

History of Rock and Roll Fall Semester Curriculum

Instructor: William Rabun

Prerequisites: None

Course Description:

This course will meet two times weekly for the semester and will cover topics from the early origins of rock and roll through current popular and subset genres of rock and roll. The course will begin with the roots of rock and roll by covering the transfer of ideas between jazz, blues, and rockabilly musicians. Additional emphasis will be placed on the social aspect of rock and roll music and how the genre has helped shape American culture, and how the genre has become a global phenomenon.

Course Objectives:

1. Identify the characteristic differences between styles of rock and roll, and later third-stream genres.
2. Develop an understanding of the social and cultural context of rock and roll music and how it relates to other areas within music, and outside music.
3. Determine the factors which hindered the distribution of early rock and roll music and look for similar trends in modern society.
4. Understand how rock and roll music represents specific ideas, goals, and beliefs.

Texts and Materials:

Friedlander, Paul., and Peter Miller. *Rock & Roll: A Social History*. 2nd ed. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2006.

Additional course readings, videos, and audio files will be shared electronically to negate the need to purchase separate materials.

Course Requirements:

Reading Blog: To ensure the material has been completely understood, there will be a short blog required weekly (**1-2 paragraph(s)**) in which students will respond to the text and detail the overarching themes within the reading. Submissions will be online.

Weight: 20%

In-Class Discussion: While attendance will not be taken, it is expected that everyone attend class on a regular basis to participate in discussions. While it is difficult to accurately gauge the level of participation in discussions, heavy absence and non-participation will negatively impact your grade.

Weight: 10%

Quizzes: There will be a short 20 question quiz at the end of each unit. Students will be expected to answer general questions about the defining characteristics of particular styles of rock and roll and be able to identify major contributors to the development of the genre. Quizzes will be multiple choice.

Weight: 5% for each quiz for a cumulative weight of 20%

Exam: There will be one cumulative final exam at the end of the semester. A combination of multiple choice, and essay format questions will be used to gauge understanding. There will be an option to write an additional essay for additional points if you happen to score poorly on an exam, or if your overall course grade is low toward the end of the semester.

Weight: 20%

Final Reflection Paper: The final paper should discuss the general evolution of rock and roll music, and how it has effected change within the United States. Personal observations of specific works, and how the music changed your perspective are encouraged. This paper should follow these general guidelines: (DUE DEC 17)

Font: 12 pt. Times New Roman

Paper: Double spaced

Length: 4-5 pages (points will be deducted for papers that are not close to this range)

Citation style: Chicago (for help with this see my office hours, or visit the campus writing lab)

Follow the rubric for more specific information on grading of this assignment.

Weight: 30%

Grading: Grading will be calculated using the percentage points in the following areas:

Reading Blog	20%
In-class Discussion	10%
Quizzes	20%
Exam	20%
Final Reflection Paper	30%

Grading Scale:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	82-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Grades Falling below 63 percent represent a failing grade for most degree programs- see your specific course catalog for clarification

Course Calendar by Day:

Date

-UNIT 1

Week One

(AUG 27) Course overview; Learning music, and social context through the lens of rock and roll music. The early origins of rock and roll music.

Assigned reading: Chapters 1, and 2 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 1: Briefly introduce yourself and describe why you decided to take this class. (DUE AUG 31)

Week Two

(SEPT 1) Classic rock, and the first generation of rock music.

Assigned Reading: Chapter 3 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(SEPT 3) The second generation of class rock music.

Assigned Reading: Chapter 4 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 2: List some differences in the style of music between the first and second generation rockers. (DUE SEPT 7)

Week Three

(SEPT 8) Doo-Wop, and the street music of New York and other urban centers

Assigned Reading: Chapter 5 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(SEPT 10) QUIZ 1

Study topics:

- **Authenticity**
- **Music Embedded in Culture**
- **Themes that Transcend the Eras**
- **Objectivity and Bias**
- **Black Musical Roots, and Country and Folk Music**
- **First and Second-Generation Rockers**
- **Doo-Wop**

BLOG 3: No blog because of quiz.

-UNIT 2

Week Four

(SEPT 15) The rock music of the early 1960s.

Assigned Reading: Chapter 6 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(SEPT 17) The British invasion: The Beatles

Assigned Reading: Chapter 7 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 4: Describe the change The Beatles made on rock music, and how they were received in America. (DUE SEPT 21)

Week Five

(SEPT 22) The British invasion continued: The Rolling Stones

Assigned Reading: Chapter 8 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(SEPT 24) Wrapping up the British invasion: The Who

Assigned Reading: Chapter 9 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 5: Describe the difference of reception between The Beatles and The Rolling Stones. (DUE SEPT 28)

UNIT 3-

Week Six

(SEPT 29) QUIZ 2

Study Topics:

- **Record companies and producers**
- **Bands of the British invasion**
- **Yoko Ono**
- **Electronic music**
- **Lead Singers**

(OCT 1) Folk singers: Bob Dylan

Assigned Reading: Chapter 10 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 6: No blog because of quiz.

Week Seven

(OCT 6) Folk Rock: The music of The Eagles, and Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young

Assigned Reading: Chapter 11 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(OCT 8) Soul Music: The music of Aretha Franklin, James Brown, and Otis Redding

Assigned Reading: Chapter 12 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 7: Describe **ONE** difference, and **ONE** similarity in style between soul music and folk rock. (DUE OCT 12)

Week Eight

(OCT 13) Motown Music: Rhythm and Blues in Detroit

Assigned Reading: Chapter 13 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(OCT 15) QUIZ 3

Study Topics:

- **Protest Songs**
- **Pop Music**
- **Black Popular Music of the Sixties**
- **Blind Musicians**

BLOG 8: No blog because of quiz.

UNIT 4-

Week Nine

(OCT 20) Drugs and the San Francisco style of Rock

Assigned Reading: Chapter 14 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(OCT 22) Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton and other virtuoso rock guitarists

Assigned Reading: Chapter 15 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 9: Describe the playing characteristics of **EITHER** Hendrix, or Clapton. (DUE OCT 26)

Week Ten

(OCT 27) Hair Bands of the 1970s

Assigned Reading: Chapter 16 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(OCT 29) Emergence of Punk Rock

Assigned Reading: Chapter 17 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 10: What social stimulus pushed for the creation of Punk Rock? (DUE NOV 2)

Week Eleven

(NOV 3) Music of the 1980s and the beginning of MTV

Assigned Reading: Chapter 18 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(NOV 5) Alternative rock, and the uprising of rap music

Assigned Reading: Chapter 19 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

BLOG 11: Briefly describe the characteristics of rap music. (DUE NOV 9)

Week Twelve

(NOV 10) Heavy metal, and other less-popular forms of rock

Assigned Reading: Chapter 20 of *Rock and Roll: A Social History*

(NOV 12) 21st-Century Rock music

BLOG 12: Describe your favorite band, **OR** style of music and tell why you enjoy it. (DUE NOV 16)

Week Thirteen

(NOV 17) Blending of Musical Genres- The Latinx community, and their influence on 21st-Century popular rock music.

(NOV 19) YouTube, and Spotify and finding the next generation of folk music.

Assigned Reading: Search on a social media platform to find lesser-known artists. Try using Keywords such as Cover, Busker, Street Musician, and Live to see what you can find.

BLOG 13: Attach a YouTube, or Spotify (or other social media) link and describe what type of rock music is being played. You should look for covers, or live performances. (DUE DEC 1)

Week Fourteen

Fall Break

BLOG 14: Fall break- no blog.

Week Fifteen

(DEC 1) Music of conflict: The change in focus of military music ensembles following the Vietnam War, and the use of rock for building morale during the conflicts in the Middle East surrounding the 9-11-2001 terrorist attacks.

(DEC 3) QUIZ 4

Study Topics:

- **Grunge Rock**
- **Hair Bands**
- **Protest songs surrounding Vietnam**
- **Busking, and street performance**

BLOG 15: No blog due to quiz.

Week Sixteen

(DEC 8) Music of change: Outlining the music that came out of the 2020 push for social justice.

Assigned Reading: Find an article that is from a 2020 news source that describes a song written in response to the social unrest in the later parts of 2020 to share with the class.

(DEC 10) Topics addressing marginalized groups that were left out of the course textbook.

BLOG 16: Write a paragraph about the importance of including marginalized groups when considering the topic of rock music, and other related genres. (DUE DEC 14)

Week Seventeen

(DEC 15) Review for Final Exam A specific study guide will be provided with questions that are very similar to those asked on the final exam. The exam will be roughly double the length of a standard quiz and will address topics from all of the time periods covered during the semester.

(DEC 17) FINAL EXAM/ FINAL REFLECTION PAPER DUE