

**MUSI 60800-046 – Seminar in Music Theory: The Music of Billy Joel**  
**TH 12:30–1:50p – Landreth 113**  
**Spring 2020**  
**Dr. Sean Atkinson**

**TCU Mission**

*To educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community*

**Introductions**

About Me: Hi. My name is Dr. Sean Atkinson: he/him/his, I prefer being called Dr. Atkinson.

You: Who you are isn't defined by records or names, so if you prefer a name or a pronoun other than the one listed/suggested on my roster, please let me know.

**Contact Information**

Email: [sean.atkinson@tcu.edu](mailto:sean.atkinson@tcu.edu) (best way to reach me)

Twitter: [@seanatki](https://twitter.com/seanatki)

Office: Jarvis 312

Phone: (817) 257-5417 (you can text me at this number)

Office Hours: MWF 1pm-2pm; TH 10am-11am

**\*\*\*Final Exam Time – Thursday, May 7\*\*\***

**Required Textbook and Materials**

- Books (available in the TCU Bookstore or Online)
  - Duchan, Joshua. 2017. *Billy Joel: America's Piano Man*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
  - MacFarlane, Thomas. 2016. *Experiencing Billy Joel: A Listener's Companion*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
  - (Optional) Schruers, Fred. 2014. *Billy Joel: The Definitive Biography*. New York: Crown Archetype
- Scores (available on reserve in the Music Library; all are optional for individual purchase)
  - *Billy Joel Complete: Volume 1*. Hal Leonard. <https://www.amazon.com/Billy-Joel-Complete-1/dp/0793520703/>
  - *Billy Joel Complete: Volume 2*. Hal Leonard. <https://www.amazon.com/Billy-Joel-Complete-2/dp/0793515246/>
  - *Billy Joel: River of Dreams*. Hal Leonard. <https://www.amazon.com/Billy-Joel-River-Dreams/dp/0793527333/>
  - *Billy Joel: Fantasies & Delusions*. Hal Leonard. <https://www.amazon.com/Billy-Joel-Fantasies-Delusions-Music/dp/0634038354/>
- Spotify account (free account is fine)
- Google account
- Manuscript paper
- Pencil and eraser

**Course Description and Requirements**

The music of American singer/songwriter Billy Joel has long been overlooked by the academic community. This class engages Joel's music through a critical analytical lens, based on my own studies and recent musicological endeavors on his music. Students will explore Joel's music through multiple avenues, including harmonic analysis, lyrical analysis, and through the various "personas" presented by Joel throughout his musical output.

Student will demonstrate their knowledge of Joel's music through weekly class discussions and a final 20-minute, conference-style presentation on a topic of the student's choosing. Much of this work will literally be groundbreaking as there is relatively little research being conducted on the analysis of Joel's music.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students completing this course will not only gain a deeper understanding of Billy Joel's music, but also knowledge of the tools and analytical techniques employed in the analysis of popular music. Regular readings in this field of music theory will expose students to a branch of music theory study not currently explored in typical graduate or undergraduate music curricula.

## Teaching Philosophy

While I come to this class with a love and passion for Joel's music, the class is first and foremost a music theory seminar. As such, our focus in class will be on examining the music with critical attention. Certainly, aspects of Joel's life will come into our discussions as needed, but the primary area of study is the music.

## Course Schedule (This schedule is subject to change. Items are due on the day listed.)

Date	Listening/Reading Assignments	Large Projects
14-Jan	Introductions, Syllabus, Listen to <i>Streetlife Serenade</i> (1974), discuss plans/goals for the semester	
16-Jan	Duchan, pgs. 15–21 MacFarlane, pgs. 27–33	
21-Jan	Listen to the album <i>Piano Man</i> (1973)  <a href="#">Lehman, Frank. 2013. "Hollywood Cadences: Music and the Structure of Cinematic Expectation." <i>Music Theory Online</i>, 19.4. (Just paragraphs 4.1–4.14)</a>	
23-Jan	Covach, John. "Form in Rock Music: A Primer." (TCU Online)  (optional reading) <a href="#">Summach, Jay. "The Structure, Function, and Genesis of the Prechorus." <i>Music Theory Online</i>, 17.3.</a>	
28-Jan	Listen to the album <i>Glass Houses</i> (1980)  MacFarlane, pgs. 74–77 Schruers, pgs. 144–147	
30-Jan	<a href="#">Atlas, Robin. "Sarah Setting the Terms: Defining Phrase in Popular Music." <i>Music Theory Online</i>, 17.3.</a>	Journal Check 1
4-Feb	Listen to the album <i>Cold Spring Harbor</i> (1971)  Duchan, pgs. 119–121 MacFarlane, pgs. 6–16	
6-Feb	Listen and analyze the chord progression of "Nocturne."  Nobile, Drew. "Double-tonic complexes in Rock Music." (TCU Online)	
11-Feb	Listen to the album <i>Turnstiles</i> (1976)  Duchan, pgs. 21–35, 38–42 MacFarlane, 39–49	
13-Feb	Everett, Walter. "The Learned vs. The Vernacular in the Songs of Billy Joel." (TCU Online)	
18-Feb	Listen to the album <i>52nd Street</i> (1978)  MacFarlane, pgs. 62–71	
20-Feb	Covach, John. "Jazz-Rock? Rock-Jazz? Stylistic Crossover in Late-1970s American Progressive Rock." (TCU Online)	Journal Check 2
25-Feb	Listen to the album <i>The Stranger</i>  MacFarlane, pgs. 53–62	

27-Feb	Atkinson, Sean. "Deceptive Love and Denied Endings: Tropes in the Music of Billy Joel." (TCU Online)	
3-Mar	Duchan, pgs. 90–94	
5-Mar	5-minute lightning presentations	Prospectus Due
10-Mar	<b>Spring Break!</b>	
12-Mar	<b>Spring Break!</b>	
17-Mar	Listen to the album <i>The Nylon Curtain</i> (1982) Duchan, pgs. 42–48 MacFarlane, pgs. 78–81	
19-Mar	<a href="#">Biamonte, Nicole. "Formal Functions of Metric Dissonance in Rock Music." <i>Music Theory Online</i>, 20.2.</a>	
24-Mar	Listen to the album <i>The Bridge</i> (1986) MacFarlane, pgs. 86–88	
26-Mar	Duchan, pgs. 83–107	Journal Check 3
31-Mar	Listen to the album <i>An Innocent Man</i> (1983) MacFarlane, pgs. 81–83 Duchan, pgs. 109–119	
2-Apr	<a href="#">Hoffmann, F. "Roots of Rock: Doo-Wop." In <i>Survey of American Popular Music</i>, modified for the web by Robert Bircline.</a>	
7-Apr	Listen to the album <i>Storm Front</i> (1989) MacFarlane, pgs. 88–91	
9-Apr	Traut, Don. "'Simply Irresistible': recurring accent patterns as hook in mainstream 1980s music." (TCU Online)	
14-Apr	Listen to the album <i>River of Dreams</i> (1993) MacFarlane, pgs. 92–95 Duchan, pgs. 147–152	
16-Apr	In-class Workshop Day	
21-Apr	Listen to the album <i>Fantasies and Delusions</i> (2001) MacFarlane, pgs. 100–104	
23-Apr	In-class Workshop Day	Journal Check 4
28-Apr	Final Presentations Begin	Final Paper Due
7-May	<b>Final Exam Slot: 11:00am-1:30pm</b> Final Presentations Continue	

## Grading

Final Letter Grades are calculated as follows:

A	94-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-59
A-	90-93	B	84-86	C	74-76	D	64-66		
		B-	80-83	C-	70-73	D-	60-63		

## Assignment Descriptions

**Album Listening/Journals (30%)** – Over the course of the semester, we will be listening to all 12 of Billy Joel’s studio albums. The easiest way to listen to these is with a Spotify account, though however you listen is up to you. We will listen to a new album each week, and while class discussion will often be about the album for the current week, we certainly won’t have time to discuss every song on every album. A listening journal will be checked 4 times during the semester. The journal should be a place to keep notes, thoughts, comments, and ideas about the albums as you are listening.

Journals will be kept digitally via Google Docs. We will set these up in class on the first day.

**Prospectus (15%)** – Before Spring Break, you will complete a prospectus for your final project. A prospectus is a detailed document that outlines what your final project will contain. This includes a detailed outline with a thesis statement, an annotated bibliography, and any examples that will help to make your case.

**Lightning Presentation (5%)** – On the last day before Spring Break, you will present your prospectus as a 5-minute “Lightning” talk. This is an opportunity to share your ideas with the class and seek feedback on the direction of your project. This is considered a “Work in Progress” talk. I am not expecting strong conclusions, but rather a solid path forward on the research project.

**Final Paper (40%)** – The final project for this class will be the text and examples of a 20-minute presentation (discussed below). The paper should be fully cited, including a bibliography, discography, and musical examples with descriptive captions. A rubric for this paper will be made available after Spring Break. The paper should be between 4,000 and 5,000 words in length.

**Final Presentation (10%)** – A 20-minute, conference-style presentation of your original research paper on the music of Billy Joel. An example of this kind of presentation can be seen [here](#), and I will present a demonstration of this kind of talk in class.

## Attendance Policy

This is a graduate seminar, and as such requires active participation from every member of the class. You are expected to be present at each class meeting. In the event you must miss class, please let me know as soon as possible.

## Acknowledgement of Native American Peoples

This statement can be found on the monument erected outside of Jarvis Hall honoring the Native American peoples who once lived on the lands now occupied by TCU:

“We respectfully acknowledge all Native American peoples who have lived on this land since time immemorial. TCU especially acknowledges and pays respect to the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes upon whose historical homeland our university is located.”

## Email Notification

Only the official TCU student email address will be used for all course notification. It is your responsibility to check your TCU email on a regular basis.

## Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the [TCU Code of Student Conduct](#)): Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life and are listed in detail in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#). Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

- **Cheating:** Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself.
- **Plagiarism:** The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit therefore. *[If you are using Turnitin, place information about your course ID/password or TCU Online integration. If you want to use Turnitin as a spot check please indicate that you may use Turnitin for plagiarism detection.]*
- **Collusion:** The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.
- **Abuse of resource materials:** Mutilating, destroying, concealing, or stealing such material.
- **Computer misuse:** Unauthorized or illegal use of computer software or hardware through the TCU Computer Center or through any programs, terminals, or freestanding computers owned, leased or operated by TCU or any of its academic units for the purpose of affecting the academic standing of a student.
- **Fabrication and falsification:** Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- **Multiple submission:** The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.
- **Complicity in academic misconduct:** Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.
- **Bearing false witness:** Knowingly and falsely accusing another student of academic misconduct.

## Disabilities Statement

Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the [Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services](#) located in Sadler Hall, room 1010 or [http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability\\_services.asp](http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_services.asp). Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-6567.

*Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator. [Guidelines for documentation](#) may be found at [http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability\\_documentation.asp](http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp). Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.*

## TCU Campus Resources for Students

- Alcohol & Drug Education Center (817-257-7100, Samuelson Hall basement)
- Brown-Lupton Health Center (817-257-7938 or 817-257-7940)
- Campus Life (817-257-7926, Sadler Hall 2006)
- Center for Academic Services (817-257-7486, Sadler Hall 1022)
- Center for Digital Expression (CDeX) (cdex@tcu.edu, Scharbauer 2003)
- Counseling & Mental Health Center (817-257-7863, Samuelson Hall basement)
- Mary Couets Burnett Library (817-257-7117)
- Office of Religious & Spiritual Life (817-257-7830, Jarvis Hall 1<sup>st</sup> floor)
- Student Development Services (817-257-7855, BLUU 2003)
- Center for Writing (817-257-7221, Reed Hall 419)
- Transfer Student Center (817-257-7855, BLUU 2003)
- Veterans Services (817-257-5557, Jarvis Hall 219)

**Student parents (or caregivers) are welcome to bring children with them to class in the case of a childcare emergency, and do not need to request prior permission.**

## TCU Online

### Getting Help with TCU Online

If you experience any technical problems while using TCU Online, please do not hesitate to contact the D2L HELP DESK. They can be reached by phone or chat 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

**Phone: 1-877-325-7778**

**Chat:** Chat is available within TCU Online in the Help menu on the navigation bar.

If you are working with the helpdesk to resolve a technical issue, make sure to keep me updated on the troubleshooting progress. If you have a course-related issue (course content, assignment troubles, quiz difficulties) please contact me.

### Personal Settings & Notifications for TCU Online

As a student, you should set up your account settings, profile, and notifications. To do this you will login to TCU Online and select your name on the top right of the screen. You can upload a photo of yourself and add personal information to your profile. In the notifications area, you can add your phone number to receive text messages when grades are given, as well as reminder texts for upcoming assignments and quizzes.

### Pulse

[Pulse](#) is a phone app which gives you access to the course calendar, assignments, grades, and announcements. This app provides a graph that can help you manage your time. Based on the number of assignments and events on the course calendar for your classes, the graph will display busy times for class work in the upcoming week. You can use this app to manage your daily workload, and it includes the ability to view and access course materials offline. You can download Pulse from the Google Play or Apple Store. You can learn more and download Pulse here:

<https://www.d2l.com/products/pulse/>.

## Anti-Discrimination and Title IX Information

### Statement on TCU's Discrimination Policy

TCU prohibits discrimination and harassment based on age, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ethnic origin, disability, predisposing genetic information, covered veteran status, and any other basis protected by law, except as permitted by law. TCU also prohibits unlawful sexual and gender-based harassment and violence, sexual assault, incest, statutory rape, sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, bullying, stalking, and retaliation. We understand that discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence can undermine students' academic success and we encourage students who have experienced any of these issues to talk to someone about their experience, so they can get the support they need.

- [Review TCU's Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Conduct or file a complaint:](https://titleix.tcu.edu/title-ix/)
- [Learn about the Campus Community Response Team and Report a Bias Incident:](https://titleix.tcu.edu/campus-community-response-team/)

### Statement on Title IX at TCU

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep any information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under TCU policy and federal law, and I am required to share any information I receive regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, and related conduct with TCU's Title IX Coordinator. Students can receive confidential support and academic advocacy by contacting TCU's Confidential Advocate in the Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education office at (817) 257-5225 or the [Counseling & Mental Health Center](https://counseling.tcu.edu/) at <https://counseling.tcu.edu/> or by calling (817) 257-7863. [Alleged violations can be reported to the Title IX Office](https://titleix.tcu.edu/student-toolkit/) at <https://titleix.tcu.edu/student-toolkit/> or by calling (817) 257-8228. Should you wish to make a confidential report, the Title IX Office will seek to maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible, but cannot guarantee confidentiality. Reports to law enforcement can be made to the Fort Worth Police Department at 911 for an emergency and (817) 335-4222 for non-emergency or TCU Police at (817) 257-7777.

### Obligations to Report Conduct Raising Title IX or VAWA Issues

**Mandatory Reporters:** All TCU employees, except Confidential Resources, are considered Mandatory Reporters for purposes of their obligations to report, to the Coordinator, conduct that raises Title IX and/or VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) issues.

Mandatory Reporters are required to immediately report to the Coordinator information about conduct that raises Title IX and/or VAWA issues, including any reports, complaints or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination and those forms of prohibited conduct that relate to nonconsensual sexual intercourse or contact, sexual exploitation, intimate

partner violence, stalking and retaliation involving any member of the TCU community, except as otherwise provided within the [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Related Conduct](#).

Mandatory Reporters may receive this information in a number of ways. For example, a complainant may report the information directly to a Mandatory Reporter, a witness or third-party may provide information to a Mandatory Reporter, or a Mandatory Reporter may personally witness such conduct. A Mandatory Reporter's obligation to report such information to the Coordinator does not depend on how he/she received the information. Mandatory Reporters must provide all known information about conduct that raises Title IX or VAWA issues to the Coordinator, including the identities of the parties, the date, time and location, and any other details. Failure of a Mandatory Reporters to provide such information to the Coordinator in a timely manner may subject the employee to appropriate discipline, including removal from a position or termination of employment.

Mandatory Reporters cannot promise to refrain from forwarding the information to the Coordinator if it raises Title IX or VAWA issues or withhold information about such conduct from the Coordinator. Mandatory Reporters may provide support and assistance to a complainant, witness, or respondent, but they should not conduct any investigation or notify the respondent unless requested to do so by the Coordinator.

Mandatory Reporters are not required to report information disclosed (1) at public awareness events (e.g., "Take Back the Night," candlelight vigils, protests, "survivor speak-outs," or other public forums in which students may disclose such information (collectively, public awareness events); or (2) during an individual's participation as a subject in an Institutional Review Board approved human subjects research protocol (IRB Research). TCU may provide information about Title IX rights and available resources and support at public awareness events, however, and Institutional Review Boards may, in appropriate cases, require researchers to provide such information to all subjects of IRB Research. 911 for an emergency and (817) 335-4222 for non-emergency or TCU Police at (817) 257-7777.

## Emergency Response Information

Building & Room Number: **Landreth 113**

The emergency exits are located: ***Through the door, turn left, proceed down hallway, turn left then exit through the door straight ahead.***

The predetermined Rally Point is located at: ***The TCU sign at the corner of University and Cantey.***

In the event of an emergency, call the TCU Police Department at **817-257-7777**.

Download the [Frogshield Campus Safety App](#) on your phone: <https://police.tcu.edu/frogshield/>

### TCU Alert Message & Action

**"Lockdown"** Situation: Violence/Active Shooter

If an active shooter incident is taking place near you, and it is safe to do so, call the TCU Police and provide information to include the location and number of assailants, description of assailant(s), weapons used, and number of potential victims. In the event of an active shooter, take these actions:

- **Run:** Run off campus if you are sure you can get away. Leave belongings behind and try to warn others if possible. Do not delay, and call TCU Police once it is safe to do so.
- **Hide:** If you are aware of the shooter's whereabouts, hide out of the shooter's view, behind a locked door. Block entry into your hiding place. Turn off the lights and silence your phone (including vibrate). Remain quiet. The hiding place must appear locked and empty.
- **Fight:** As the last resort and when your life is in danger, fight. Act with as much physical aggression as possible. Improvise weapons or throw items at the shooter. Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.

## TCU Alert Message & Action

### **“Evacuate”** Situation: Fire

- Remain calm
- Alert others and pull the nearest Fire alarm
- **NEVER IGNORE A FIRE ALARM**
- All fire alarms require mandatory evacuation
- Evacuate the building immediately
- Do NOT use elevators
- Gather at the predetermined Rally Point
- Call TCU Police when it is safe to do so
- Do NOT re-enter the building until authorized by the TCU Police

### **“Seek Shelter”** Situation: Tornado

Thunderstorms are the most common type of severe weather in the Fort Worth area. However, tornadoes can occur.

- Move to the innermost and lowest level of the building, away from exterior windows
- Get under sturdy furniture or along an interior wall, if possible
- Use your arms and hands to protect your head and neck
- Wait for the “All Clear” before leaving your “Seek Shelter” safe space