

MUN 2800 (26883)

Popular Music Ensemble (fall 2020)

Ensemble Director: Jason Mullen: jasonmullen@ufl.edu

Office Hours: Via zoom and by appointment

Class Time: Thursdays, Periods 10-11 (5:10-7:05)

MUB 121 (Orchestra Room)

Objectives and Description:

Defining popular music is difficult. Generally, it can be considered as, “music that is mass-reproduced and disseminated via mass-media” which is listened to by “large numbers” and “typically draws upon a variety of preexisting musical traditions” (Starr, Waterman p. 6). With such a broad definition popular music studies converge with diverse and profound issues such as: identity, gender, class, place, technology, aesthetics, and society. The Popular Music Ensemble explores popular music from all genres/subgenres and eras utilizing socially informed and musically creative methods towards investigating these issues through performance.

The ensemble is open to: drummers/percussionists, rappers, horn players, bassists, programming/sequencers/synthns, vocalists, keyboard players, guitarists, strings, etc. and aims to create a space for all UF students to develop musicianship, critical thinking, and performance skills. Exact note-for-note recreations of popular songs, although possible and sometimes appropriate, are not always conceivable, nor desirable; rather, crafting an informed and ensemble-specific interpretation will be favored. There is no need to be able to read music for this ensemble. If it becomes a necessary tool for remembering a part, we'll write something down in notation for those who read it, but mostly we'll rely on chord charts, lyric sheets, and our ears.

The semester will be broken into **three phases**. Within the **first phase** we will decide on repertoire that we want to explore; taking into account available instruments/singers, number of students, and general interests. The **second phase** will be the laboratory setting, where we deconstruct component parts of a song, exploring: structure, lyrics, timbre, instrumentation, and meaning. In the **third phase** we will begin learning and rehearsing interpretations of the song for performance. The semester will culminate with a performance, which will be accompanied by a brief oral explanation that curates the arranging process, socio-historical background, and interpretations of a song's meaning.

Requirements and Policies:

Members are expected to learn and practice their parts and come to rehearsals prepared to cooperate, analyze, and perform. Everyone is expected to help set up and strike equipment used during the rehearsals. This means, if possible, coming ten minutes prior to the rehearsal time or staying ten minutes later. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation." In case of scheduling conflicts including a date in which you cannot make a rehearsal, please inform the appropriate director in advance. If you are sick, please also inform the appropriate instructor.

Assessment/Grading:

Your grade is determined by attendance and effort in this class. If you attend rehearsals and performances, practice your parts and try your best you will receive an A for the course. If you do not show up to rehearsals or come consistently late to rehearsals, you will receive less than an A. Attendance: 50%; Effort: 50%. Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points may be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculating>

GRADING: A 95% A- 90% B+ 87% B 83% B- 80% C+ 77% C 73% C- 70% D+ 67% D 63% D- 60% E 0-59%

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: For students with disabilities—to request classroom accommodations, contact the Assistant Dean of Students/Director of the Disability Resources Program at P202 Peabody Hall or call 392-1261 (V), 392-3008 (TDD). Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office.

Preliminary Performance Dates: • (time/location TBA)