MUSI 102
Popular Music in America
FALL 2021

Professor: Dr. Gyu Tag Lee
Time: Monday & Wednesday 14:00 – 15:15
Room: TBA
Email: gleeg@gmu.edu
Office: #547
Office Hours: Tuesday 13:30-14:30/16:30-17:30 or by appointment

Course Description:

This course offers a general overview of popular music in twentieth and the early twenty first century America. Throughout the semester, we explore many different genres of popular music including: Blues, Swing, Rock and Roll, Motown, Hip hop, etc. We study how these genres evolved and influenced each other over time. Another important dimension of the course will be learning the relations between popular music and society, copyright, and globalization. Since music is the focal point of the course, course materials and assignments include readings, listening to music, and videos about popular music.

Note: This syllabus is designed for the online-only class in the COVID-19 era. There may be changes if the instruction mode changes.

Course Textbooks:

- There is no specific textbook for this class.

- Most of the recommended course texts will be made available on Blackboard (https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu) or will be provided by email. It is your responsibility to print these texts or read them electronically, and take good notes. Please check Blackboard regularly for course texts and announcements. Also, PowerPoint materials used in the class would be available on the Blackboard.

- There is only one book that I recommend you to use as a reference in this class. The title of the book is *American Popular Music* (4th edition), written by Larry Starr and Christopher Waterman (2013). You can find this book at our IGC library. For Korean students, the Korean translation is also available at the library.

- Another important “text” for this course is your GMU email account. I will be periodically sending out updates, announcements, and syllabus changes to your GMU email addresses and it is your responsibility to regularly check your email and maintain space in your inboxes. The phrase “I did not get your email” is not an acceptable excuse.

Course Polices and Student Responsibilities:
1. Attendance
   a. You are expected to **attend all classes**, arriving **before** the class begins and remaining engaged for the duration of each class meeting. If you cannot attend class due to illness or other emergency, you should notify your professor directly or by email before class.

   b. Arriving late or leaving early is equal to 1/2 absence. **Any more than 3 absences** will result in a grade penalty in participation.

   c. If a student misses **more than 6 classes** (7 absences or more) he or she would be fail.

2. Class Preparation and Participation
   a. **Class Preparation and Participation**
      - Students must prepare in advance for every class meeting (recommended reading and written homework). Class participation means that you actively engage in the discussions/activities and that you take notes during discussions and lectures.
      - **DO NOT WORK ON OTHER CLASS ASSIGNMENTS, TEXT MESSAGE/KAKAO TALK, READ EMAIL, FACEBOOK OR ENGAGE IN OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA DURING CLASS TIME. Your grade will be seriously lowered** if the instructor finds you doing those things.

   b. **Mobile Phones and Other Electronic Devices** (Laptops, Tablets, etc.) «This policy is applicable to face-to-face, in-person classroom meeting»
      - During class all mobile phones should be switched off or to silent mode, and put away out of sight. Mobile phones on your desk, lap, or within sight are not allowed. Using phones without permission can negatively impact your participation grade. If mobile phones or other devices use continues after the start of class you may be asked to leave the classroom, which could also affect your attendance score.
      - Students should keep in mind that this is a laptop ban class when we have a face to face meeting.

   c. **Homework and Written Assignments**
      - You must complete the homework and written assignments **independently and individually**. **Copying homework and/or a written assignment from a current or former student is cheating**. University policies for cases of academic integrity can be found at: [http://oai.gmu.edu/](http://oai.gmu.edu/). *If you have any questions about these policies, please ask your professor before completing the assignment.*

   d. **Course Readings and Worksheets**
      - You are responsible for completing reading homework for every class meeting if there is any. You should be prepared to share the main ideas from each reading and have the written assignments ready for in-class discussions/activities. Your professor may check to see if your homework is complete at any time. These homework checks are part of your Preparation
and Participation Grade. Do not email “missing” or late worksheets to your professor. You must be present in-class to receive credit for homework.

e. Graded Assignments
   - These must be typed using MS Word. All text must be in 12-point font and double-spaced. Please check spelling and grammar prior to submitting your assignments.

※ If you want to get advising for your writing assignment, you can visit GMUK Academic Resource Center. Please find more information about it at the end of this syllabus.

3. Late Work
   : You must get permission from the professor to submit work after the posted due date. Otherwise, late work will not be accepted and will result in a “zero” grade. Even when permission is given, late work may be subject to a certain percent grade penalty.

4. Technology
   : You are expected to use Blackboard to access course materials. Also, you should be able to access your GMU e-mail account.

5. Quizzes
   : Basically, no make-up quizzes or exams will be given.

6. Time Management
   : You are encouraged to make an appointment with the course professor as soon as you experience difficulty in the course or have questions about an assignment or exam. Do not wait to get help. Keep in mind that poor planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on the part of your professor (i.e. if you wait until the last minute to make an appointment with your professor, you may not have the opportunity to do so).

Students with Disabilities

: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Academic Affairs at 032-626-5060. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the Office.

Mason Diversity Statement

: George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also
entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.
Course Assessments and Grading Scale
FALL 2021

Your course grade will consist of the following:

1. Short Essays 15% (total 150 pts)
2. Individual (or Group) Research 20% (200 pts)
3. Reflection paper on a live performance 10% (100 pts)
4. Mid-Term Exam 10% (100 pts)
5. Participation 30% (total 300 pts.)
   5.1 Attendance 15% (150 pts.)
   5.2 Classroom Discussion Participation 15% (150 pts.)
6. Final Exam 15% (150 pts)

Total 100% (1,000 pts)

Grading Scale
- A+ = 97.0~100, A0 = 93.0~96.9, A- = 89.0~92.9
- B+ = 85.0~88.9, B0 = 81.0~84.9, B- = 77.0~80.9
- C+ = 73.0~76.9, C0 = 69.0~72.9, C- = 65.0~68.9
- D or F = below 65.0

Overview of Course Assignments

1. Short Essay: 15% (total 150 pts)
   - During the semester, students will be given 5-6 ‘Short Essay’ assignments. For each short essay, Professor will give students a topic related to main themes that they study. The minimum word-count for each essay will be 330 words.
   - The essay does not have to be very formal and strictly academic. You can write your thoughts, opinions, and arguments more freely than the typical academic essay.
   - Avoid summarizing the readings and other references – move quickly into an analytical response and show your own arguments/opinions. This essay should be argumentative, rather than too descriptive and/or informative.
   - If your answer is well-made and seems more insightful/interesting than usual, you will get up to 5 extra points. Therefore, if you get extra points for some of your essays, your total points can be more than 150 pts.
   - Note on grading: When marking this, I will NOT be strictly looking for grammar, organization, and so on. I will be looking for evidence that you are engaged with what we’ve done during the class, and your own thoughts/reflections/opinions about the topic that you choose to write about. Papers that simply re-hash the lectures or the readings, or that fail to show an explicit connection to the class will receive reduced or zero credit.
2. **Individual (or Group) Research: 20% (200 pts)**

※ *If we can have face-to-face, in-person class in this semester, this assignment will be shifted to the group project. Details will be announced later when available. Otherwise, students will conduct this research project individually.*

- Students will research a specific topic that they choose for themselves. The topic does not have to be specifically highlighted within the readings or lectures. However, it should be related to the major theme of this class – American popular music.

- After that, you will make a presentation-ready file (such as PPT, Prezi, or PDF) based on your research. It is not necessary to write a full-length paper, but you also can do that as a supplement material.

- Students can make presentations based on their research and video-record it. This is optional, not mandatory (extra credit available). When you make a presentation, your presentation should be between 10-15 minutes.

3. **Reflection Paper on a Live Music Performance: 10% (100 pts)**

※ *If COVID-19 situation gets worse, this assignment will be cancelled and replaced by other assignment.*

- During this semester, you should watch at least one online or offline live music performance. After watching the performance, you will write one (1), 330-word reflection paper about it.

- The performance can be any kind of music performance – it can be a performance by American musician, Korean musician, or musicians from anywhere in the world. Also, you can watch a street performance by unknown, amateur musicians, classical music concerts, traditional music performances, musicals, and even performance by your own colleague in our college!

- You can submit your reflection paper anytime during the semester – there is no specific due date. However, you should submit it by the very last week of the semester (12/05/2021).

- When you write this reflection paper, you should attach your ticket and/or brochure for the performance (if applicable), or the photo/screen-captured image (or even selfie) to your paper as evidence.

4. **Mid-Term Exam: 10% (100 pts)**

- The mid-term exam is supposed to let you know how the final exam will look like as well as to check what you have learned so far.
- It will consist of ‘Fill in the Blanks’ and a couple of ‘Short Essay’ questions.

- During the exam, you can open your hand-written notebook to refer to. However, any other material (including printed-out lecture PPTs and recommended reading materials) is not allowed. Details will be announced later.

5. **Participation: 30% (total 300 pts.)**
   In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole.

5.1 **Attendance: 15% (150 pts.)**
   : Refer to the course policy section

5.2 **Classroom Discussion Participation: 15% (150 pts.)**

- Class participation is crucial to one’s overall grade. It will be assessed by your participation during other students’ presentation and other usual class participations.

- *This is separate from your general attendance. They are separately graded. It means your attendance does not count as classroom discussion participation.*

- It will be counted based on how many times you participate. Therefore, you can get zero if you do not make any participation during class discussions in the semester. You can get the full participation grade when you make seven or more participations through the whole semester.

- Just saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’ will not count as participation.

6. **Final Exam: 15% (150 pts)**

- The format of final exam will be similar to that of mid-term exam. Details will be announced later.
Class Schedule:

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- Basically, we have a synchronous online class via Zoom on every Wednesday 14:00-15:15.

- If necessary, we may have additional synchronous online meetings on Monday 14:00-15:15 as well. The professor will let you know previously if there is an additional Thursday synchronous online meeting.

- Additionally, you will be provided asynchronous class materials including, but not limited to, recorded lectures, Short Essay assignments, watching video content (films, Youtube clips, music videos, etc.), reading materials, or Discussion Board assignment. It will be uploaded on the Blackboard ‘Weekly Lessons’ section. You can expect feedback from the Professor about your assignment and discussion within a week after the submission.

Week 1 (08. 23 / 08. 25)   Course Introduction: What Is Popular Music?

Week 2 (08. 30 / 09. 01)   Popular Music vs. Non-Popular Music

Week 3 (09. 06 / 09. 08)   Adorno and His Analysis on Popular Music

Recommended Reading:

Week 4 (09. 13 / 09. 15)   Development of Popular Music / Film (I): Almost Famous

Recommended Reading:

Week 5 (09. 20 / 09. 22)   Chuseok추석 Holidays and Fall Recess: NO CLASS

Week 6 (09. 27 / 09. 29)   Development of Popular Music (cont.) / 5 Themes of US Popular Music

Recommended Reading:
Week 7 (10. 04 / 10. 06)  5 Themes of US Popular Music (cont.)

* NO CLASS on 10/04 (Alternative Holiday for National Foundation Day)

Week 8 (10. 11 / 10. 13)  Midterm Exam

* NO CLASS on 10/11 (Alternative Holiday for Hangul Proclamation Day)

Week 9 (10. 18 / 10. 20)  3 Traditions of US Popular Music

Recommended Reading:

Week 10 (10. 25 / 10. 27)  3 Traditions of US Popular Music (cont.) / Blues: The Very Beginning of US Popular Music

Recommended Reading:

Week 11 (11. 01 / 11. 03)  Blues: The Very Beginning of US Popular Music (cont.) / Swing: US Cultural Symbol

Recommended Reading:

Recommended Film:
*Swing Girls*

Week 12 (11. 08 / 11. 10)  Swing: US Cultural Symbol (cont.) / Rock and Roll and Elvis Presley

Recommended Reading:

Week 13 (11. 15 / 11. 17)  Rock and Roll and Elvis Presley (cont.) / Film (II): *Dreamgirls* / Motown in the 1960s
Recommended Reading:

Week 14 (11. 22 / 11. 24) Motown in the 1960s (cont.) / Film: Straight Outta Compton

Week 15 (11. 29 / 12. 01) Issues in Hip Hop

Recommended Reading:


* We May Have An Additional Class on 12/06 (MON.) If Needed.

*Final Exam Schedule: TBD

In the interest of everyone’s safety, students and faculty must follow these guidelines during the FALL 2021 semester.

1. Use the basement entrance to enter and exit Mason’s building. Your temperature will be screened each time you enter the building. Allow additional time before class to complete the entrance screening procedure. Carry your student ID card with you at all times and be ready to show it when you enter and exit the building. Do not prop doors or let others enter the building through doors on the ground floor.

2. Wear a face mask at all times. Remain 6 feet apart from others. Clean your seat and desk space with disinfectant wipes before you begin class. Use hand sanitizer regularly, and avoid shaking hands or other forms of physical contact. Do not share pens, pencils or other personal items. Limit your use of the elevators, and use stairs to travel between floors of the building. Students are expected to purchase their own masks for personal use. Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom.

3. Classrooms are marked to indicate appropriate seating to allow for social distancing. Only sit in allowable seats, and maintain current set-up of classroom furniture. If you are asked to re-arrange classroom furniture by your professor for in-class exercises, return furniture to its original position when you are finished.

4. Observe these rules at all times during the class period and while in Mason’s building or
other public areas of the campus. This includes during class breaks, in small group work (in or out of class), meetings with your professors during office hours, tutoring sessions at the Academic Resource Center, socializing in common areas, or any other activities on campus.

5. Make sure windows and doors remain open during the class period to promote circulation of outside air. Classrooms without windows have mechanical systems that vent air, but doors should be kept open at all times.

6. The safest option for studying is to study alone in your dorm room or at home. If you must study in the building, alone or in groups, observe these rules at all times.

7. All faculty and students must abide by these rules in the classroom. If you see others who are not observing the rules outside the classroom, you may report this to your instructor, student affairs or academic affairs.

8. Do not enter the Mason building or come to class if you have symptoms such as fever, chills, sore throat, persistent cough, shortness of breath or other respiratory difficulties. If you must miss class for this reason, send an email immediately to the professor prior to the beginning of class. You will not be penalized for missing class for this reason, but you may be asked to provide documentation that you sought medical diagnosis or treatment. You are responsible for making up any missed assignments or tests as a result of your absence.

9. Students who come to class with visible signs of illness will be asked to leave the classroom immediately and seek assistance from the IGC Health Clinic. Faculty will report your name and symptoms to the Office of Student Affairs (mksa@gmu.edu) to confirm that you have sought medical assistance.

10. Failure to comply with any of these guidelines may result in disciplinary action through the Student Code of Conduct.

Academic Integrity

: George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, Plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited.

: All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.

Enrollment

: Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class.
: Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. Deadlines each semester are published in the Academic Calendar available from George Mason University-Korea website (https://masonkorea.gmu.edu/academic-calendars/academic-calendars).
: Last day to add – Aug 30, 2021
: Final Drop Deadline (with 100% tuition refund) – Sep 6, 2021
Unrestricted Withdrawal Period (100% tuition liability) – Oct 1, 2021
After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.
Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the website for selective withdrawal procedures.

GUMK Academic Resource Center

The Academic Resource Center, GMUK is in the business of looking at your papers and problems to improve your academic achievement in the area of Writing, Mathematics, Accounting, Statistics, and Economics. You are invited to utilize the faculty and student tutor services at a variety of stages in your academic activities, checking to see that your project specifically meets the directions specified by your instructor.

While tutors are ‘fixing’ your writing or projects, they do help you become conscious of particular error patterns that emerge in your work. For more information, please contact Professor Eunmee Lee, director of Academic Resource Center (elee45@gmu.edu, office #521).