

SYLLABUS

ROCK N ROLL: HISTORY, CULTURE, AND AESTHETICS
MUS 114 A
SPRING 2017; T-Th 9:30 am – 10:50 am

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the development of rock n roll and similar popular genres from their origins in the 1940s to about 1980. Aside from a detailed historical study and investigation of the elements of stylistic evolution, themes throughout the course will include analysis of the place rock n roll holds as a cultural phenomenon, connections between style and genres, and a continuing discussion of the aesthetics of rock n roll and the resulting ongoing arguments for and against the inclusion of rock n roll in the realm of "serious music."

COURSE MATERIALS

- Textbook — Szatmary, David P., Rockin in Time: A Social History of Rock and Roll, Pearson Custom Publishing, 6th or 7th edition. (AVAILABLE ON THE CLASS WEB SITE OR HARD COPY BY REQUEST)
- Online Resources — The web site for the course will include links to online materials as well as MP3s for use in this class. (<http://acmusic114.net>) Readings will be available there in PDF format as well.

ASSIGNMENTS

Regular listening and analysis assignments will be given. Unannounced quizzes on the lectures, listening, and reading material may be given throughout the semester. A handout giving specific information about the assignment will always accompany longer assignments.

All assignments will be available on the class web page after they are presented in class.

There is a final research paper on an approved topic for this class.

CONCERTS

You are required to attend TWO rock/pop/country/blues/alternative/hip hop/etc concerts throughout the semester and write a reaction essay on each. Parameters of the assignment will be posted on the web site. Suggested sources for tickets and concert calendars are also posted with the online syllabus. Classical music, opera, musical theater DO NOT count.

TESTS

There are two or three tests throughout the semester. Since intelligent discussion of one aspect of the historical and stylistic development of any art form usually requires an awareness of those that came before and since, tests will require a cumulative knowledge of the course materials. The tests are 80-minutes each.

Accommodations for alternative test-taking are available *with advance notice to and official approval of the ASC*.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not taken in this course, but most of the material for the course will be developed through in-class listening, discussion, and lectures with the textbook serving as supplemental reading and review for tests. In other words, this is not a "read the book — take the test" kind of class. Making-up such work is not really possible; therefore, this makes attendance important. More than two or three absences during the semester will probably affect your understanding of what is going on in class, not to mention your performance on assignments and tests. If your extra-curricular activities require that you are away regularly, you should arrange to get lecture materials from a colleague.

HINT: Take notes...there is a lot presented in class, and while it may seem like "storytime," that is the stuff that will be on the tests!

Assignments, presentations, tests, quizzes, exams, etc. will not be made up or accepted late due to unexcused absences. Absences are excused and late work and make-up exams are allowed at the discretion of the instructor, usually as a result of school-sponsored activities or extreme personal emergencies. In general, make-up work will be due BEFORE the posted due date.

GRADING

All quizzes, tests, and assignments will have a point value. Points earned will be added and then divided by the total possible points to determine a raw percentage. The raw percentage is adjusted with consideration for the highest grade in the course to determine the final percentage. The final percentage will be applied to the following scale to determine the final grade.

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|--------|----|-------|----|-------|----|
| 93-100 | A | 81-82 | B- | 69-70 | D+ |
| 91-92 | A- | 79-80 | C+ | 63-68 | D |
| 89-90 | B+ | 73-78 | C | 61-62 | D- |
| 83-88 | B | 71-72 | C- | | |

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Austin College policy on academic integrity will be carefully observed in this class. I would much rather you asked for help than claim as your own work that is not original. Any problems with academic integrity on assignments or tests may result in disciplinary action through official college channels. Further, if your work violates the policy for Academic Integrity, you will receive NO CREDIT for that assignment.

TOPICS

This is a very rough and hopelessly optimistic estimate of our class schedule. The actual schedule and time spent on topics will depend upon our interests and where the class takes us.

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| Week 1-2 | 1940s: Roots (Blues, Jazz, Rhythm and Blues) |
| Week 3-4 | 1950s: Invention (The Creators of an Art Form) |
| Week 5-6 | 1960s: Entertainment (Doo Wop, Teen Idols, Girl Groups) —> (Test #1) |
| Week 7 | 1960s: Exploration (Surf Music and The Beach Boys) |
| Week 8 | 1960s: Politics (Folk Rock) |
| Week 8-10 | 1960s: Revolution (The Beatles & The British Invasion) —> (Test #2) |
| Week 11 | 1960s: Counter-Revolution (Psychedelic and San Francisco) |
| Week 12 | 1970s: Transformation (Rock as an Art Form) |
| Week 13 | 1970s and Beyond: Communication (Rock and the New Media) —> (Final) |

ASSIGNMENTS

Details of all assignments will be added to the web site as they are assigned.

acmusic114.net