



SCHOOL OF
Music

MUS 1310 01H
History of Rock and Roll
Course Syllabus: Spring 2025

Instructor Information

Instructor:	Dr. Jessica Stearns
Classroom Location:	Music Building Rm. 158, MWF 10:00 am-10:50 am
Office Location:	Music Building Rm. 220
Office Hours:	MW 1:00 pm-3:00 pm; F 9:00 am-10:00 am
University E-mail:	Jessica.Stearns@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication:	Email
Communication Response Time:	24 hours

Course Information

Course Description

This course will provide opportunities for students to develop and broaden their familiarity with, and understanding of Rock and Roll and other forms of American popular music. Students will be guided through outside reading assignments, class discussion, aural/visual experiences, and written assignments to allow for an increased understanding of American popular music, its heritage, and its social and historical context.

Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will:

- Analyze elements of rock music using appropriate vocabulary.
- Demonstrate a knowledge of the origins of rock and rock subgenres.
- Identify connections between rock music and its social and historical contexts.

Required Textbook

Covach, John and Andrew Flory. *What's that Sound: An Introduction to Rock and Its History* 6th edition. New York: Norton, 2023.

Course Requirements

Instructional Methods

Students will follow outlined activities for each week that include in-person lectures, listening examples, readings, class discussions, and other assessments.

Assessments

Listening Exercises: There will be 12 Listening Exercises over the course of the semester. For these activities, students will submit written analyses describing pertinent musical aspects of works played in class. Dates of the Listening Exercises will not be announced ahead of time. The only way to earn points for a Listening Exercise is to be in the classroom for the entire class period on the day that an activity takes place. These assignments cannot be made up for any reason. For each activity, you will earn 15 points toward your final grade. You can thus miss 2 Listening Exercises and still earn full points in this category. If you are present for all 12 Listening Exercises, you may earn up to 180 points in this category (30 points of extra credit). I reserve the right to change Listening Exercises to graded pop quizzes if it becomes evident that students are not preparing for class or are not participating.

Quizzes: Over the course of the semester there will be 7 quizzes in D2L covering concepts from class materials.

Seminar Reflections: There will be 7 Seminar Days throughout the semester in which students will prepare readings covering specific topics and discuss them during class. Students will write reflections answering questions about the readings and topics in small groups and submit them for credit at the end of the class period. Seminar Reflections are meant to happen in class and will only be made up at the instructor's discretion.

Reading Responses: Students will post brief reactions to assigned readings for Seminar Days in D2L the evening before class.

Album Reviews: Students will write an essay reviewing a rock album of their choice.

Virtual Rock Festival: Students will create a virtual rock festival featuring artists and songs they consider to be the most significant in rock history.

Grading

Listening Exercises	150
Quizzes	280
Seminar Reflections	175
Reading Responses	140
Album Review	105
Virtual Rock Festival	150
Total	1000

A=900-1000 B=800-899 C=700-799 D=600-699 F=Below 600

Course and University Procedures / Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance

Attendance Policy

Attending class regularly is the responsibility of each student and is expected. Please keep in mind that I will not post PowerPoint slides and missed Listening Exercises cannot be made up. Although you will not be penalized for missing classes, I will keep a record (via sign-in sheet) of which students have attended. I am always happy to answer questions about class material for students who have been in class, but I will not re-teach material to students who have not been in class (limited exceptions may be made for students who provide documentation for truly unavoidable absences). I reserve the right to institute an attendance policy if I think attendance and/or tardiness is becoming a problem.

Late Assignments or Work

Assignments (Album Review and Virtual Rock Festival) submitted within one week of the deadline will incur a 50% penalty. No assignments will be accepted beyond one week after the deadline. Quizzes must be completed by the End Date listed in D2L. Quizzes will only be reopened at the discretion of the instructor and only in extreme cases with documentation.

Classroom Etiquette

As a courtesy to me and to your classmates, you should plan to arrive on time for class and to remain in the classroom for the entire class period. It is very distracting when students leave and enter the classroom during a lecture. Students who consistently arrive late, depart early, or leave and reenter the classroom without serious reason may lose Listening Exercise points.

Although the format of this class is mainly lecture, I expect students to answer questions and engage in discussion about the assigned materials. I strongly encourage every student to participate actively. You are by no means required to like all of the music assigned in this course or to agree with the views expressed by the artists we will be studying. You are, however, expected to be thoughtful and courteous in expressing your opinions and in responding to those of your classmates. Students are expected to be attentive and refrain from doing work for other courses during class. If I must ask you to stop doing work for other classes more than once in a class period, you may lose Listening Exercise points.

Electronic Devices

Students may use laptops or tablets to take notes during lectures. The use of cell phones is prohibited. Please silence and put away (completely out of sight) your cell phone. If I notice you using your cell phone, I will ask you to put it away. If I must ask you to do so more than once in a class period, you may lose Listening Exercise points.

Students may not record lectures or take pictures of PowerPoint slides without my consent.

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures: [Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

AI Use in Course (University Statement)

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

AI Use in Course (Instructor Statement)

As an instructor, I recognize the potential of AI as a useful tool to aid learning, create content, and refine writing skills. However, I will not utilize AI to generate course materials or provide feedback to students. In this class, students are permitted to incorporate AI (including Grammarly) into assignments only when explicitly instructed to do so. Any other use of AI on assignments or exams will be deemed as academic dishonesty.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Student Disability Services at 903-886-5150, 903-886—5835; email studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu; online at [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#); or in-person in Room 162 of the Velma K. Waters Library.

Tenets of Common Behavior

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See current Student Guidebook);

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Campus Concealed Carry - Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedure/s/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Course Calendar

Week	Content
Week 1: 1/13-1/17	Mon: Course Introductions; Introduction to Musical Terms R: None Wed: The World Before Rock and Roll R: pp. 35-56 Fri: Regional Styles R: pp. 57-73
Week 2: 1/20-1/24	Mon: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, No Class Wed: The Birth of Rock and Roll R: pp. 75-96 Fri: Rockabilly R: pp. 96-110 Quiz 1 due
Week 3: 1/27-1/31	Mon: Splitting up the Market and Rise of Producers R: pp. 113-135 Wed: Soul and the late 1950s R: pp. 136-151 Fri: Seminar Day—Girl Groups
Week 4: 2/3-2/7	Mon: Beatlemania R: pp. 153-172

Week	Content
	Wed: British Invasion R: pp. 172-188 Fri: American Responses; Rock on the West Coast R: pp. 191-206 Quiz 2 due
Week 5: 2/10-2/14	Mon: Rock on the East Coast; Garage Bands and TV Rock R: pp. 206-216 Wed: Motown R: pp. 219-229 Fri: Seminar Day—Motown and the Civil Rights Movement Album Review Due
Week 6: 2/17-2/21	Mon: R&B and Soul R: pp. 230-247 Wed: Psychedelia; The San Francisco Scene R: pp. 251-271 Fri: Psychedelia in London, Los Angeles, and New York; Woodstock R: pp. 271-289 Quiz 3 due
Week 7: 2/24-2/28	Mon: New Directions in the 1970s R: pp. 291-309 Wed: The Growing Rock Monster R: pp. 309-333 Fri: Seminar Day—XIT and Native American Rock
Week 8: 3/3-3/7	Mon: Black Pop R: pp. 335-348 Wed: Soul, Reggae, and Disco R: pp. 348-363 Fri: Mainstream Rock; Punk in the US R: pp. 365-383 Quiz 4 due
Week 9: 3/17-3/21	Mon: Punk in the UK; New Wave R: pp. 383-397 Wed: MTV R: pp. 399-419 Fri: Seminar Day—Prince and Social Issues
Week 10: 3/24-3/28	Mon: No Class, Attend Guest Lecture (TBD)* Wed: Seminar Day—Punk Rock in El Paso Fri: Guest Speaker
Week 11: 3/31-4/4	Mon: The New Traditionalists R: pp. 420-432 Wed: Heavy Metal; The Emergence of Rap

Week	Content
	R: pp. 435-455 Fri: Punk and Indie Rock in the 1980s R: pp. 455-465 Quiz 5 due
Week 12: 4/7-4/11	Mon: The 1990s and Alternative Rock R: pp. 467-480 Wed: Metal Extensions and Indie Rock in a New Decade R: pp. 480-493 Fri: Seminar Day—Riot grrrl Virtual Rock Festival due
Week 13: 4/14-4/18	Mon: Widening Gaps R: pp. 495-505 Wed: Feel-Good Rock; Female Singer-Songwriters R: pp. 505-513 Fri: Teen Idols and Beat-Based Pop R: pp. 513-526 Quiz 6 due
Week 14: 4/21-4/25	Mon: Rock in the New Millenium R: pp. 529-547 Wed: Country and Beat-Based Styles; Indie Rock Sells R: pp. 547-561 Fri: Seminar Day—Media and Business
Week 15: 4/28-5/2	Mon: The Rock Industry and the 2010s R: pp. 563-572 Wed: Rock in the Mainstream R: pp. 572-595 Fri: Rock as Discourse R: pp. 596-600 Quiz 7 due
Final Exam	There is no Final Exam for this course

**Attendance at the Guest Lecture outside of class time is required unless students have a class or work conflict, and students must communicate such conflicts ahead of time*