

University of Western Ontario
Don Wright Faculty of Music
Music 2709A - Special Topics in Music History: Hip Hop
Fall 2022

Professor: Dr. Ryan Bruce

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Course Delivery: Asynchronous

Course Description

A survey of rap music and hip hop culture with an emphasis on musical style, historical development, and political context.

Additional Description

Music 2709 investigates the history and culture of Hip Hop with connections to music of the African diaspora, and its expressions from the 1970s to contemporary practice after 2010. We will engage with written texts, videos, recordings to develop a critical lens on topics and issues such as listening, audiences, race, gender, technology, geography, politics, identity, mass media, and globalization which shape hip hop culture expressed through music. No prior training in music is required.

Course Prerequisites: None

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Discuss historical and current social forces that shape Hip Hop cultures.
2. Explain how extra-musical forces such as race, class, gender, economics, politics, media, and technology shape the culture and music industry of hip hop.
3. Identify and describe significant recordings from Hip Hop and related genres of music.
4. Use discipline-specific terminology in the description of musical works.
5. Express ideas about Hip Hop that are researched and informed from a variety of texts.

Textbook

Orejuela, Fernando. *Rap and Hip Hop Culture*, 2nd ed. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022.

**An ebook rental is available online. See the course website for details.

Listening

You will create a Spotify account to access the listening examples. See the course website for instructions.

Method of Assessment

Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
Quizzes	4 X 10% each	Ongoing
Required Discussions/Reflection Report		
Graded Discussion	5%	Random selection from 4, ongoing
Discussion Participation	15%	Ongoing
Reflection Report	20%	November 27, 2022
Final Exam	20%	TBA (December 10–22, 2022)
Total	100%	

Academic Policies

i) **Course Prerequisites: None.** Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

ii) **Grading scale:** A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.

iii) **Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work ($\geq 10\%$):** Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate policy on accommodation for medical illness at the following website for further details regarding requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

iv) **Academic Consideration for Missing Work ($< 10\%$):** In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade (ie. two or fewer assignments) due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if documentation is voluntarily submitted to the Associate Dean's office and the Associate Dean grants an accommodation, then the missed assignment(s) or quiz(zes) will be discounted

in the calculation of the final grade for the course. If documentation is not voluntarily submitted then the missed assignment(s) will receive a grade of zero. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

v) **Academic Offences:** Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

vi) **Mental Health & Wellness:** Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in UCC room 76. **Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in UC11 or to click on the green "I Need Help Now" button on the Health and Wellness page above.**

vii) **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Students work with Accessible Education Western (AEW, formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

viii) **Religious Accommodation:** Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar. <http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

ix) **Contingency Plan:** Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 restrictions may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Instructor's note: this university policy does not effect the delivery or assessment of our asynchronous online course.

x) **Evaluation Policy Exemption:** This course has received an exemption from the requirement in the Senate Policy on Evaluation of Undergraduate Academic Performance that stipulates "At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a 1000- or 2000-level course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade."

xi) **Electronic Devices in Exams:** Electronic devices of any type will be permitted during the Midterm Test and/or Final Exam in this course (unless required for accessibility reasons based on an approved accommodation request from Accessible Education).

xii) **Plagiarism Detection Software Usage:** All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the

detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

xiii) **Computer-marked Multiple-choice Tests or Exams:** These may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

xiv) **Implicit Consent to Remote Proctoring:** When required, tests and examinations in this course may be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.

xv) **Recording of Online Activities:** All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation, or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor.

xvi) **Online Etiquette:** Some components of this course may involve synchronous online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please observe the following general considerations of "netiquette":

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of "Zoom-bombing" a class, or of other serious online offenses, may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

Course Schedule

This is a guide to the week-by-week units. With the exception of due dates (discussions, quizzes, assignment and exam), the schedule of topics may not be strictly followed.

Readings refer to the textbook chapters.

Dates	Topic
Week 1: Sep 8–11	Course Setup and Introduction No Discussions
Week 2: Sep 12–18	Listening, and What is Hip Hop? Reading: Ch. 1 No Discussions
Week 3: Sep 19–25	Predecessors and Early Hip Hop Reading: Ch. 2 Week 3 Discussion: - Original Post Due Thursday Sep 22, 11:59pm - Responses Due Sunday Sep 25, 11:59pm
Week 4: Sep 26–Oct 2	Hip Hop Culture and the “4 Pillars” Reading: Ch. 3 Quiz 1 open Friday 8am-Sunday, 11:59pm No Discussions
Week 5: Oct 3–9	African American Music and Aesthetics Reading: Ch. 4 Week 5 Discussion: - Original Post Due Thursday Oct 6, 11:59pm - Responses Due Sunday Oct 9, 11:59pm
Week 6: Oct 10–16	DJs and MCs Reading: Ch. 5 Quiz 2 open Friday 8am-Sunday, 11:59pm No Discussions

Week 7: Oct 17–23	1980s: The Golden Era Reading: Ch. 6 Week 7 Discussion: - Original Post Due Thursday, 11:59pm - Responses Due Sunday, 11:59pm
Week 8: Oct 24–30	Message Rap and Hardcore Rap Reading: Ch. 7 Quiz 3 open Friday 8am-Sunday, 11:59pm
Oct 31–Nov 6	Fall Reading Week (no classes)
Week 9: Nov 7–13	The DJ Strikes Back: 1995 and After Week 9 Discussion: - Original Post Due Thursday, 11:59pm - Responses Due Sunday, 11:59pm
Week 10: Nov 14–20	Gangsta Rap Reading: Ch. 8 Quiz 4 open Friday 8am-Sunday, 11:59pm
Week 11: Nov 21–27	Hip Hop after 2000 Reading: Ch. 9 and 10 Reflection Report Due Sunday Nov 27 No Discussions
Week 12: Nov 28–Dec 4	Global Hip Hop Reading: Ch. 11 No Discussions
Week 13: Dec 5–8	Conclusion and Review Reading: Ch. 12 No Discussions
TBA (Dec 10–22)	Final Exam