

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 32 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	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam (Journal)	25%
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. Quizzes for Units 1,2, and 3 will open on the first day of class and have due dates for each. Quizzes for Units 4 and 5 will open following the Midterm and will have due dates assigned for each. Once quizzes close, they are no longer available. All quizzes are due by 11:59 pm. In an effort to give you flexibility, I will have quizzes due in groups. For example: Quizzes for lessons 1-9 open from **Aug. 23 until Sept. 16 @ 11:59pm**. 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**

Individual project 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 (Journal)**

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. 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 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

Final Journal Deadline: Journal will be due **December 10, 2023 @ 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 is due. **Minimum of 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: Projects will be Due **December 2, 2023 @ 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)

### Course Schedule

Lecture Date	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Assigned Date	Due Date
8/21-8/28	Review Syllabus and Register for Connect for Education		
8/28-9/16	Lesson 1 - American Popular Music in the Nineteenth Century	8/28	9/16 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 2 - Tin Pan Alley and Ragtime	8/28	9/16 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 3 - Rural Blues and Urban Blues	8/28	9/16 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 4 - Dixieland	8/28	9/16 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 5 - Swing and Big Bands	8/28	9/16 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 8 - Traditional Pop in the 1940s and 1950s	8/28	9/16 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 9 - Doo-Wop and Rhythm and Blues	8/28	9/16 @ 11:59pm
8/28-9/17	Written Assignment 01	8/28	<b>9/17 @ 11:59pm</b>
9/18-9/30	Lesson 6 - Hillbilly and Country and Western Music	8/28	9/30 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 7 - Bluegrass	8/28	9/30 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 11 - Rockabilly	8/28	9/30 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 16- Country Rock and Southern Rock	8/28	9/30 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 17 – Country Music Goes Mainstream	8/28	9/30 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 18 - Country Music in the 1980s and 1990s	8/28	9/30 @ 11:59pm
9/18-9/30	Written Assignment 02	8/28	<b>9/30 @ 11:59pm</b>
10/1-10/14	Lesson 13 - The British Invasion	8/28	10/14 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 16 - American Reactions to the British Invasion (no quiz)	8/28	10/14 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 14 - Folk and Folk Rock	8/28	10/14 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 19 - Psychedelic Rock	8/28	10/14 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 19 – Early Rock and Roll	8/28	10/14 @ 11:59pm
10/9-10/13	– <b>Midterm Exam</b> –	<b>10/9</b>	<b>10/13 @ 11:59pm</b>
10/15	Start Group Project ( <b>Due Dec 2</b> )	10/15	<b>12/2 @ 11:59pm</b>
10/15-11/4	Lesson 12 - Soul	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 19 - From Soul to Funk	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 20 – Funk	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 21 - Punk Rock and New Wave	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 22 - MTV	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 23 - Hard Rock and Heavy Metal	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 24 - Heavy Metal in the 1980s	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 25 - Alternative and Metal in the 1990s	10/15	11/4 @ 11:59pm
11/5	Start Journal Entry ( <b>Due Dec 10</b> )	11/5	<b>12/8 @ 11:59pm</b>
11/5-12/8	Lesson 26 - Hip-Hop's Roots and Origins	10/15	12/8 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 27 - Hip-Hop Comes of Age	10/15	12/8 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 28 - Hip-Hop in the 1990s	10/15	12/8 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 29 - The Rise of Alternative Rock	10/15	12/8 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 30 – Hybrids and Genres Without Definition	10/15	12/8 @ 11:59pm
∨	Lesson 32- Music Creation and Distribution in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	10/15	12/8 @ 11:59pm
	Group Project uploaded	10/15	<b>12/2 @ 11:59pm</b>
	<b>FINAL Journal Due</b>	<b>11/5</b>	<b>12/10 @ 11:59pm</b>

### **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](#).