAMPLE: Federal law prohibits the instructor from releasing information about students to parties outside the university without the signed consent of the student. Thus, in almost all cases the instructor will not discuss a student's academic progress or other matters with his/her parents without the proper release from students.

Campus Carry Statement

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 at [Campus Carry Rules/Policies](#).