

Jazz, Hip Hop, and African Culture
MUH 4930/6935
Fall 2020

Course Time: Thursdays 4:05-7:05 pm

Professor: Sarah Politz (spolitz@ufl.edu)

Office Hours: Via Zoom, 3-5 pm Mondays, or by appointment

Course Description: This course will consider how African music and culture have influenced African American musical expression since the beginning of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and up through the development of the blues, jazz, soul music, hip hop, and r&b. We will consider how such cultural flows have moved in both directions, from the foundations of African American music in African aesthetics of orality, performance, and embodiment, to the ways that jazz and hip hop musicians have throughout the 20th century made explicit reference or taken inspiration from African musical cultures. Assignments will include short response posts, analysis of music videos and other media, and a final research paper or media project. Previous experience in music, African studies, or African American studies is desirable but not required.

Course Objectives: Students will (1) become familiar with the literature, scholarship, and central themes of African American popular music with reference to Africa, (2) be able to identify and think critically about the signs and sounds of Africa in African American popular music, and (3) develop an original research project related to their interests on a related topic.

Course Pre-requisites: This course is intended primarily for graduate students in music. Undergraduates may enroll at the 4000 level, and non-music students may enroll with the permission of the professor.

Grading: Response papers 25%, Music video analysis 15%, Scholarly review article 10%, Final paper and presentation 30%, attendance and participation 20%

Description of Course Assignments

Weekly Response Papers: Students should read the assigned articles and any listening/viewing assignments and write a response post of about 250 words, to be posted to the course website by midnight on the day before class. You may provide a critical response to one or more of the readings, place two or more readings in conversation with one another, or compare an aspect of the readings to your own research, listening, or performance experience.

Music Video Analysis: Students will select a song from an African American popular music style and an accompanying video with African imagery and/or references in the lyrics. This will be a song released in the last 20 years of their own choosing. They will write a short paper (about 5 pages) evaluating the lyrical content and imagery in the video, and placing it in historical and cultural context. The paper will be evaluated based on the argument and the evidence presented. Students will have the opportunity to submit a second draft of the paper after receiving feedback from Dr. Politz and a peer reviewer.

Scholarly Article Review: Each student will select a scholarly article not assigned on the syllabus and write a short (1-2 page) review of the article, evaluating its strengths and any areas of productive critique.

Final Paper and Presentation: A final paper (about 15 pages, double spaced) is due by Friday, December 11 at 5 pm, sent via email to Dr. Politz. This paper should be focused on a topic discussed or related to topics discussed in class pertaining to African American musical expression in international or cross-cultural perspective. This paper should be formatted following Chicago style and citation guidelines. The proposal for this paper is due before class on November 12. The paper will be evaluated on its groundedness in specific music and video examples, the quality of the research, and the strength of the argument and the evidence.

Outline of Class Content (subject to change)

September 3 – Course introduction

September 10 – Africa in the Study of Black American Music

Ramsey, Guthrie P., Jr. 2003. “Disciplining Black Music: On History, Memory and Contemporary Theories,” and in *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip Hop*.

Garcia, David F. 2017. *Listening for Africa: Freedom, Modernity, and the Logic of Black Music’s African Origins*, introduction.

Jones, LeRoi. 1963. *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*, introduction and chapter 1.

Floyd, Samuel. 1995. Chapter 1. *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States*. 3-34.

September 17 – New Orleans Music and Africa

Lipsitz, George. 2011. “New Orleans in the World and the World in New Orleans,” *Black Music Research Journal* 31(2):261-290.

Evans, Freddi Williams. 2011. “Foreword” (J.H.K. Nketia), “Introduction,” “The Legacy of the Gathering Place,” “The Significance of the Gatherings,” and “The Gatherers” in *Congo Square: African Roots in New Orleans*. pp. ix-xii, 1-22, 23-46, 47-61.

Turner, Richard Brent. 2009. “Mardi Gras Indians and Second Lines, Sequin Artists and Rara Bands: Street Festivals and Performances in New Orleans and Haiti,” in *Jazz Religion, the Second Line, and Black New Orleans*. pp. 39-68.

September 24 – The Afro-Centric Idea

Nketia, J.H. Kwabena. 2005. “African Roots of Music in the Americas: An African View,” in *Ethnomusicology and African Music*. pp. 318-336.

Asante, Mory. 1990. “Dancing Between Circles and Lines,” in *The Afro-centric Idea*.

Garcia, David. 2017. “Analyzing the African Origins of Negro Music and Dance in a Time of Racism, Fascism, and War,” in *Listening for Africa*.

Austin, Algernon. 2006. “The Racial Ideology of Afrocentrism,” in *Achieving Blackness: Race, Black Nationalism and Afrocentrism in the Twentieth Century*.

October 1 – Jazz and Africa 1930-1960: Blues, Swing, Bebop

Jackson, Travis. 2003. "Jazz Performance as Ritual: The Blues Aesthetic and the African Diaspora," in *The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective*, ed. Ingrid Monson. pp. 21-82

Woideck, Carl. 2017. "Authentic Synthetic Hybrid: Ellington's Concepts of Africa and Its Music," in *Duke Ellington Studies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 224-264.

Lock, Graham. 1999. "Duke Ellington: Tone Parallels," in *Blutopia: Visions of the Future and Revisions of the Past*. pp. 77-144

Ramsey. 2003. "We Called Ourselves Modern: Race Music and the Politics and Practice of Modernism at Midcentury" in *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip Hop*.

Listening: Ellington

October 8 – African Jazz, Latin Jazz

Kelly, Robin. 2012. "Prelude," and "The Drum Wars of Guy Warren," *Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times*.

Austerlitz, Paul. 2005. "Machito and Mario Bauza," in *Jazz Consciousness* (42-97)

Monson, Ingrid. 1999. "Art Blakey's African Diaspora," in *The African Diaspora: A Musical Perspective*, 324-347.

Vincent, Joshua and Lydia Lindsey. 2017. "Jazz is African Diasporic Music: Reconfiguring the Uniquely American Definition of Jazz," *Africology: The Journal of Panafrikan Studies*, 10(5):156-189.

Listening: Machito, Dizzy Gillespie, Art Blakey – *The African Beat* (1962)

October 15 – Jazz and Africa During the Civil Rights Era: Free Jazz, Hard Bop

Weinstein, Norman. 1993. "John Coltrane: Sounding the African Cry for Paradise," and "Randy Weston: Talking Piano Like a Drum Shouting Freedom," in *A Night in Tunisia: Imaginings of Africa in Jazz* (60-72, 107-118)

Kelly. 2012. "The Sojourns of Randy Weston," in *Africa Speaks, America Answers*.

Lock, Graham. 1999. Introduction and "Sun Ra: A Starward Eye," in *Blutopia: Visions of the Future and Revisions of the Past*. pp. 13-76

Thomas, Lorenzo. 1995. "Ascension: Music and the Black Arts Movement," in *Jazz Among the Discourses*.

Listening: Randy Weston, *African Cookbook* (1964); John Coltrane, *Africa/Brass* (1961); Sun Ra, *Space Is the Place*

October 22 – Soul and Funk (Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, Motown, Marvin Gaye, James Brown, Black Power, George Clinton, Afro-futurism)

*Scholarly article review due

(SEM annual meeting Oct 22-25)

Ward, Brian. 1998. "Tell It Like It Is: Soul, Funk, and Sexual Politics in the Black Power Era," in *Just My Soul Responding: Rhythm and Blues, Black Consciousness, and Race Relations*. pp. 339-387.

Wesley, Fred. 2002. *Hit Me, Fred: Recollections of a Sideman*, pp. 132-210. (selections)

Womack, Ytasha. 2013. *Afrofuturism: The World of Black Sci-Fi and Fantasy Culture*, ch. 4-5

October 29 – The Birth of Hip Hop: Connecting to Africa Via Jamaica in the Bronx

Rose, Tricia. 1994. "Prophets of Rage: Rap Music and the Politics of Cultural Expression" in *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America*.

Broughton, Frank. 2010. "Afrika Bambaata: Zulu King of the Bronx" in *The Record Players: DJ Revolutionaries*. 190-203.

Chang, Jeff, and D. J. Kool Herc. 2007. *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*. Chapter 2

Austin, Algernon. 2006. "Conservative Black Nationalism in the Afro-centric Era," in *Achieving Blackness*.

Listening: Gil-Scott Heron, Afrika Bambaata, Sugar Hill Gang

November 5 – Afro-centric Hip Hop, Religion, and Spirituality

*Music video analysis paper due

(American Musicological Society meeting Nov. 5-8)

Ramsey, Guthrie. 2003. "Hip-Hop Hybridity and the Black Church Muse," in *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip Hop*

Nesbit, Thomas. 2005. "Planet Rock: Black Socioreligious Movements and Early 1980s Electro" in *Call Me the Seeker: Listening to Religion in Popular Music*.

Gosa, Travis. 2015. "The Fifth Element – Knowledge" in *The Cambridge Companion to Hip Hop*.

Perchard, Tom. 2011. "Hip Hop Samples Jazz: Dynamics of Cultural Memory and Musical Tradition in the African American 1990s," *American Music*, 29(3):277-306.

Listening: A Tribe Called Quest, Gangstar, Guru, Native Tongues, Queen Latifah, De La Soul, Black Sheep, Jungle Brothers, Digging in the Crates, Beat Miners, Helter Skelter, Smith and Wesson, Arrested Development, The Roots, Kamasi Washington, Nas, Miles Davis, Digable Planets, Last Poets, Erykah Badu

November 12 – Afro-centric Hip Hop, Gender, and Sexuality

*Final paper abstracts due

Williams, Faith. 2017. "Afrocentrism, Hip Hop, and the 'Black Queen': Utilizing Hip Hop Feminist Methods to Challenge Controlling Images of Black Women," *McNair Scholars Research Journal*, 10(1):211-223.

Dean, Terrance. 2008. *Hiding in Hip Hop*, introduction.

Roberts, Robin. 1994. "Ladies First: Queen Latifah's Afrocentric Feminist Music Video," *African American Review*, 28(2): 245-257.

Decker, Jeffrey Louis. 1993. "The State of Rap: Time and Place in Hip Hop Nationalism," *Social Text*, 34:53-84.

hooks, bell. 2001. *Salvation: Black People and Love*, introduction.

November 19 – Hip Hop, Social Change, and African Identity

(African Studies Association meeting Nov. 19-22)

Forman, Murray. 2010. "Conscious Hip-Hop, Change, and the Obama Era," *American Studies Journal*, 54. <<http://www.asjournal.org/54-2010/conscious-hip-hop/>>

Faraji, Salim. 2016. "Kendrick Lamar's Grammy Performance Points to a Simple Truth: #Black Lives Matter When Africa Matters," *Africology: The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 9(2):3-6.

Coates, Ta-Nehisi, *Between the World and Me*. Chapter 1.

Tate, Greg, Rolling Stone “How #BlackLivesMatter Changed Hip-Hop and R&B in 2015.”
December 16 2015.

Garza, Alicia. “A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement.” *The Feminist Wire*, October 7, 2014.

Listening: Kendrick Lamar (To Pimp a Butterfly)

November 26 – No class (Thanksgiving)

December 3 – Student presentations

*Final papers due Friday, December 11 by 5 pm via email to Dr. Politz

This course takes place online on Zoom and Canvas. You should participate actively in discussion on Zoom, using video and audio as appropriate, and keeping your microphone muted when not speaking. You may mute your video after the beginning of class if you wish, but you are encouraged to keep it on. You may find that earbuds or headphones, as well as a quiet, private space, improve your experience.

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile image, video, or voice recorded, please speak with the professor about your concerns. You also have the option of using the chat function to participate. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Resources for confronting the challenges of COVID-19, including dealing with precarious home and work environments, mental health issues, and displacement, can be found here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/11YAeLIZEGexvmxanpQjTOE4xw_wsMQgS4uwt7GohvM/edit

Please do not multitask during class, become distracted by your phone or other devices, browse the web, etc. You should arrive on time, and notify Dr. Politz if you need to be absent, late, or leave early.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

For UF grading policies, including grades and grade points, please see here:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Resources:

Technical support (including Zoom and internet trouble), helpdesk.ufl.edu, 352-392-4357

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>

E-learning technical support (for Canvas), 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Wellness Resources:

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.