

**GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT**

HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC

DD1021 A3 3(3-0-0) Fall 2002

T, R 11:30-12:50, Room L-107

University Transfer to: UofA, UofC, UofL, AU, AugUC, ConcordiaUC, KingsUC

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History of Popular Music serves as an introduction to a number of North American popular music styles. This course focuses on popular music from the beginning of this century to the present day, with an emphasis on the evolution of the various musical styles and the placement of these styles in their social contexts. Both assigned readings and critical listening are important aspects of the course, and exams and quizzes will reflect material from readings and recordings. Recordings will be on reserve for you in the library. They will be related to, and reflect, information covered in the readings. In addition to the required text, additional readings may occasionally be assigned. Those readings will be put on reserve in the library. Topics covered in the course may include the developments in and relationships between blues, jazz, gospel, country, folk, musicals, vaudeville, and rock. When you have completed this course, you should have a good perspective of the history and evolution of popular music in North America during this century.

Prerequisite: This is an introductory course that requires no previous knowledge of music and no prerequisite courses.

Evaluation:	Unit quizzes	30%
	Mid-term examination (October 22)	20%
	Term research project (due November 28)	20%
	Final examination	30%

Term Project: You will demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of an aspect of the course through a research project resulting in the creation of a formal academic paper. Topics must be chosen in consultation with the instructor, and an outline of your proposed project worth 5% of the total paper grade will be due by October 29. The paper is due on November 28. It must be a minimum of 1500 words in length, and must be typed. A list of suggestions for possible topics is appended to the end of this outline. Be aware: you will probably have to order through inter-library loans many of the sources you will need for the paper. Do not take your time ordering your sources (i.e. order early!), or you will find writing your paper extremely difficult.

Required Text:

Joyner, David Lee. 2003. American Popular Music. 2nd Edition. Madison, WI: WCB Brown and Benchmark.

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Progression Policy: This is Fine Arts Department policy. All students who are absent from more than 20% of this class may be told to leave the class. If students fail to complete and submit 85% of the graded requirements of the term mark, they will not be allowed to write the final exam, or complete the course. In such a case, the student will automatically receive a grade of "0" on the exam. You **MUST** submit the term project to be able to pass this class. See P. 30-34 of the Calendar for more details, and for explanation of many other policies and regulations.

It is a Fine Arts Department guideline that students will lose 10% a calendar day for submitting projects after the due date. After ten days, a grade of zero (0%) will be recorded.

Schedule:

Unit One	Tin Pan Alley and the Theater Chapters 1 and 2
Unit Two	The African-American Tradition Chapters 3 → 9
Unit Three	Country Music and the Anglo-American Tradition Chapters 10 → 14
Unit Four	Rock and Related Musics Chapters 15 → 21

You will get a week's notice of upcoming quizzes following each unit.

Possible research topics may include any aspect of popular music that interests you, with the exception of biographical portrayal of artists. Some examples of ideas are listed below.

- music as process or product: live performances vs. recorded performances or use of video
- political and social activism
- propaganda
- advertising
- a specific theme in music, such as romance, fantasy, government, sex (sexism?), spirituality, unemployment, the supernatural, history, social commentary, racism, fear, humour, satire, nonsense, etc.
- use of symbolism in music
- comparing original and cover versions of the same songs (live or studio covers of recorded originals)
- in-depth studies of specific genres
- careful analysis of the works of a single composer or small group of composers. (e.g. themes in the works of John Lennon, the musical evolution of Elton John [through different lyricists and/or band members], comparing the works of Paul McCartney and John Lennon, etc.)
- genres that we will not cover in depth in class, such as Folk, Zydeco, House, or Acid-Jazz
- topics in Canadian Native popular music
- popular musics from other parts of the world, e.g. Soukous, Celtic, Cine, Soca, Tango, JuJu, Bhangra, Flamenco, or Isicathamiya
- the impact of technology (and its changes) on popular musics of all kinds
- the effects of situations such as globalization, urbanization, etc., on various musics
- recent papers that were successful looked at the impact of Sun Records, flamenco music, censorship of popular music, gender issues. Papers on jazz, Tin Pan Alley, and country music have been rare...