

"The mind is a fire to be kindled, not a vessel to be filled."
— Plutarch

GEN_MUS 175-0 Special Topics in Music: History & Styles of Rock

Northwestern University—Winter, 2005
Tues & Thurs 8:30 to 9:50 a.m., MAB 229

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COURSE SYLLABUS

Course description: A survey of the evolution of rock styles, contributions of important performers, and musical techniques involved in the creation and performance of rock music. This course will introduce students to the history of rock and roll music, as it evolved in the United States and spread throughout the world. In addition to the historical perspective, class discussions will also focus on aesthetic and sociological issues that have influenced the various developments within the genre. Dr. Lipscomb will share his own personal experience as a rock musician in Los Angeles and throughout the United States & Canada.

Incoming competency of students expected by instructor: No prerequisite. Basic musical terms and concepts will be introduced as needed throughout the semester.

Statement of Course Objectives:

This course will provide each student an opportunity to ...

- ✓ become familiar with the sound of the many variants that are grouped under the broad rubric "rock and roll," focusing primarily on American & British performers
- ✓ develop the ability to "LISTEN" — not just "hear" — when participating in the musical experience
- ✓ acquire a musical vocabulary that will enable concise, intellectual discussion about any music
- ✓ gain experience in communicating with others about music, clearly expressing one's own opinions & beliefs
- ✓ learn about individuals integral to the evolution of rock music (e.g., composers, performers, etc.), circumstances surrounding their lives, and style elements common to the various sub-genres
- ✓ gain a historical perspective, including listening to and discussing primary musical, social, and aesthetic influences on the emergence & evolution of rock music styles
- ✓ apply newly-acquired knowledge about music to unfamiliar contexts
- ✓ identify musical examples from repertoire covered in this course to illustrate the various concepts presented and discussed in class
- ✓ gain a clearer understanding of one's own current musical preferences and the basis for this selection
- ✓ accept the dynamic nature of musical style, realizing that music of tomorrow may require a re-thinking & reformulation of concepts, beliefs, and preferences held today
- ✓ stimulate an appreciation for popular music as a relevant artform within contemporary society

Required texts:

[S&L] Stuessy, Joe & Lipscomb, S.D. (2003). *Rock and roll: Its history and stylistic development*, 4th edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. [available at Norris Bookstore]

[H] Handouts (chapters from the forthcoming 5th edition of the Stuessy & Lipscomb text)

Supplemental texts (highly recommended, but not required):

Rolling Stone, The (2001). *The New Encyclopedia of Rock & Roll* (revised & updated for the 21st century). Old Tappan, NJ: Fireside Books (Simon & Schuster). [available at Norris]

Wadham, W. (2001). *Inside the hits: The seduction of a rock and roll generation*. Boston, MA: Berklee Press. [available at bookstores]

Listening Assignments & Music Online:

Students are required to spend *at least* 1 hour per class session reviewing and listening to specific recorded examples. These listening materials are available (in Real Audio format) online in the "Course Documents" area of the course Blackboard site and can be accessed either from home or on-campus. In order to successfully complete the listening assignments, ...

- ✓ students must have access to computers with RealPlayer and the Shockwave & Flash plug-ins installed; both are FREE programs and should already be installed on computers in NU's student computer labs.

Additional Materials & Requirements:

- ✓ A spiral bound notebook for maintaining a Listening Journal (details provided on p. 4).
- ✓ All students will be required to utilize Blackboard for the submission of assignments. Point your web browser to <http://courses.northwestern.edu>, then provide your UNet username & password.
- ✓ Every student enrolled in this class is required to donate approximately one hour to participate in a music cognition research project (details will be provided).

Schedule of Assignments (subject to change)¹:

<i>January 4th</i> Review Course Syllabus & Requirements What is (Rock) Music? – Musical Elements	<i>February 15th</i> – Art Rock S&L – ch. 12 Timeline for Final Group Presentations Due (selected topics)
<i>January 6th</i> - Roots of Rock S&L – ch. 1, 2 & 16	<i>February 17th</i> – Mainstream Rock H – ch. 13
<i>January 13th</i> – Emergence of Rock S&L – ch. 3	<i>February 22nd</i> – Continuing Fragmentation H – ch. 14
<i>January 18th</i> – Rock 50s Style S&L – ch. 4	<i>February 24th</i> – Heavy Metal H – ch. 15
<i>January 20th</i> – Transition to the 1960s S&L – ch.5	<i>March 1st</i> – Dance Music H – ch. 16
<i>January 25</i> – British Invasion S&L – ch. 6 & 7	<i>March 3rd</i> – Rap & Hip-Hop H – ch. 17
<i>January 27th</i> Brief Group Presentations due (assigned topics)	<i>March 8th</i> – Alternative Rock H – ch. 18 S&L – ch. 16 (re-read) Final Group Presentations (oral)
<i>February 1st</i> – Folk Rock S&L – ch. 8	<i>March 10th</i> Oral Presentations (continued) Final Group Presentations due
<i>February 3rd</i> – Soul, Motown, & Acid Rock S&L – ch. 9 & 10	<i>March 16th</i> 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Final Exam
<i>February 8th</i> Midterm exam	
<i>February 10th</i> – Jazz Rock S&L – ch. 11	

¹ Only those dates upon which reading or other assignments are due are listed in this schedule. However, unless otherwise noted, we will meet on every day class is scheduled. Any changes related to due dates for assignments or exam dates will be communicated to students via the email address provided in Northwestern's "Ph" system. Students are responsible for ensuring this information is up-to-date.

Grading:

Grades will be determined by scores in two major performance areas: **Individual Performance** and **Group Performance**. Grading Weights are provided below:

<u>Grade Weights</u>	<u>Grade Weights</u> <u>Within Area</u>	<u>Percentages</u> <u>of Total Grade</u>
Individual Performance		60%
Individual Assignments & Class Participation	20%	
Listening Journal	20%	
Midterm exam	20%	
Final exam	20%	
"Helping Behavior" (evaluated by peers)	<u>20%</u>	
	100%	
Group Performance		40%
Group Assignments & Class Participation	25%	
Brief Group Presentation	25%	
Final Group Presentation	<u>50%</u>	
	100%	
		<hr/> 100%

“Helping” Behavior: At the end of the quarter, each individual will rate the helpfulness of all of the **other** members of their group. Individual Helping Behavior scores will be the average of the points received from other members of their group. An example of this procedure follows, *assuming a group consisting of six members*:

Since **a student does not provide a rating for her/himself**, each individual must assign a total of 50 points to the other five members in their group, i.e., take the total number of group members, subtract 1, then multiply by the average score of 10. For example, $(6 - 1) \times 10 = 50$. Raters must differentiate some in their ratings ... this means that each rater must give at least one score of 11 or higher—with a **maximum of 15**—and at least one score of 9 or lower. A student's Helping Behavior score will be the average of the peer evaluations received from other members of her/his group; an average score of 12 or more will result in a grade of 100% for this portion of the grade, while lower average scores will receive a percentage equal to the evaluation score average $\times 10$ minus 20 points; e.g., a student earning an average evaluation score of 11.1 from her/his peers would receive 91%, calculated as follows: $(11.1 \times 10) - 20 = 91$, an A-.

The Helping Behavior scores will produce differences in grades only **within** groups. It is impossible, because of the required differentiation, for group members to help everyone in their group get an A by giving them a high peer evaluation score. The only way, in fact, for everyone in a group to earn an A is by doing an outstanding job on both the individual **and** group assignments & exams.

Determination of Final Grades:

The final grades will be determined as follows:

1. a raw total score will be computed for each student in both major performance areas
 - a) in the Individual Performance area, this will be a weighted combination of the sum of the Individual Assignments (20%), Listening Journal (20%), Midterm exam (20%), Final exam (20%), and the Helping Behavior score (20%);
 - b) in the Group Performance area, this will be determined by the group assignments & class participation (25%), the Brief Group Presentation (25%), and the Final Group Presentation (50%);
2. Students' total scores will be computed by multiplying the raw scores in each area by the grade "weight" provided ... 60% for Individual Performance & 40% for Group Performance
3. Course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

>= 92 = A
>= 90 AND < 92 = A-
>= 88 AND < 90 = B+
>= 82 AND <88 = B
>= 80 AND <82 = B-

>= 78 AND <80 = C+
>= 70 AND < 78 = C
>= 60 AND < 70 = D
< 60 = F

Listening Journal: Using a spiral-bound notebook dedicated for this purpose only, students are required to maintain a Listening Journal throughout the quarter. The purpose of this journal is to afford students an opportunity to reflect upon the music to which – and artists to whom – we will be listening. Students must provide an entry (minimum of 50-75 words) for each *required* listening example (highlighted by gray boxes in the online supplementary material). Students are encouraged to also provide comments about any of the *additional* listening examples (highlighted in blue) that are found to be particularly interesting. In addition, since many musical terms & concepts will be introduced during the course and the practice of *really listening* to music is one of the course objectives, this document should provide tangible evidence of the enhanced ability of each student to communicate intellectually about musical sound and their continually improving listening skills.

Group Presentations: Dr. Lipscomb will assign topics for the Brief Presentations. By mid-quarter, each group will select a topic of interest relevant to the course content for their Final Presentation. All members of the group will be responsible for researching this topic thoroughly and preparing an effective PowerPoint presentation for viewing by the instructor and other class members. The presentation should be well-organized and each member of the group must actively participate in its preparation. A handout containing the specific requirements for the Brief & Final Group Presentations can be found online.

Blackboard & email: Each student is required to utilize the Blackboard course site for a variety of purposes: to communicate with fellow group members, to listen to musical examples, to view animations, and to peruse supplementary course content. Also, students are expected to check their email at least five times per week (checking every day, however, is highly recommended), since this is the manner in which Dr. Lipscomb will make announcements outside of class. To access these communication tools in Blackboard, simply point your internet browser to <http://courses.northwestern.edu>. After providing your NUNet userName & password, click on the GEN_MUS 175-0 link and select the "Communication" button on the left side of the course web page.²

Attendance: MANDATORY!! ... come on, this class is going to be fun!! The consequence for being absent is two-fold. First, the instructor will maintain an accurate record of attendance. Absences in excess of **2** will lower your final grade by 5 points for each additional absence. Second, other members of your group are instructed to take the matter of group member attendance into consideration as they provide their "Helping Behavior" rating. NOTE: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL MAKE-UPS FOR THE MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS BE GIVEN. **DO NOT** be absent on these days.

² For assistance in using Blackboard, contact the Help Desk support staff at (847) 491-HELP or the online Blackboard Help System at: <http://course-management.northwestern.edu/>.

Scholastic Dishonesty: The University expects every student to maintain a high standard of individual integrity for work done. Scholastic dishonesty is a serious offence which includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test or other class work, plagiarism (the appropriation of another's work and the unauthorized incorporation of that work in one's own work), and collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing college work offered for credit). In cases of scholastic dishonesty, Dr. Lipscomb will initiate disciplinary proceedings against the student. Any student caught cheating on an exam or plagiarizing a written document will receive a grade of "0" *and* disciplinary proceedings will be initiated. It's not worth the risk—don't do it!

**Pagers & cell phones are disruptive to this class.
ALWAYS turn them off when entering the classroom.**

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