

SCHOOL OF FINE ART AND MUSIC

Winter Semester 2016

MUSC*2150

MUSIC AND POPULAR CULTURE



INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Colleen Renihan
TIME: Tuesday 7:00 – 9:50 p.m.
LOCATION: Richards Building, Rm. 2520
OFFICE: Johnston Building, Rm. 118
PHONE: Extension 53139
EMAIL: crenihan@uoguelph.ca
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 12-2:00pm, Johnston Building, Rm. 118, or by appointment

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

A survey of the major genres, styles, personalities and performances of popular music primarily in the 20th-century through lectures, listening, discussion and reading. Issues such as the relationship between popular music and race, class, technology, and art will be examined. Technical knowledge of music is not required.

INSTRUCTOR'S COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the history of North American popular music in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Students will be encouraged to participate in guided discussions of the musical, socio-cultural, and political aspects of popular music genres ranging from Tin Pan Alley songs in New York in the late nineteenth century to local musicians here in Guelph in the early twenty-first century. Through an innovative 'Singing for Social Change' project, students will enter into a creative dialogue with music and historical figures who believed in music's ability to intercede in political and social issues.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester:

- You will gain a deeper understanding of how music reflects culture, and how music has been used in very different ways in different cultural and geographical contexts;
- You will understand how and why generic lines have been drawn in popular music;
- You will gain a working knowledge of and apply musical terminology appropriately to examples in all genres;
- You will be able to identify ways that historical context influences genre and style;
- You will have improved musical analysis and listening skills;
- You will gain the ability to approach sound and music more critically, thereby enriching your approach to all kinds of music;
- You will be able to articulate how popular music is tied so strongly to issues of identity (both individual and collective);
- You will be able to articulate how the histories of popular music and technology are inseparable;
- You will gain an appreciation for the myriad ways that the music business influences the dissemination and circulation of music throughout the twentieth century.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

1. Listening Tests
 - Listening Test 1 (February 9).....15%
 - Listening Test 2 (March 15).....15%
2. Singing for Social Change Project (dates will range based on group assignment)
 - Choice: paragraph/ poster/ web work/ interview/ performance/ composition.....20%
 - Participation in classroom roundtable discussion.....5%
 - Participation in online discussion.....5%
3. Final Exam (April 22, 2016 8:30-10:30am).....40%

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH GRADING SCHEME

90-100	A+ (Excellent)	67-69	C+ (Adequate)
85-89	A (Excellent)	63-66	C (Adequate)
80-84	A- (Excellent)	60-62	C- (Adequate)
77-79	B+ (Good)	57-59	D+ (Marginal)
73-76	B (Good)	53-56	D (Marginal)
70-72	B- (Good)	50-52	D- (Marginal)
		0-49	F (Inadequate)

REQUIRED TEXT

The following course text is available for purchase at the University of Guelph Bookstore:
 Larry Starr and Christopher Waterman, *American Popular Music from Minstrelsy to MP3*. 4th Edition.
 Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Playlists of music are available on the textbook site & with book.

LISTENING TESTS

Students will be tested twice during the semester on the music we've listened to and discussed in class. Students will be required to identify the song title, artist, date, and answer contextual, historical, and musical questions about its content and creation.

SINGING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE PROJECT

In light of protests across the continent in response to racial, gender, and sexual orientation injustices that continue to proliferate, it is apt for us to consider how music, historically, has been used as a forum for the expression of related concerns. It has also, in many ways, been used as a vehicle for social change. Students will be assigned to a particular group and song, and will choose the activity they wish to do to engage in a thoughtful discussion in class about the resonances of the song, and its engagement in the righting of historical injustices of various kinds. More information will be circulated in class.

ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) as soon as possible. For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email sas@uoguelph.ca.

WHEN YOU CANNOT MEET A COURSE REQUIREMENT

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, ID#, and email contact. [See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.](#)

DROP DATE

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **Friday, 11 March 2016**. For [regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

COPIES OF OUT-OF-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights that carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. [The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar](#).

RECORDING OF MATERIALS

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

COMMUNICATION

Please use email to contact the instructor outside of the classroom. Though email needn't be overly formal, you should compose your email messages with proper English, spelling, grammar, and capitalization so that communications are clear and professional. Please also use your University of Guelph address for all communications with the instructor, and include the course code in the subject line, and your full name in the body of the email. I will respond to emails within 24 business hours.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Students may be excused to observe a religious holy day without penalty provided they notify the instructor in advance. The policy states: *“The University acknowledges the pluralistic nature of the graduate and undergraduate communities. Accommodation will be made to students who experience a conflict between a religious obligation and scheduled tests, mid-term examinations, final examinations, or requirements to attend classes and participate in laboratories. The type of accommodation granted will vary depending on the nature, weight and timing of the work for which accommodation is sought. Accordingly, the request for alternative arrangements normally must be submitted to the instructor in charge of the course within two weeks of the distribution of the course outline. A student requiring accommodation may submit the request to the instructor directly or through his/her program counsellor. The instructor has a responsibility to provide reasonable alternative arrangements that do not put the student at an academic disadvantage.”* Students will be held responsible for material while absent.

