

## 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:** MWF – Period 8 (3:00-3:50 PM) in 0018 Matherly Hall.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Glenn Rickard (professionally known as Glenn Richards)  
Operations Coordinator / Morning Edition Local Host for WUFT-FM  
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**OFFICE HOURS (2220 Weimer Hall; 1885 Stadium Road):** MWF – 2:00-2:30 PM; or immediately after class on Mondays and Wednesdays, or by appointment.

**TEACHING ASSISTANT:** TBA

**COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:** Messages will be sent to the class via Canvas. I strongly suggest you set Canvas notifications to text you any new announcements so you don't miss anything important. Individual students may be contacted via email. Students are encouraged to contact me via Canvas (or email me directly).

I try to answer quickly, but please keep in mind that I'm on the radio Monday through Friday from 6 to 10 AM and wake up pretty early (4AM). If you do use email to contact me, please include in the subject of your message which version of the class you are taking (F2F, residential, or in-person is fine) as there are multiple versions of the class taught simultaneously and it helps me keep track!

**REQUIRED TEXT:** [\*What's That Sound? An Introduction to Rock and Its History \(Fourth Edition\)\*](#) by John Covach and Andrew Flory (W.W. Norton, 2015). ISBN-10: 0393124347; ISBN-13: 978-0393124347.

**Note:** There will also be about 30 short articles 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.

All assigned reading is to be completed *before* class. This isn't just some blah-blah-BS instructors put in the syllabus just to fill space or be a pain in the butt; it's for your own benefit and not just for this class, but for *all* your classes. Think about it ... if you read the assignment *before* class, you'll have a better understanding of what's being talked about *in* class. There really is a method to the madness.

**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 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.

As previously stated, this is 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, public relations, 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 1900, 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.

Although this course is fun, it is not an easy “A.” It is a mass communication and history class which means keeping track of important people, places, dates and things. I’m just sayin’....

**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 articulate how all of that has influenced the cultural history of the United States. Students also will be able to recognize and identify different styles of music such as blues, bluegrass, country, gospel, jazz, folk, 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 that includes a great deal of multimedia, especially music and videos of musical performances. We’ve got a lot of material to cover, so there may not be a lot of opportunities to ask questions in class. You are encouraged to use Canvas discussions to ask and answer questions from classmates as well as me. I will weigh in as appropriate. Also, please feel free to come see me if you have any questions. I love to visit with my students.

#### COURSE POLICIES:

**HOW TO DO WELL:** This class is a whole lot of fun! We listen to lots of great music during every lecture. We watch videos, movie trailers, and more. But “fun” does not mean “easy.” It’s still a history class, after all. 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 regularly. 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. **Please note:** *Not everything in the book will be discussed in class and not everything discussed in class will be covered in the book!*

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. The 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 the assigned readings, lectures, videos, and class discussions.
5. **Build an interactive timeline** that illustrates how music, technology and history correspond during the time period being studied. 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 hassle 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 approximately 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 POLICY:** 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. And as previously stated, not everything in the book will be discussed in class and not everything discussed in class will be covered in the book!

Please be on time for class. Arriving late is disruptive. I understand some of you may be coming from another class across campus, but please do your best to minimize the disruption. We have a lot of material to cover and only 50 minutes for each class. Treat this class like your job. What would happen if you constantly showed up late for work?

Even though we won't be taking attendance, that does not mean you have a free pass to skip. Regular attendance is absolutely necessary for you to get the most out of this course. Believe me, your exam grades will show if you attended class regularly or not.

**EXAM POLICY:** 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 accommodations. 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 and evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**EXTRA CREDIT:** There will not be any papers or projects offered for extra credit, *but* there will be extra credit questions on each exam worth an additional 6 to 10 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: Don't cheat.** It is expected that you will exhibit ethical behavior in this class. Students are expected to do their own work, use their own words, 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, 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](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarism).

*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.

More information about academic honesty and the [UF Student Honor Code](#) can be found [here](#).

### GRADING:

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

### GRADING SCALE:

Points:	A = 951-1,000	A- = 910-950
B+ = 880-909	B = 850-879	B- = 820-849
C+ = 790-819	C = 751-789	C- = 720-750
D+ = 690-719	D = 651-689	D- = 610-650

### UF POLICIES:

#### UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH

#### DISABILITIES:

Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with [Disability Resource Center](#) in 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.

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.

The [Disability Resource Center](#) in the [Dean of Students Office](#) provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. Staff at the Disability Resource Center will assist any student who registers as having a disability. Official documentation of a disability is required to determine eligibility for appropriate accommodations. The professional employees at the Disability Resource Program serve as fulltime advocates for students with disabilities ensuring students have physical and programmatic access to all college programs. One of the services provided by the Disability Resource Center includes:

- Testing Accommodations

Please click on this link for further information: [DRC-Testing Accommodations](#)

Here is the link to register with the DRC: [DRC-How to Get Started](#)

***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](#).

**NETIQUETTE AND 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’ online communications. Find more information on [Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#).

#### GETTING HELP:

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

- [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP (4357) – select option 2
- [e-Learning help](#)
- Email: [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)
- [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#)

\*\* 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 & 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.

## Support Services:

Academic Help: Additional services are available at:  
The Teaching Center  
<http://www.teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

The Writing Studio: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>  
2215 Turlington Hall

Disability Resources: If you have a disability that you believe will affect your performance in this class and/or need special accommodations:  
UF Disability Resource Center: 352-392-8565  
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

More information about Student Counseling and Support Services is available [here](#).

## COURSE SCHEDULE:

The most recent calendar is listed (and updated) under the Syllabus tab in Canvas. The one below will give you a preliminary idea of the scheduled workload.

**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.

## Rock 'n' Roll and American Society Course content:

Lesson	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1	What to expect: Course introduction and welcome		Get the book
2	Video: What Rocks? Musicians talk about rock 'n' roll	The syllabus – all of it	Fill out the student survey



3	Labor Pains: The Origins of Rock 'n' Roll	Canvas: "The Origin of Rock 'n' Roll" (Canvas readings are found in the Learning Modules)	
4	Labor Pains (continued)	Covach: Pages 18-36*	
5	Mississippi Ghosts: Robert Johnson and the Roots of Rock	Canvas: "Land Where the Blues Began" and "King of the Delta Blues" Covach: Pages 37-74*	
6	A Tale of Three Cities: New Orleans	Canvas: "Fats"	
7	A Tale of Three Cities: Chicago	Canvas: "From the Delta to Chicago"	
8	A Tale of Three Cities: Memphis, Sun and the rise of Elvis	Canvas: "706 Union Avenue" and "Elvis Scotty and Bill" Covach 75-100*	
9	Memphis Continued: Who made the first rock 'n' roll record?		
10	Elvis Presley: The return of the king	Canvas: "The Return of the King" and "Where Were You When Elvis Died"	<b>EXAM 1 (2/4)</b> (complete before class 11)
11	Chuck Berry and the "Deluge"	Covach: Pages 101-109* Canvas: "Got to Be Rock and Roll Music," and "The Immortals - Bo Diddley"	
12	The Class of '55:	Canvas: "The Immortals - Perkins, Cash, Lewis, and Orbison," "Up Against the Wall," and "Jerry Lee Sees the Bright Light of Dallas"	

13	Buddy Holly	Canvas: "The Immortals - Buddy Holly"	
14	The Day the Music Died	Canvas: "The Day the Music Died"	
15	The Five Styles of Rock 'n' Roll	Canvas: "The Five Styles of Rock and Roll"	
16	Five Styles (continued)	Canvas: "Doo Wop"	
17	Rock 'n Roll, Inc.	Covach: Pages 111-126* Canvas: "Save the Last Dance for Me"	
18	Songwriters and Teen Idols	Covach: Pages 126-139* Canvas: "The Immortals - Ricky Nelson"	Fill out the second student survey

19	Misfortune strikes: Radio and the Payola Scandal	Canvas: "Testimony in the Payola Hearings"	
20	The "Wall of Sound"	Canvas: "Behind the Glass," "Inflatable Phil," and "The Immortals - Phil Spector"	
21	"Wall of Sound" (continued)	Canvas: "The Top 10 Weirdest Phil Spector Moments"	<b>EXAM 2 (3/1)</b> (complete before class 22)
22	Surf's Up: The Beach Boys, Dick Dale, Jan & Dean	Covach,,: Pages 145-154* Canvas: "The Immortals - The Beach Boys"	
23	Surf's Up (continued)	Canvas: "A Teenage Hymn to God"	
24	Bob Dylan: The Folk Years	Canvas: "The Immortals - Bob Dylan" and "How Does it Feel"	

25	Blasphemy: Dylan Goes Electric	Canvas: "The Making of Blonde on Blonde"	
26	Dylan: The Troubadour		<b>EXAM 3 (4/1)</b> (Complete before class 32)
27	The Beatles (1958-64)	Covach: Pages 158-166* Canvas: "The Immortals - The Beatles" and "A Good Stomping Band"	
28	The Beatles (1965-67)	Canvas: "Words to the Wild" and "More Popular than Jesus"	

29	The Beatles (1968-70)	Canvas: "The Ballad of John and Yoko" and "Video Pioneer"	
30	The British Invasion	Covach: Pages 175-191* Canvas: "The Immortals - The Kinks," "The Immortals - The Rolling Stones" and "Altamont"	
31	The Rolling Stones	Canvas: "The Immortals -- The Yardbirds" and "The Immortals - The Who"	
32	America Responds	Covach: Pages 192-215*	
33	Sweet Soul Music: Motown	Covach, pages 135-139 and 222-234* Canvas: "Girl Groups" and "Motown Finishing School"	
34	Stax, Atlantic and Southern Soul	Covach: Pages 235-253* Canvas: "Dan and Spooner" and "Otis Redding: King of Them All"	
35	Sweet Soul Music: James Brown	Covach: Pages 245-253* Canvas: "The Godfather of Soul" and "The Immortals - James Brown"	

36	Psychedelia: Drugs and the Quest for Higher Consciousness	Covach: Pages 254-295* Canvas: "Next Year in San Francisco" and "These are the Good Old Days"	
37	Guitar Heroes: Beck, Clapton, Hendrix, Townshend and Page	Canvas: "A Life at the Crossroads," and "Meaty, Beaty, Big and Bouncy"	<b>Timelines Due (4/19)</b>
38	Guitar Heroes (continued)	Canvas: "Hendrix in Black and White"	<b>Peer Reviews Due (4/22)</b>
39	Bringing It All Back Home		<b>EXAM 4 (4/24)</b>

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