



MUSC 1043 American Popular Music

MSU Texas

MUSC 1043 Section X12

Fall 2026 Aug. 24 - Dec. 11

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Amanda Hamilton

Office hours: made by appointment

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Course Description

The course will enhance the student's appreciation and understanding of music already known, 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 themes 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. Appreciation of a variety of musical genres and songs
4. The influence of mass media, economy, and technology of popular music
5. 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 40 lessons for this semester which including readings, listening assignments, and quizzes that must be completed before the respective midterm and final exam that will be reviewing the information.

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

Textbook & 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.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

Assistance with course materials or course management is available at any point of the semester by appointment. Please email to find a time to meet virtually or in person in the Music Department of Midwestern State University.

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.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Moffett Library

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student's studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

Grading

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Percentage of Final Grade
Quizzes	30%
Written Assignments	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Journal Entries	5%
Research Project	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 and equal one quiz for each day of classes. All the quizzes are open from the first day of class and will remain open until Dec.

4. The quizzes will close on that date and will no longer be available to take. It is highly recommended to pace the work throughout the semester and particularly to complete each quiz leading up to the midterm exam before taking the midterm exam.

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.

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 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

Written Assignments

There are four written assignments to be completed throughout the semester. Each writing assignment rubric (directions) can be found on the Connect 4 site. **Minimum of 500 Words.**

Grading Rubric for Written Assignments

90-100: Clearly written, with little to no grammatical errors, and robustly describes/answers the question(s) given in the assignment.

80-89: Clearly written, with few to little grammatical errors, and describes/answers the question(s) given in the assignment.

70-79: Has some grammatical errors, but is readable. Content and information when answering the question(s) given in the assignment is lacking or incomplete.

60-69: Has many grammatical errors and is not easy to read or follow. Content and information when answering the question(s) given in the assignment is lacking or incomplete.

0-59: Is unreadable, does not answer the question(s) in any manor or is less than 500 words.

Group Research Project

As already outlined in your syllabus, all students enrolled must complete a student group research project. In doing so, each student 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. Groups will choose a band or artist and will present four important 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: All final projects are due by: **12/04 @ 11:59PM**

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)

Mid-Term Exam

Details on the Mid-Term Exam can be found on the Connect 4 site. The Mid-Term Exam will be open from 10/19 to 10/23. Submissions will not be accepted after 11:59 pm on 10/23.

Final Exam

Details on the Final Exam can be found on the Connect 4 site. The Final Exam will be open from 12/05 to 12/09. Submissions will not be accepted after 11:59 pm on 12/09.

Extra Credit

Extra Credit is not offered in this course.

Late Work

All work must be submitted by 12/04 at the latest. All assignments will remain open until then except for the Mid-term and Final Exam.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Deadline to file for graduation: Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).
- Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student's grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. In those classes where attendance is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should so inform students of the specifics in writing at the beginning of the semester in a syllabus or separate attendance policy statement. An instructor who has an attendance policy must keep records on a daily basis. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to being dropped from the class. Instructor's records will stand as evidence of absences. A student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor. Any individual faculty member or college has the authority to establish an attendance policy, providing the policy is in accordance with the General University Policies.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ****Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. Some faculty may not permit recordings of their classes. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exist in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#)

to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Suggested Course Schedule:

Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Review Syllabus and Register for Connect for Edu	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 1 - American Popular Music in the Nineteenth Century	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 2 - Tin Pan Alley and Ragtime	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 3 - Rural Blues and Urban Blues	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 4 - Dixieland	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 5 - Swing and Big Bands	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 6 - Broadway and the Development of the American Musical	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 7 - Hillbilly and Country and Western Music	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 17 - Bluegrass	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Written Assignment 01	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 8 - Traditional Pop in the 1940s and 1950s	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 9 - Doo-Wop and Rhythm and Blues	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 10 - Early Rock and Roll	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 11 - Rockabilly	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 12 - Teen-Styled Rock Music in the Early 1960s	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 13 - The Record Producer and the Rise of Surf Rock	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Written Assignment 02	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 14 - Soul	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 15 - The British Invasion	12/04 @ 11:59pm

Lesson 16 - American Reactions to the British Invasion	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 18 - Folk and Folk Rock	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 19 - Psychedelic Rock	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Start Project	N/A
Lesson 20 – Midterm Exam	10/23 @11:59pm
Lesson 21 - Country Rock and Southern Rock	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 24 - Country Music Goes Mainstream	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 22 - From Soul to Funk	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 23 – Funk	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 25 - Hard Rock and Heavy Metal	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 30 - Heavy Metal in the 1980s	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 27 - Punk Rock and New Wave	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Written Assignment-03	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 29 - MTV	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Journal Entry	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 31 - Hip-Hop's Roots and Origins	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 32 - Hip-Hop Comes of Age	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 35 - Hip-Hop in the 1990s	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 33 - The Rise of Alternative Rock	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 34 - Alternative and Metal in the 1990s	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 36 – Hybrids and Genres Without Definition	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 37 - Country Music in the 1980s and 1990s	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 38 - Popular Music and Controversy After 9/11	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Lesson 39 – Music Creation and Distribution iin the 21 st century	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Written Assignment-04	12/04 @ 11:59pm
Research Project Presentation Due	12/04 @ 11:59pm

FINAL

12/09 @
11:59pm