

**Huron University College**  
**Department of English**  
**English 4881G: Music in Culture**  
**Dr. John Vanderheide**

**Class:** Tues. 2:30-5:30 HUC W104

**Office:** HUC A203

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1:00-:2:00 or by appt.

**Email:** [jvande29@uwo.ca](mailto:jvande29@uwo.ca)

**Prerequisite(s):** 1.0 from English 2200-2250, English 3200-3201, Theatre Studies 3205F/G, or permission of the Department.

### **Course Description**

This seminar in cultural studies examines different kinds of music, the roles that music and musicians have played in different societies, social groups and time periods, and the cultural values that are attributed to them.

In this iteration of the course, students will look at the cultural impact of music directly in a select survey of twentieth century and contemporary popular musical forms from America, the U.K. and Canada, and indirectly in a parallel survey of other literary and cultural forms that represent music and the place of the musician. Students may thus expect to study such popular musical forms as blues, jazz, folk, rock, punk, pop, rap, hip-hop, musical theatre, electronic and noise, and how they have been represented on the page (in poetry, the novel, the memoir, cultural history and cultural theory) and on the screen (in documentary, narrative film, and video).

The ways popular musical forms in Western cultures have developed are inseparable from the evolution of broader social and cultural problems pertaining to race, class, gender and sexuality, technology and the economy. Students can thus expect to study the intersections between musical, literary and cinematic form, identity politics, and political economy.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

Successful students who complete the course will:

- Develop historical perspectives on the development in North America and Europe of a variety of popular musical forms from the early twentieth century to the present
- Develop theoretical perspectives on the nature of music, its reproduction and transmission, and on the social and cultural conditions of the development of musical forms from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present
- Develop theoretical and historical perspectives on the ways in which different arts inform and represent each other within or across cultures (i.e. music *in* or *as* poetry, literature, film, etc.)
- Develop theoretical and historical perspectives on the ways in which different arts are informed by and themselves inform social and cultural discourses on identity, technology and politics
- Develop the capacity to appreciate the scholarship of a subject and write effectively in a selected scholarly (critical/theoretical) tradition. This includes learning effective

research methods, utilizing and incorporating secondary sources, and formatting and documenting work in MLA format.

### **Description of Class Methods**

The seminar will contain a lecture component, but will largely be driven by discussion and presentations, so attendance is crucially important. The Academic Calendar reads:

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. (39)

For this course, “absenteeism” is defined as more than two unexcused absences. Students are expected to have the text(s) assigned on a given day read, in their entirety, before class. Students are expected to turn off their cell phones and other electronic devices during class **unless for research purposes**. Any student who distracts the instructor or other students in class by idle cell-phone usage will be asked to leave the classroom. Students are encouraged to come to office hours or if that is not possible to make other arrangements to discuss course material, the course project, exams, etc.

### **Print Texts (to be purchased)**

Brownstein, Carrie. *Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl*

Cohen, Leonard. *Book of Longing*

Dupont, J.M. *Love in Vain*

Jones, LeRoi (Amiri Baraka), *Blues People*

Marcus, Greil. *Lipstick Traces*

Rose, Tricia. *Black Noise*

Zabor, Rafi. *The Bear Comes Home*

### **Electronic texts (PDFS made available)**

Attali, Jacques. *Noise: The Political Economy of Music* (selections)

Bey, Hakim. “The Utopian Blues.”

Deleuze, Gilles & Felix Guattari. “Of the Refrain.”

Ellison, Ralph. “Living with Music.”

---. “On Bird, Bird-Watching”

Eshun, Kodwo. *More Brilliant Than the Sun. Adventures in Sonic Fiction*. (selections)

Feinstein, Sascha et al. *The Jazz Poetry Anthology* (selections)

Spoon, Rae. “How to be a Transgender Indie Rocker.”

Storr, Anthony. *Music and the Mind* (selections)

Taylor, Timothy. *Music and Capitalism* (selections)

Womack, Ytasha. “Mothership in the Key of Mars.”

## **Schedule of Readings and Lectures**

### **Week 1 (Jan 9): Introduction**

Music, Theory and Cultural Studies

### **Week 2 (Jan 16): Blues in Culture**

*Blues People* (LeRoi Jones)

*Love in Vain* (J.M. Dupont)

### **Week 3 (Jan 23): Blues in Culture**

*Bessie* (Dir. Dee Rees)

### **Week 4 (Jan 30): Jazz in Culture**

“Living With Music,” “On Bird, Bird-Watching, and Jazz” (Ralph Ellison)

*The Jazz Poetry Anthology* (selections) (Sascha Feinstein et al.)

### **Week 5 (Feb 6): Jazz in Culture**

*The Bear Comes Home* (Rafi Zabor)

### **Week 6 (Feb 13): Folk in Culture**

*Inside Llewyn Davis* (Dir. Coen Bros.)

“The Utopian Blues” (Hakim Bey)

*READING BREAK (FEB 19-23)*

### **Week 7 (Feb 27): Afrofuturism**

*More Brilliant Than the Sun* (selections) (Kodwo Eshun)

“Mothership in the Key of Mars” (Ytasha Womack)

### **Week 8 (Mar 6): Punk**

*Lipstick Traces* (selections) (Greil Marcus)

### **Week 9 (Mar 13): Post-Punk**

*Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl* (Carrie Brownstein)

### **Week 10 (Mar 20): Canadiana**

*Book of Longing* (selections) (Leonard Cohen)

“How to be a Transgender Indie Rocker” (Rae Spoon)

### **Week 11 (Mar 27): Rap & Hip-Hop**

*Black Noise* (Tricia Rose)

### **Week 12 (Apr 3): Other Musics**

*Noise* (selection) (Jacques Attali)

## **Week 13 (Apr 10): Other Musics**

*Music and Capitalism* (selection) (Timothy Taylor)

### **Method of Evaluation and Assessment**

#### **Method of Evaluation**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Short Presentation (10 minutes)	Jan 30 or Feb 6	15%
Field Study/Creative Assignment	Feb 27	15%
Seminar Presentation (30 minutes)	Between Mar 6-Apr 10	25%
Term Paper (1500-2000 words)	Apr 13	35%
Attendance and Participation		10%

#### **Attendance and Participation (Ongoing) (10%)**

Attendance and participation multiply perspectives and enrich the educational experience for all. For each class missed, students will lose 10% of the attendance and participation grade (i.e. 1 point out of 10). *If you miss more than twelve hours of class meetings per term (three classes), your attendance & participation grade will be forfeited automatically.* Participation means having prepared for the week's listenings and readings and being prepared to discuss them in class.

#### **Short Presentation (Jan 30 or Feb 6) (15%)**

A maximum 10 minute mini-presentation on course material pertaining to the first five weeks of class. Topics can include: 1) reviews of selected works in blues and jazz, with reference to select historical and theoretical material; 2) short critiques of first weeks of course material (or selected portions thereof) (including *Blues People*, *Love in Vain*, *Bessie*, *The Bear Comes Home* and selected blues and jazz poems). More detailed rubric provided when course begins.

#### **Field Study Report/Creative Assignment (Due Feb 27) (15%)**

An independent critical or creative assignment focusing on experiencing music live or firsthand. A "critical" field study will entail a 750 word written reflection of an experience of live music as auditor or participant, from a coherent critical or theoretical perspective. A "creative" field study will involve writing and recording maximum 10 minutes of original music. Music will be submitted alongside lyrics (if there are lyrics) as well as a 250-350 word reflection on the experience of writing and performing, from a coherent critical or theoretical perspective. More detailed rubric provided when course begins.

#### **Seminar Presentation (Between Mar 6-Apr 10) (25%)**

A 30 minute seminar presentation on selected topics drawn from course material. Topics will be centred around critiques of selected figures and/or works from the genres or categories of afrofuturism, punk, post-punk, Canadiana, Rap, Hip-Hop or other musics,

with reference to selected historical, fictional and theoretical course material. More detailed rubric provided when course begins.

### **Term Paper (Due Apr 13) (35%)**

A traditional research essay of 1500-2000 words on a selected topic related to course material. Topics may include single work study, single author/artist study, genre study, etc. 5-8 secondary sources required, with appropriate formatting. More detailed rubric provided when course begins.

### **Late Policy**

All assignments are due by the end of class on the due date and should be handed to the instructor personally. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the instructor receives the essay.

Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 2 marks per calendar day until the instructor receives the essay. *Normally, late assignments will receive a grade but no detailed commentary.* **After 7 days, the assignment will not be accepted and a mark of 0/F will be awarded.**

Students must pass both term work and the final examination in order to pass the course. Students who fail the term work are not allowed to take the final examination. Students who fail the final examination (regardless of their term work) automatically fail the course.



### **Appendix to Course Outlines**

#### **Prerequisite Information**

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Provost and Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

#### **Conduct of Students in Classes, Lectures, and Seminars**

Membership in the community of Huron University College and the University of Western Ontario implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. The academic and social privileges granted to each student are conditional upon the fulfillment of these responsibilities.

In the classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Students can avoid any unnecessary disruption of the class by arriving in sufficient time to be seated and ready for the start of the class, by remaining silent while the professor is speaking or another student has the floor, and by taking care of personal needs prior to the start of class. If a student is late, or knows that he/she will have to leave class early, be courteous: sit in an aisle seat and enter and leave quietly.

Please see the *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities* at:

<http://www.huronuc.ca/CurrentStudents/StudentLifeandSupportServices/StudentDiscipline>

### **Technology**

It is not appropriate to use technology (such as, but not limited to, laptops, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and is distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

### **Academic Accommodation for Medical/Non-Medical Grounds**

Students who require special accommodation for tests and/or other course components must make the appropriate arrangements with the Student Development Centre (SDC). Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at:

[http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/?requesting\\_acc](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/?requesting_acc)

#### **(a) Medical Grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of final grade: Go Directly to Academic Advising**

University Senate policy, which can be found at

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf),

requires that all student requests for accommodation on medical grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of the final grade be made directly to the academic advising office of the home faculty (for Huron students, the “home faculty” is Huron), with supporting documentation in the form (minimally) of the Senate-approved Student Medical Certificate found at:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform\\_15JUN.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform_15JUN.pdf).

The documentation is submitted in confidence and will not be shown to instructors. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation. The instructor will not normally deny accommodation where appropriate medical documentation is in place and where the duration it describes aligns with the due date(s) of assignment(s). Before denying a request for accommodation on medical grounds, the instructor will consult with the Provost and Dean. The instructor’s decision is appealable to the Provost and Dean.

#### **(b) Accommodation on Medical Grounds for assignments worth less than 10% of final grade: Consult Instructor Directly**

When seeking accommodation on medical grounds for assignments worth less than 10% of the final course grade, the student should contact the instructor directly. The student need only share broad outlines of the medical situation. The instructor **may** require the student to submit documentation to the academic advisors, in which case she or he will advise the student and inform the academic advisors to expect documentation. The instructor may not collect medical documentation. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation. The instructor will not normally deny accommodation where appropriate medical documentation is in place and where the duration it describes aligns with the due date(s) of assignment(s). Before denying a request for accommodation on medical grounds, the instructor will consult with the Provost and Dean. The instructor's decision is appealable to the Provost and Dean.

**(c) Non-medical Grounds: Consult Instructor Directly**

Where the grounds for seeking accommodation are not medical, the student should contact the instructor directly. Late penalties may apply at the discretion of the instructor. Apart from the exception noted below, academic advisors will not be involved in the process of accommodation for non-medical reasons.

Where a student seeks accommodation on non-medical grounds where confidentiality is a concern, the student should approach an academic advisor with any documentation available. The advisors will contact the instructor after the student's request is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the challenge without breaching confidence. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified that significant circumstances are affecting or have affected the student's ability to complete work, and the student will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation. Before denying a request for accommodation where documentation has been submitted to an academic advisor, the instructor will consult with the Provost and Dean. The instructor's decision is appealable to the Provost and Dean.

**Statement on Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

**Statement on Academic Integrity**

The International Centre for Academic Integrity defines academic integrity as "a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behaviour that enable academic communities to translate ideals to action." (CAI Fundamental Values Project, 1999).

A lack of academic integrity is indicated by such behaviours as the following:

- Cheating on tests;
- Fraudulent submissions online;
- Plagiarism in papers submitted (including failure to cite and piecing together unattributed sources);
- Unauthorized resubmission of course work to a different course;
- Helping someone else cheat;

Unauthorized collaboration;  
Fabrication of results or sources;  
Purchasing work and representing it as one's own.

### **Academic Integrity: Importance and Impact**

Being at university means engaging with a variety of communities in the pursuit and sharing of knowledge and understanding in ways that are clear, respectful, efficient, and productive. University communities have established norms of academic integrity to ensure responsible, honest, and ethical behavior in the academic work of the university, which is best done when sources of ideas are properly and fully acknowledged and when responsibility for ideas is fully and accurately represented.

In the academic sphere, unacknowledged use of another's work or ideas is not only an offence against the community of scholars and an obstacle to academic productivity. It may also be understood as fraud and may constitute an infringement of legal copyright.

A university is a place for fulfilling one's potential and challenging oneself, and this means rising to challenges rather than finding ways around them. The achievements in an individual's university studies can only be fairly evaluated quantitatively through true and honest representation of the actual learning done by the student. Equity in assessment for all students is ensured through fair representation of the efforts by each.

Acting with integrity at university constitutes a good set of practices for maintaining integrity in later life. Offences against academic integrity are therefore taken very seriously as part of the university's work in preparing students to serve, lead, and innovate in the world at large.

A university degree is a significant investment of an individual's, and the public's, time, energies, and resources in the future, and habits of academic integrity protect that investment by preserving the university's reputation and ensuring public confidence in higher education.

**Students found guilty of plagiarism will suffer consequences ranging from a grade reduction to failure in the course to expulsion from the university. In addition, a formal letter documenting the offence will be filed in the Provost and Dean's Office, and this record of the offence will be retained in the Provost and Dean's Office for the duration of the student's academic career at Huron University College.**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is



malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else's clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

### **Policy on Special Needs**

Students who require special accommodation for tests and/or other course components must make the appropriate arrangements with the Student Development Centre (SDC). Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at:

[http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/?requesting\\_acc](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/?requesting_acc)

### **Attendance Regulations for Examinations**

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Provost and Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Provost and Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Provost and Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Provost and Dean of the Faculty of registration.

### **Class Cancellations**

In the event of a cancellation of class, every effort will be made to post that information on the Huron website, <http://www.huronuc.ca/AccessibilityInfo> ("Class Cancellations").

### **Mental Health @ Western**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Academic Advising**

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation [see above], students should contact an Academic Advisor in Huron's Student Support Services ([huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca)). An outline of the range of services offered is found on the Huron website at: <http://www.huronuc.ca/CurrentStudents/AcademicAdvisorsandServices>

Department Chairs and Program Directors and Coordinators are also able to answer questions about their individual programs. Their contact information can be found on the Huron website at: <http://www.huronuc.ca/Academics/FacultyofArtsandSocialScience>