

Muc363-02: Analysis of Popular Music

Spring 2020 - 2 credits

Section 01: TTh 1:00-1:50pm, MP160

Instructor Information

Dr. Jessica Narum

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Office: Kulas Hall, Room 216

Office hours: MTThF 10-11am + by appointment

Email is the best way to get in touch with me outside of class times or office hours.

Text and Materials

No textbook is required for this course; our readings will be from academic journals, music journalism, and sources readily available online and/or through online BW library access. For this class you will need:

- . access to a functional computer, including internet browsing, word processing, and music notation programs. (I have no preference as to the specific programs.)
- . access (provided through your registration at BW) to Google Drive and Blackboard.
- . responsibility for regular communication through email.

Course Description

From the course catalog: “Specialized treatment of particular subjects.”

In this course, we will explore different approaches to the study of popular music (specifically American popular music, mostly post-1960), including not only the study of harmony, form, and timbre, but also of rhythmic flow in hip-hop, the intertexts created by cover songs, and race and gender in music videos. Within some guidelines, students will be able to incorporate the music and music videos of their choice for all significant assignments, and the course will culminate in a project of their own design, allowing each student to determine both what they would like to study and how they would like to present their findings.

Student Expectations

Students should:

- . Complete all assigned readings, writing, and/or analysis assignments before they are due.
- . Bring up any questions or insights before or during class as appropriate.
- . Support their fellow students by engaging their ideas in discussion, being respectful of differences of opinions or learning styles, and fostering a healthy classroom learning environment.

Course Objectives

This course meets the Conservatory’s core objective of Foundational Musical Skills and Knowledge (“Students will develop a foundation of knowledge and skills in music theory [written and aural], technology [...], and music history through their study of music from various historical periods, cultural contexts, and genres.”) by reading analytical and critical writings about various genres and interpretations of American popular music since 1960.

In addition, students will:

- . engage with a diverse range of primarily American popular music using their aural skills.
- . engage with a range of analytical commentary, from scholarly articles to podcasts.
- . lead discussion with and among their peers.
- . create and share their own analyses, with preparation and off-the-cuff, orally and in writing.
- . design and present a final project of their choice (with instructor consultation).

The above objectives may be assessed by

- . in-class discussion (both as a leader and as a participant).
- . in-class presentations.
- . outside-of-class assignments.

Attendance (Departmental Policy)

Attendance is required for all class sessions. You may miss up to four classes without penalty. Each additional absence will result in the lowering of your final grade. One absence over the limit lowers your grade by 3%, a second over the limit lowers it by a full letter grade (9%), and a third results in failure of the course.

An absence is any time that you miss class or an appraisal, whether for sickness, performance obligation, or any other reason. All Absences, excused or unexcused, are treated the same! You are responsible for learning all materials that you miss, and you are required to make up all work missed as a result of absence by the beginning of the next class session. You may also be marked absent for coming to class unprepared, for being inattentive (i.e. sleeping, texting, doing homework for other classes) during class, or for leaving before the end of the lesson.

Timeliness is an essential skill for professionals. As a result, time you are late for class will be treated as one half of an absence. Late for class means that the instructor has begun the lesson for the day. Consult with your instructor if there are special or extraordinary circumstances that need to be taken into account regarding your attendance. Students are responsible for acquiring and making up all material and assignments missed as a result of absence (excused or unexcused).

Assume that homework is due at the start of class; any homework submitted after I have collected it from the class will be considered late (excepting any prior arrangements related to absences, etc.). Homework may be submitted later on the day it is due (including just after the class in which it was collected) for a 5% point deduction. I will continue to accept late homework for a 10% deduction per day. Policies for late projects will be announced related to those projects.

(As an example, say an assignment is due Monday during class. If it is turned in on time, you could earn a grade of 100%. If it is turned in later during that same class period, you could earn a grade of 95%. If it is turned in later that same day, you could *still* earn 95%. If it is turned in the following day, Tuesday in this scenario, you could earn 90%. If it is turned in Wednesday before class, you could earn 80%.)

TL;DR for homework – it's always better to do it late than to not do it at all.

Grading

There will be something assigned each day. In general, we will have readings due on Tuesdays (to give you the most time to complete them) and analytical endeavors (songs, albums, specific assignments, open assignments) due on Thursdays. Students will lead discussion twice each and submit four guided written responses throughout the semester; descriptions for these grades are provided at the end of this document. Students will also design and complete a final project of their choice; a proposal for this project is due mid-semester and provides an opportunity for agreement between the student and the professor as well as some early feedback and guidance.

Class participation involves any and all of the following activities:

- . timely attendance.
- . active listening.
- . appropriate use of technology (to access articles, look up information relevant to the discussion, etc.; inappropriate use of technology during class includes work for other courses or jobs, time spent on social media, games, etc.).
- . providing responses (questions, examples, ideas, etc.) when asked directly or indirectly.
- . respectfully responding to the questions and ideas of your peers and the instructor.
- . emailing myself or the class ahead of time with relevant thoughts or examples for discussion.
- . emailing myself or the class after discussion with pertinent points or examples.

Class participation:	50%
Discussion leading (2 x 5%):	10%
Short writings: (4 x 5%)	20%
Final project proposal:	5%
Final project:	<u>15%</u>
	100%

A+	98-100	B+	89-91	C+	80-82	D+	71-73	
A	95-97	B	86-88	C	77-79	D	68-70	F 0-64
A-	92-94	B-	83-85	C-	74-76	D-	65-67	

Classroom Policies

In order to conserve paper and/or money, you might choose to read and access the articles on your laptop or tablet; this is fine, though you'll likely get more out of the articles if you prepare a one-page brief for yourself. Phones are prohibited, though if you have an emergency situation which requires you to be near your phone, please let me know. Food and drink (especially water) are acceptable as long as they are unobtrusive to your classmates, do not prohibit your performance in the class, and never ever come near the piano.

If there are any circumstances which are adversely affecting you and/or your performance in the course (including but not limited to: challenges studying or managing your time, difficulties securing housing or food, or feelings of anxiety or depression), I encourage you to seek out those student

services available to you. If you are comfortable discussing this with me, please feel free and we can work together to find you the appropriate campus resources.

Pop Seminar specific policies:

- . Be advised that in this course we will be encountering lyrics and writings that may contain adult language or content.
- . Our citation style will be the Chicago Manual of Style for all texts, including songs, albums, and podcasts.

Additional policies

For additional information concerning Academic Integrity, Disability Services, and similar university-wide policies, please see our Blackboard site.

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus or course schedule.

Students will be notified of any changes as soon as possible.

Last updated: January 7, 2020

Schedule Overview

Week	Topic/Reading	Assignment(s) due
1 (Jan14-16)	Introductions, Syllabus, Memes, Close readings (Reade)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
2 (Jan21-23)	Harmony (Biamonte)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
3 (Jan28-30)	Form (de Clerq)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
4 (Feb04-06)	Form (Neal); discuss final project and proposal	<i>weekly analysis</i>
5 (Feb11-13)	Timbre (Lavengood)	<i>weekly analysis</i> Close reading due
6 (Feb18-20)	Timbre (Heidemann)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
7 (Feb25-27)	Rhythm (Komaniecki)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
8 (Mar03-05)	Project Proposal discussion/catch-up/close-read show-and-tell	<i>weekly analysis</i> End of the week: final project proposal, incl. Timeline, due
Spring break (March09-13)		
9 (Mar17-19)	Intertextuality: covers (Daley)	<i>weekly analysis</i> Hip-hop transcription due
10 (Mar24-26)	Intertextuality: reference (podcast) Demos (Hough)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
11 (Mar31-Apr02)	Rock cycles (Mazullo)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
12 (Apr07-09)	Videos (Ferrandino, Balaji)	<i>weekly analysis</i> Cover song comparison due
13 (Apr14-16)	Videos (Cusick)	<i>weekly analysis</i>
14 (Apr21-23)	catch-up/students' choice	<i>weekly analysis</i>
15 (Apr28-30)	catch-up/students' choice Thursday: no class - Ovation	<i>weekly analysis</i> Video analysis due
Finals (May 04-08)	THURSDAY, MAY 7, 11:30am-2:30pm	Final projects due (presentations during final exam time)

Detailed Schedule

Week 1: January 14 and 16 - Introductions, etc.

“Single Ladies (Put a Ring On It)” - Beyoncé

“My Two Front Teeth Parts II and III” - Travis Morrison

“Extraordinary Machine” - Fiona Apple (2005)

Introductions, syllabus, course policies, memes, close reading

Reade, Haley. “Making the Most of an Enharmonic Seam: Pitch Respellings, Semitone

Relationships, and Mode Mixture in Fiona Apple’s ‘Extraordinary Machine’.” *Theory and Practice* 39 (2014): 75-108. Accessed January 8, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/26477727.

Week 2: January 21 and 23

Discussion leaders: _____

The Kinks, “Lola” (1970)

Blue Öyster Cult, “Don’t Fear the Reaper” (1976)

Patti Smith, “Because the Night” (1978)

Heart, “Crazy on You” (1976)

Joni Mitchell, “Free Man in Paris” (1974)

Queen, “Crazy Little Thing Called Love” (1979)

David Bowie, “Suffragette City” (1972)

Biamonte, Nicole. “Triadic Modal and Pentatonic Patterns in Rock Music.” *Music Theory Spectrum* 32, no. 2 (2010): 95-110. doi:10.1525/mts.2010.32.2.95.

Assignment for 01/23

Listening (we’re focusing on the music, not the videos)

Mary J. Blige, “Real Love” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90c9pEtZquw>

Phil Collins, “In the Air Tonight” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkADj0TPtJA>

Silver Jews, “Tennessee” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bmyd1YoqBh8>

RIP, David Berman

Week 3: January 28 and 30 - Form

Discussion leader(s): _____

“When Doves Cry” - Prince & the New Power Generation (1984)

“Papa Don’t Preach” - Madonna (1986)

de Clercq, Trevor. “[Embracing Ambiguity in the Analysis of Form in Pop/Rock Music, 1982–1991](#).” *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 3 (2017).

Assignment for January 30

Whitney Houston, "I Wanna Dance with Somebody"

Whitney Houston, "How Will I Know"

Eurhythmics, "Sweet Dreams"

Assignment for February 4

*remember the [Close Reading Assignment](#) - due February 13

Week 4: February 4 and 6 - Form

Discussion leader(s): _____

Listen to the two marked with an asterisk, plus two others of your choice.

Sawyer Brown, "The Walk" (1991)

Tim McGraw, "Don't Take the Girl" (1994)

Collin Raye, "One Boy, One Girl" (1995)

Patty Loveless, "How Can I Help You (To Say Goodbye)?" 1993

Ty Herndon, "A Man Holdin' On (To a Woman Letting Go)" (1998)

*Darrell Scott, "Title of the Song" (1997)

*Dixie Chicks, "Long Time Gone" (2002)

Neal, Jocelyn R. "Narrative Paradigms, Musical Signifiers, and Form as Function in Country Music."

Music Theory Spectrum 29, no. 1 (2007): 41-72. doi:10.1525/mts.2007.29.1.41.

Discuss Final Project Proposal

Assignment for February 6

"There Goes My Life" by Kenny Chesney

"Juicy" by the Notorious B.I.G.

"Chocktaw County Affair" by Carrie Underwood

Week 5: February 11 and 13 - Timbre

Discussion leader(s): _____

"Do They Know It's Christmastime at all?" - Band Aid 1984 (1984)

"What's Love Got to Do With It" - Tina Turner (1984)

Lavengood, Megan. 2017. "A New Approach to the Analysis of Timbre" (Chapter 3-part of 4). PhD Dissertation, City University of New York.

*Note: Read Chapter 3 and the part of Chapter 4 about "Do They Know It's Christmastime at all?", her pages 59-97 [PDF pages 71-108].

https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3214&context=gc_etds

Assignment for February 13:

Timbre Scavenger Hunt!

Find and analyze a song that uses timbre in interesting ways. (Maybe try to pick a song that someone else in the class would know?)

Think about how that song's timbre relates to Lavengood's core/melody/novelty categories.

Does it do what it's supposed to? What is unexpected/unusual/interesting?

Create a musical example related to the timbre of the piece (I'll check these in class).

(Let's skip the example for Thursday since you have your close reading due.)

Link for showing spectrogram information in Audacity:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZbZa99ocPU>

Week 6: February 18 and 20 - Timbre

Discussion leader(s): _____

“(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman” - Aretha Franklin (1968)

“Respect” - Aretha Franklin (1967)

Heidemann, Kate. “A System for Describing Vocal Timbre in Popular Song.” *Music Theory Online* 22, no. 1 (2016). <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.16.22.1/mto.16.22.1.heidemann.html>

NOTE: try to emulate the voice placement differences the author discusses as you read the article.

Assignment for February 20:

Three Janelle Monae songs:

“Cold War” from *The ArchAndroid* (2010)

“Dance Apocalyptic” from *The Electric Lady* (2013)

“The Way You Make Me Feel” from *Dirty Computer* (2018)

...and if you'd like to consider more, “Pynk” and “I Like That” from *Dirty Computer* are excellent.

We're comparing and contrasting her vocal timbre on ALL three tracks, specifically with an ear to how her vocal timbre changes (or doesn't) within each song and what it might mean. Analytical examples are optional this week, but if you do find it helpful to make one, please feel free.

Week 7: February 25 and 27 - Rhythm

Discussion leader(s): _____

NEW SONGS from our discussion leaders! (As of 02/24, 10:43am) We'll discuss these:

* “Warm Enough” by Chance the Rapper (ft. Noname Gypsy and J. Cole)

* “Monster” by Kanye West, Jay-Z, Nicki Minaj, Rick Ross, and Bon Iver

* “Jello” by Brockhampton

And these are also good examples (but less necessary for Tuesday's discussion):

Oldie by Odd Future

Potato Salad by A\$AP Rocky and Tyler, the Creator

Komaniecki, Robert. "Analyzing Collaborative Flow in Rap Music." *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 4 (December 2017). <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.4/mto.17.23.4.komaniecki.php>

Songs featured in the article:

Busta Rhymes and Nicki Minaj, "#TWERKIT" (2013)

Run-D.M.C., "I'm Not Going Out Like That" (1988)

Dr. Dre feat. Eminem, "Forgot about Dre" (1999)

50 Cent, feat. Young Buck, "Blood Hound" (2003)

Assignment for February 27:

Listen to these three songs:

Saweetie feat. Kehlani, "ICY GRL" (Bae Remix)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8m2uosFEjY4>

Lizzo feat. Missy Elliott, "Tempo" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=raVe1hZxFac>

Doja Cat feat. Rico Nasty, "Tia Tamera"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_yI2959DYU

Week 8: March 3 and 5

Discuss Final Project Proposals (small group, as a class)

Assignment for March 5:

Work Day on Thursday - we'll be in the RBI, but working on our final project proposals. Bring your computers and bring your questions (or don't, and have a great spring break). Attendance optional.

Week 9: March 17 and 19 - Intertextuality I (Covers)

Discussion leader(s): _____

"Gloria" - Van Morrison (1974)

"Gloria" - Patti Smith (1975)

Other songs/covers as determined by the class

Daley, Mike. "Patti Smith's 'Gloria': Intertextual Play in a Rock Vocal Performance." *Popular Music* 16, no. 3 (1997): 235-53. www.jstor.org/stable/853044.

Week 10: March 24 and 26 - Intertextuality II (References and Demos) - NB: 2 lists!

Discussion leader(s): _____

“The Way You Make Me Feel” - Janelle Monae (2018)

“The Way You Make Me Feel” - Michael Jackson (1987)

“Truth Hurts” - Lizzo (2017)

Switched on Pop. “How to ‘Make Me Feel’ with Lizzo”

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/icymi-how-to-make-me-feel-with-lizzo/id934552872?i=1000448432105>

Discussion leader(s): _____

“I Sing for the ‘Things’” - Stevie Nicks (1983)

“Dreams” - Fleetwood Mac (1977)

Hough, Matthew T. “[Elements of Style in Three Demo Recordings by Stevie Nicks.](#)” *Music Theory Online* 21, no. 1 (2015).

Week 11: March 31 and April 2 - Rock Cycle

Discussion leader(s): _____

PJ Harvey, *Dry* (entire album)

Mazullo, Mark. “Revisiting the Wreck: PJ Harvey's *Dry* and the Drowned Virgin-Whore.” *Popular Music* 20, no. 3 (2001): 431-47. Accessed January 8, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/853631.

Week 12: April 7 and 9 - Music Videos I

Discussion leader(s): _____

Crash Test Dummies, “Mmmm, mmmm, mmmm, mmmm” (1994)

David Guetta, feat. Sia, “Titanium” (2011)

Beyoncé, “If I Were a Boy” (2008)

Benny Blanco, “Eastside” (2018)

Ferrandino, Matthew and Brad Osborn. 2019. “Seeing Stories, Hearing Stories in Narrative Music Videos. SMT-V 5/5 <<https://vimeo.com/357096231>>.”

Week 13: April 14 and 16 - Music Videos II

Discussion leader(s): _____

Jadakiss, “Knock Yourself Out” (2001)

Mystikal, “Shake it Fast” (2000)

Balaji, Murali. 2010. “Vixen Resistin!: Redefining Black Womanhood in Hip-Hop Music Videos.” *Journal of Black Studies* 41/1: 5–20.

Week 14: April 21 and 23

Discussion leader(s): _____

Pearl Jam, "Go" (1993) [article only discusses song]

Indigo Girls, "Ghost" (1992) [article only discusses song]

Cusick, Suzanne. "On Musical Performances of Gender and Sex." In *Audible Traces: Gender, Identity, and Music*, edited by Elaine Barkin and Lydia Hamessley, 25-48. City: Carciofoli, 1999.

Week 15: April 28 (No class April 30 - Ovation)

Dr. Hiser presents her in-progress sabbatical research

Finals week: Our final is Thursday, May 7, 11:30am-2:30pm

Presentation of final projects

Assignment Descriptions and Rubrics

Leading Class Discussion

Each student will sign up to lead class discussion in two separate weeks; you will be paired with another student. You are encouraged to collaborate and lead discussion as a team. (You may not lead a discussion with the same person twice.)

As you prepare for your week, I encourage you to consider the following:

- Include some questions designed to establish everyone's understanding of the article.
- Ask open-ended questions instead of either/or or yes/no questions.
- Incorporate some not-just-talking element - perhaps a PollEverywhere or a "pop quiz" (note: this will not count toward your grade) or a short worksheet or game - something that will make sure we're secure on the basics before moving on to higher points, illustrate a point you want to make, or make us focus on a problem or discrepancy.
- Provide an example not featured in the article that we can work through; this example might support the article's argument, apply their methodology to a new genre/issue, or perhaps it will highlight some way that the article is incomplete, inconsistent, or wrong.
- Lead discussion in such a way that everyone can participate - feel free to call on people, ask follow-up questions, allow for discussion between students. If you're comfortable, you can also kindly thank anyone who's dominating the discussion and encourage responses from those who have been mostly quiet.

As a final note, I encourage you to prepare to the fullest for every class session, not only those for which you are leading discussion, since the success of the discussion you lead is at least partially dependent on the participation of your peers and vice versa.

The Grading Rubric for leading class discussion is on the next page.

Student-led Discussion Grading Rubric (for the discussion leaders)

	Accomplished (10)	Average (9)	Developing (8)	Needs Work (5)
Demonstrate understanding of content ¹	Exceptional understanding of the text's content; concisely and clearly articulated points in own words; includes meaningful connection to other readings, concepts, critiques, and implications	Competent understanding of the text; clearly articulate major/minor points of the article; some connections made to other reading/concepts; may include some consideration of implications, critiques, etc.	Understanding of the major points of the article; can identify key passages in the text; focuses on the content of the article without considering links to other readings or possible avenues for further research or critique.	Student(s) demonstrate understanding of most basic elements of the text; may lack nuance; may include some errors
Questions	A variety of on-topic, open-ended questions; related to+inspired by the article; promoted thoughtful engagement with content.	On-topic and open-ended questions; some questions generated discussion.	Questions, some may have been off-topic, yes/no, or otherwise prohibitive to generating discussion.	Student(s) prepared few or no questions.
Supplemental Activity ²	Activity both reviewed material from the reading in an engaging way and moved beyond it; activity generated discussion	Student(s) selected/created a supplemental activity which reviewed material and/or introduced new examples	Student(s) selected/created a basic supplemental activity which reviewed material	Student(s) included a basic activity, unrelated to the article, or did not include a supplemental activity
Examples	Examples illustrated concepts of the text; provided rich points for discussion; encouraged the class to move beyond the reading	Student(s) provided examples which illustrate the concepts of the reading and/or provide examples for class practice	Student(s) provided examples which illustrate the concepts from the reading	Student(s) provided examples which were unrelated to the reading and/or did not provide examples
Facilitate Discussion	Student(s) facilitated discussion so that all classmates were involved in the discussion; leaders' participation was equal	(n/a)	Student(s) facilitated participation so that most classmates contributed and/or leaders' participation was mostly equal	Facilitated such that only some of the class contributed to the discussion and/or leaders' participation was unequal.
TOTAL				

¹ Please note: Talking with me about the reading in preparation for the discussion you will lead will never, ever harm your grade.

² If you need me to provide something related to your supplementary activity (copies, projecting something for the class, etc.), please let me know.

Close Reading Assignment (due February 13)

For this assignment, you should provide a close reading of a song in which harmony and form influence your interpretation. Your analysis must consider some significant element(s) of harmony and form, as well as other musical parameters in conjunction with the lyrics. Your analysis should spend little, if any, time on artist background or intention and instead be primarily focused on the song and your understanding of it (though obviously this is informed by context, etc.).

You might want to read [How to Do a Close Reading](#), especially for the following points:

“1. Read [and listen] with a pencil in hand, and annotate the text. 2. Look for patterns in the things you’ve noticed about the text - repetitions, contradictions, similarities. 3. Ask questions about the patterns you’ve noticed - especially how and why.”

Your close reading should focus on one song, with particular focus on the harmony, form, and lyrics (loosely modeled on Reade’s analysis of Fiona Apple’s “Extraordinary Machine” and our combined analysis of Beyonce’s “Single Ladies (Put a Ring On It)”). (Note: it is important that harmony is included in this assignment, so make sure to choose your song accordingly.) After reading your analysis, the reader should know:

- What are some interesting features of this song? (This should include features pertaining to harmony, form, and lyrics, but may also include concerns of timbre, instrumentation, rhythm, etc.)
- How do these features relate to the lyrics?
- How might we understand the song as a whole?

Your writing should be 1,000-1,500 words (4-6 double-spaced pages).

You should include at least three musical examples that support or clarify your reading - one of which must include staff notation. (These examples will not count toward your word count.) Other types of examples could include lyrical analysis, formal diagrams, spectrograms, charts, tables, interpretive images, lead sheet notation, etc.)

Any sources (including the song itself, any other songs your reference, and any outside sources, including class readings that you reference) should be cited appropriately; recall that we’ll be using Chicago Style citations. There are numerous citation guides available for free online. [This one](#) might be useful to you.

I encourage you to seek out feedback from friends and members of the class, from a visit to the Writing Center, and from me.

Close Reading Grading Rubric

	Accomplished (10)	Average (09)	Developing (8)	Needs Work (5)
Analysis	Analysis is insightful and free from errors; synthesizes findings related to harmony, form, lyrics, and other musical parameters.	Analysis is insightful and mostly free from errors; includes findings related to harmony, form, and lyrics	Analysis is accurate; may include some errors; lists findings related to harmony, form, and/or lyrics	Analysis is inaccurate or incomplete; or there are many errors; omits findings in the areas of harmony, form, or lyrics
Musical Examples	Musical examples are sufficient in number and type; examples clearly illustrate salient points and are appropriate to the subject	Musical examples are sufficient in number and type; examples are related to the point	Musical examples are sufficient in number or type; somewhat related to the point	Musical examples are insufficient in number or type; or unrelated to the reading
Formatting	Document and musical examples are formatted clearly and at the highest standard; musical examples are digital (not scans)	Document and musical examples are correctly formatted; musical examples may be scanned but are legible	Document and musical examples contain some errors of formatting; musical examples could be improved	Document and musical examples contain many errors of formatting; musical examples are sloppy, incomplete, or illegible
Writing (grammar, mechanics, terminology)	Writing is clear, engaging, and error-free; musical terminology is used correctly; citations are all present and error-free	Writing is clear and mostly grammatically correct; musical terminology is used correctly; citations are present and mostly correct	Writing is clear, with some errors of spelling or grammar; terminology is mostly correct; citations are present but may contain errors	Writing is unclear or full of errors; terminology may be incorrectly used; citations are incomplete, incorrect, or absent
Total				

Final Project and Final Project Proposal

For your **Final Project** in this course (worth 15% of your final grade), you will design a music-theoretical or analytical endeavor of your choice. You might choose to write a paper (especially if you like writing papers or if you'd like to get a nice writing sample for near-future graduate school applications), but you could also choose to do a video, a lesson plan, a podcast, a database, an app, a zine, a presentation, or something else entirely. We will share our final projects during the final exam time. Here are the important parts of this project:

- ❑ It must be analytical (an in-depth analysis of a song or album, a comparison of two versions of a song, etc.) or music-theoretical (a more general look across a larger sample group, noting a trend or paradigm).
- ❑ It must include your own original analysis, at least partially illustrated by some meaningful representations of the music you're studying (transcriptions, charts, etc.).
- ❑ It must be situated within the scholarship we've studied this semester and include citations appropriate for the format.

In order to help you be successful with this project, you will submit a **Final Project Proposal** (worth 5% of your final grade), due before Spring Break; please note that this document is both a plan (that might change as your work progresses) and part of a conversation (so, regarding the last point, I get a say). Your Final Project Proposal should include the following elements:

- ❑ A summary of your project - what will you do and how are you going to do it?
- ❑ An outline of the content that you'll include (ie. like a paper outline, a video storyboard, etc.).
- ❑ A timeline of the work you will do, including at least one deadline by which you will update me about your progress and the deadline for the final project.
- ❑ A list of the requirements this project should meet to earn an A.
 - ❑ Requirements you might want to consider: comprehensiveness, clarity, production value, formatting/citations/writing mechanics, originality, usability, rhyme scheme, organization, notation, color coordination, consideration of audience, etc.

I'll return your proposal to you with feedback, especially regarding the requirements for an A.

Please submit this project proposal as a GoogleDoc that is shared with me and which I may also edit.

Hip-hop Transcription and Analysis

For this assignment, you'll transcribe and analyze hip-hop flow (using some of the tools found in Komaniecki 2017, plus others of your own devising if necessary) in the track of your choice.

A few options for how this might work out in your paper:

Analyze the collaboration (or lack thereof) between two or more artists on one track (as found in the article and as we did in class).

Analyze changes in one artist's flow within a track.

Some other option not listed here, that synthesizes musical features and expressive concerns.

After reading your paper, we should have answers to the following questions:

What are the significant features of the artist's or artists' flow(s)?

(These kinds of features include rhythm, end-rhyme, internal rhymes, etc.)

How do they affect interpretation (of the lyrics, of the collaboration, or something else)?

NOTE 1: If you'd like to create an argument/a thesis statement/a point that is not suggested here, I'd recommend thinking through the questions on [this handout](#).

It's difficult to say exactly how long your musical transcriptions should be, especially given different artists' tempos, word density, and rhythmic complexity, in addition to variance in felt meter on the analysts' part. That said, your transcription should be around the length of a full verse or about thirty seconds long, whichever makes the most sense for your song. You are absolutely allowed to break that up over the course of a track; ie. you might want to transcribe half of Artist A's verse and half of Artist B's verse. Reasonably accurate rhythmic notation is a given, but it might be meaningful to your argument to include information about timbre, pitch, articulation, dynamics, or something else.

Your paper should be 500-1,000 words long (2-4 pages, 12pt font, double-spaced), not including your transcription or the full lyrics of the song. Your transcription(s) can be integrated into the body of the paper or supplied at the end. Any sources (including lyrics sheets, etc.) should be cited appropriately.

Please see the grading rubric on the following page.

NOTE 2: If you would like some help choosing a song, please let me know.

Hip-Hop Transcription and Analysis Grading Rubric

	Accomplished (10)	Average (9)	Developing (8)	Needs Work (5)
Analysis	Analysis is insightful and free from errors; synthesizes findings related to flow, lyrics, and/or other musical features	Analysis is insightful and mostly free from errors; includes findings related to flow, lyrics, and/or other musical features	Analysis is mostly accurate; may include some errors; lists findings related to flow, lyrics, and/or other musical features	Analysis is inaccurate or incomplete; or there are many errors; omits findings in crucial areas
Musical Examples	Musical examples are sufficient in length and type; examples clearly illustrate salient points and are appropriate to the subject	Musical examples are sufficient in length and type; examples are related to the point	Musical examples are sufficient in length or type; somewhat related to the point	Musical examples are insufficient in length or type; or unrelated to the reading
Formatting	Document and musical examples are formatted clearly and at the highest standard ; musical examples are digital (not scans)	Document and musical examples are correctly formatted; musical examples may be scanned but are legible	Document and musical examples contain some errors of formatting; musical examples could be improved	Document and musical examples contain many errors of formatting; musical examples are sloppy, incomplete, or illegible
Writing (grammar, structure, terminology, citations)	Writing is clear, engaging, and error-free; paper is structured clearly; musical terminology is used correctly; citations are all present and correct	Writing is clear and mostly grammatically correct; paper has structure; musical terminology is used correctly; citations are present and mostly correct	Writing is developing, perhaps with some mechanical errors; structural issues; terms are mostly correct; citations are present but may contain errors	Writing is unclear or full of errors; structural issues; terminology used incorrectly; citations are incomplete, incorrect, or absent
Total				

Intertextuality: Cover Song Comparison

Drawing inspiration from Mike Daley’s article on Patti Smith’s cover of a Van Morrison song,³ please write an analysis of the cover song of your choice. Some options:

- You could choose anything from a pretty straight-forward cover to a near-total reworking (like Smith’s cover).
- Yes, you may consider a song that makes extended and especially foregrounded use of a sample to be a “cover” for the purposes of this assignment.

Your analysis **MUST** consider musical differences, may consider extra-musical differences, and **MUST** demonstrate your interpretation of any changes to the meaning of the song.

Musical differences	Extra-musical differences	Interpretation (possible ?s)
key range/register meter/tempo rhythm instrumentation vocal timbre instrumental timbre changes to form changes to lyrics others	genre/singer/band associations singer identity (gender, age, race, etc.) others	How do these changes influence my interpretation of the song? Why might (cover artist) have made these changes (lyrics/form/etc.) to the song? [for what expressive purpose]? others

Remote Instruction Adaptation

Honestly, if you don’t want to write a paper, I get it. Let’s just get ideas out. Could we use discussion boards? Post a detailed outline? Post short paragraphs, links, hand-sketched musical examples? Could you create a short video where you talk about the main points of what you would have written in a paper and share it with the class? Do what conveys your analysis best.

If you want to write a paper, please do so, but I realize that that might be asking a lot right now; I’d honestly rather have everyone do some element of this project than require everyone to write a paper. The main thing is that I want everyone to think through one cover/original pairing and share your analysis with the class.

³ Daley, Mike. “Patti Smith’s ‘Gloria’: Intertextual Play in a Rock Vocal Performance.” *Popular Music* 16, no. 3 (1997): 235-53. www.jstor.org/stable/853044.

Music Video Analysis Assignment

Choose one of the following prompts.

(With thanks to Brad Osborn for sharing his resources with the SMT PMIG on Humanities Commons [hcommons.org]; this assignment is based on his video analysis assignment.)

https://hcommons.org/?get_group_doc=1003019/1575048208-OsbornAnalyzingPopularMusicF2019Resources.pdf

Option 1: Narrative and Ethnicity in Music Videos (your choice of video)

Find a music video that has some sort of visual narrative plot, and that you find interesting from the perspective of race and/or ethnicity.

1. First, which of the four narrative types (following Ferrandino/Osborn) is it? Write a paragraph describing the relationship between the narrative plot and the lyrical plot.
2. Write another paragraph about how race and/or ethnicity is portrayed in this video. Do your ideas relate more to the lyrical narrative, the visual narrative, or both? Discuss.

Option 2: Performing Gender in Music and Music Videos (your choice of video)

Having read Cusick's adaptation of Judith Butler's concept of "performing" gender, choose a music video in which you think an artist is performing gender in some meaningful/interesting way.

1. First, which of the four narrative types (following Ferrandino/Osborn) is it? Write a paragraph describing the relationship between the narrative plot and the lyrical plot.
2. Write a paragraph outlining specific ways in which the artist is performing a certain gender. Make reference to specific track timing. Analyze vocal timbre, or any other musical elements that you feel are crucial to this performativity. Be clear which elements are aural/lyrical, which elements are visual, and how these separate domains relate to one another.

Any genre of music is appropriate for this assignment. Please do not choose the same video as anyone else in class.

Please post your responses to the Video Analysis Discussion Board, including a link to the video.

Research Resources

[Citation samples](#) (Remember that for this course we'll be using Chicago/Turabian style citations.)

[The elements of an argument handout](#)

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