

ROCK 'N' ROLL AND AMERICAN SOCIETY

MMC 3702 3 credits

Rock 'n roll? "It's restless and rude. It's defiant and daring. It's a fist shaken at age. It's a voice that often screams out questions because the answers are always changing."

*Nora Roberts
"Public Secrets"*

CLASS MEETINGS: Monday and Wednesday at 3 p.m. in 1064 Weimer Hall.

PROFESSOR: David E. Carlson (aka "Prof. Rock")

Cox/Palm Beach Post Professor of New Media Journalism
3219 Weimer Hall
dcarlson@jou.ufl.edu
352.846.0171

OFFICE HOURS: *Every Monday after class, Tuesday from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. and Wednesday from 11 a.m. to noon, or by appointment. My office, 3219, is in the far northwest corner of Weimer Hall, the area nearest the stadium, on the third floor.*

TEACHING ASSISTANT: Angela Farinacci

email: anacci@ufl.edu

Office: WEIM G035

Office Hours:

- **Tuesdays:** 1:00pm-4:00pm
- **Wednesdays:** 12:30pm-2:30pm

COMMUNICATIONS: *Messages will be sent to the class via Canvas Announcements. I strongly suggest you set Canvas notifications to text you any announcements. Individual students may be contacted via email. Students are encouraged to contact me via email to dcarlson@jou.ufl.edu. I prefer that to Canvas messages. I usually will answer quickly, but I don't promise to be available every night and weekend. (I need some down time, too). Please include in your message which version of the class you are taking (F2F or in person is fine) as there are multiple versions of the class taught simultaneously.*

REQUIRED TEXT: *What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History* (Links to an external site.) (Fourth Edition) by John Covach and Andrew Flory (W.W. Norton, 2012). ISBN: 978-0-393-91204-3

There also will be about 30 short articles that will be posted in the “Resources” section of Canvas. Many of those articles are compiled in the next book. Purchase is optional but recommended to provide additional nourishment to your brain. It is a compilation of essays, record reviews and the like from throughout the history of rock 'n' roll:

“Rock and Roll Is Here to Stay: An Anthology” by William McKeen (W.W. Norton, 2000). ISBN: 0393047008

COURSE DESCRIPTION: *(From the UF catalog) Studies the role of popular music in American culture. It is not a music course but a look at the effects of recorded sound on popular culture. Part 1 emphasizes rock 'n' roll and its impact from 1954-1970.*

*Prerequisite Knowledge and Skills: There are no prerequisites for MMC3702, but students who are hearing impaired may have difficulty as we play and discuss a lot of music. **No prior familiarity with music (rock or otherwise) is necessary or assumed.** All I ask is that you have an open mind and be ready and able to suspend whatever pre-conceived notions you may have regarding “rock 'n' roll,” “rock music” or “popular music” in general.*

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE: *This communication course explores **the history of rock (and pop) music**—its significant performers, producers, recordings, performances, and cultural identity, with the focus on the decades of the 1950s and 1960s.*

*It's NOT a music course, per se, but we will be listening to a lot of music as we consider the effects of recorded sound on popular culture. Thus, this is a quintessential **“communication and culture”** course. We will study the origin and growth of the recording industry and music business, consider the impact new technology had (and continues to have) on the development of popular music and examine the mutual influences of rock 'n' roll music and other mass media (film, television, journalism, advertising, etc.).*

We will attempt to **integrate into this story the general social and intellectual history of the United States**. Our emphasis is on rock 'n' roll and its impact from around 1954 to 1970, which happens to closely parallel the Civil Rights movement.

We will examine some of the different musical influences that came together to create rock 'n' roll, beginning as far back as the turn of the century, then building through the first half of the last century. Following a loose chronology, we will trace the evolution of specific musical styles and investigate issues related to culture, performance, technology, and reception. Reading assignments will introduce the distinct musical styles, performers, and works that comprise each genre and time period.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course, students will:

Be able to broadly describe the history and development of rock 'n' roll music, its technological, regional and cultural influences, and synthesize how all that has influenced the cultural history of the United States. Students also will be able to recognize and compare different styles of music such as blues, bluegrass, country, gospel, jazz and various genres of rock 'n' roll.

Additional goals are to improve critical thinking skills, ability to discern important information and note-taking skills, all of which are useful in a broad range of disciplines.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS: This is a large lecture class. Lectures include a great deal of multimedia, especially music and videos of musical performances. There may not be a lot of opportunities to ask questions in class, so you are encouraged to use Canvas discussions to ask and answer questions from others. The instructor will weigh in as appropriate. Also, please come to see me if you want to ask questions. I love to visit with my students.

HOW TO DO WELL: This class is a whole lot of fun. We listen to great music during every lecture. We watch videos and movie trailers. But "fun" does not mean "easy." We cover a lot of material, about 70 years of music and social history, so it will be hard to catch up if you fall behind. To do well, the following will make a big difference:

1. **Show up.** Take good notes on the lectures and study them every day. You will not have time to go back through everything when exam time rolls around.
2. **Read** the text and all assigned materials before class. The book and other readings have been carefully chosen to maximize the experience and potential for intellectual growth. Keeping up with the readings will make a big difference in how much you enjoy the journey we will take this semester.
3. **Be open-minded** and fully engage yourself. Please leave your preconceptions about what sucks and what doesn't at the classroom door. The development of rock 'n' roll has been mostly linear, and learning what came before will help you appreciate the music of today. My goal is to make you a better-educated listener, exposing you to many artists, genres and songs that may be new to you. It's also to help you understand what a powerful force this music has been in American culture. Leave behind your subjective opinion of rock and roll. Be open-minded and don't discriminate against music of any kind based on your previous experience.
4. **Complete four exams.** Tests will include a minimum of 50 questions and may be a combination of multiple-choice, true-false and matching. Even audio questions may be included. Questions are taken from lectures and reading assignments. Many, if not most, exam questions will come from lectures so enjoy the music, do the "bar-stool boogie," but stay alert.
5. **Build an interactive timeline** that illustrates how music, technology and history correspond during the time period. Your timeline must include entries I will assign as well as entries you choose that help synthesize events. This will help you see and understand the overall picture. This project accounts for almost 30 percent of your semester grade, therefore it is a lot of work. It's not a big deal if you work on it as we go. It's a killer if you wait to the last minute.
6. **Participate in peer review** of your classmates' timelines. The timelines will be graded primarily by the class. Each of you will be assigned four classmates' timelines to evaluate. This lets you see how your fellow students did the same assignment. The instructors then will compile the scores and investigate any that seem "out of whack."

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is required. A great deal of material will be covered in class that is not available elsewhere, at least not easily available. If you fall behind, it will be very difficult to catch up. Lectures are not made

available online except in rare circumstances. It's much more fun and interesting to come to class, and I promise you will be engaged! I will take attendance on random dates. Late arrivers will not receive credit.

EXAMS: *Exams will be given in the classroom during regular class periods on the dates listed in the calendar. They are not comprehensive. Therefore, there is no “final exam” given after classes end. Each test covers the lectures and readings assigned since the previous exam up to and including the day before the exam. All testing dates are clearly stated in the calendar, so please don't ask for other accomodations. Failure to take an exam at the time offered will result in a grade of zero.*

MAKE-UP POLICY: *If you become aware of a serious problem or an extraordinary circumstance that will prevent you from taking an exam at the stated time, you must inform me **before** the exam, **not after**. You still will need to provide documentation to prove your need for a makeup test. Otherwise, there will be no makeup exams.*

*Assignments, especially the timeline and peer evaluations, must be submitted on time. Late assignments **may** be accepted for up to half credit, but the circumstances would have to be extraordinary.*

EXTRA CREDIT: *There will be no papers or projects offered for extra credit, but there will be extra credit questions on exams worth additional points (which is what a paper or project would be worth anyway). No individual extra-credit opportunities will be offered; everyone in class is treated the same. Please remember that the grading scale (see below) is hard and fast. A point total of 799, for example, will not be rounded up to 800.*

ASSIGNMENT POLICY: *Additional assignments are rare.*

ACADEMIC HONESTY: *It is expected that you will exhibit ethical behavior in this class. Students are expected to do their own work, use their own words in papers, and to reference outside sources appropriately.*

*Students are further expected to observe intellectual property rights and to comply with copyright laws. **The music included in the lectures for this class is the property of the respective copyright holders. It***

does not belong to you, and you are not free to copy it or distribute it to others. The same goes for the lectures themselves, as well as images and videos included in the lectures and printed materials.

Academic honesty also means you will not plagiarize the words, designs, concepts or ideas of others. Plagiarism is defined as "...taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own." Source: [Dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) ([Links to an external site.](#)).

Students who cheat will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of university rules. You will automatically receive a failing grade in this class if you engage in any form of academic dishonesty.

GRADING POLICY:

Your grade is based on a 1,000-point scale. Please understand from the beginning that the grade scale is not flexible. A score of 899 will **not** be rounded up to 900, for example. This is the only way to be fair to everyone and to treat everyone equally.

Assignment	Points or percentage
Exams (4)	150 points each (600 points total)
Timeline	300 points
Peer review	100 points
Attendance	10 points (extra credit)

GRADING SCALE:

Points:	A = 950-1,000	A- = 900-949
B+ = 870-899	B = 841-869	B- = 800-840
C+ = 770-799	C = 741-769	C- = 700-740

D+ = 670-699	D = 641-669	D- = 600-640
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UF POLICIES:

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities: Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.ds.dso.ufl.edu/drc>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking any quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Instructor's note: *Students who are severely hearing impaired may have difficulty as we play and discuss a lot of music.*

University Policy on Academic Misconduct: Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>. Netiquette: Communication Courtesy: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. Students who "flame" others will be warned once and then locked out of the class's online communications. <http://teach.ufl.edu/docs/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>.

GETTING HELP

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.jat.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

** Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Other resources are available at [http \(Links to an external site.\):// \(Links to an external site.\)www \(Links to an external site.\). \(Links to an external site.\)distance \(Links to an external site.\). \(Links to an external site.\)ufl \(Links to an external site.\). \(Links to an external site.\)edu \(Links to an external site.\)/ \(Links to an external site.\)getting \(Links to an external site.\)- \(Links to an external site.\)help \(Links to an external site.\)](http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help) for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit [http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints \(Links to an external site.\)](http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints) to submit a complaint.

Disclaimer: This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.

CALENDAR: SPRING 2017

Start Here: Finish by Jan. 6

Module 1: Finish by Jan. 6

Module 2: Finish by Jan. 13

Module 3: Finish by Jan. 20

Module 4: Finish by Jan. 27 **Exam 1 is on Jan. 30**

Module 5: Finish by Feb. 3

Module 6: Finish by Feb. 10

Module 7: Finish by Feb. 17

Module 8: Finish by Feb. 24 **Exam 2 is on Feb. 27**

Module 9: Finish by March 3

Module 10: Finish by March 17

Module 11: Finish by March 24 **Exam 3 is on March 27**

Module 12: Finish by April 7 **Timelines due April 7**

Module 13: Finish by April 14

Module 14: Finish by April 19 **Peer reviews due April 12**

Module 15: **Exam 4 is on April 19**