



SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS
COURSE SUBMISSION AND CONSULTATION FORM

Principal Faculty Member(s) Proposing Course

Name	User ID	College	Department
JUSTIN DE SENSO	jxd367	Berks College (BK)	Not Available

Academic Home: Berks College (BK)

Type of Proposal: Add Change Drop

Course Designation

(AMST 226N) Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop

Course Information

Cross-Listed Courses:

INART 226N(AA) AFAM 226N(LA)

Prerequisites:

Corequisites:

Concurrents:

Recommended Preparations:

AMST 100; AFAM 126; INART 126;

Abbreviated Title: CRIT APP TO HIPHOP

Discipline: General Education

Course Listing: Inter-Domain

Special categories for Undergraduate (001-499) courses

Foundations

Writing/Speaking (GWS)

Quantification (GQ)

Knowledge Domains

Health & Wellness (GHW)

Natural Sciences (GN)

Arts (GA)

Humanities (GH)

Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)

Additional Designations

Bachelor of Arts

International Cultures (IL)

United States Cultures (US)

Honors Course

Common course number - x94, x95, x96, x97, x99

Writing Across the Curriculum

First-Year Engagement Program

First-Year Seminar

Miscellaneous

Common Course

GE Learning Objectives

GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication

GenEd Learning Objective: Creative Thinking

GenEd Learning Objective: Crit & Analytical Think

GenEd Learning Objective: Global Learning

GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp & Ethic Reason

Bulletin Listing

Minimum Credits:	3
Maximum Credits:	3
Repeatable:	NO
Department with Curricular Responsibility:	Berks College Liberal Arts (BKBK_BKLA)
Effective Semester:	FA 2018
Travel Component:	NO

Course Outline

A brief outline or overview of the course content:

This course is broken down into three (3) units. Each unit integrates both learning domains (GH & GA) and builds on concepts and methods learned along the way. Course content will be determined by the core questions each unit aims to answer. Core unit questions include:

UNIT 1: "Hip-Hop Contexts & Origins": How do scholars talk about hip-hop? What does it mean to approach hip-hop academically, and what analytical methods does that require? What is hip-hop and where does it come from? What are the politics of hip-hop? What do hip-hop's roots and politics teach us about American life and democracy?

UNIT 2: "Keepin' it Real: Race, Gender, Bling & The 'Death' of Hip-Hop": What does it mean to be an "authentic" hip-hopper? Why does authenticity matter, and in what ways do hip-hoppers express authenticity? What do these differences tell us about culture, politics, and human expression? What do hip-hop's authenticity politics teach us about race, gender, class, and related social categories? Considering its ubiquity and cultural power in the present, how and why has hip-hop changed since the 1970s? What do these changes reveal about American life and culture?

UNIT 3: "We Gon' Be Alright: Hip-Hop's Past, Present & Future": Considering its cultural and aesthetic changes over time, why and how has hip-hop endured? What aspects of hip-hop politics have endured, and what do these aspects reveal about America? What have been some of the aesthetic, cultural, social, and political consequences of hip-hop's ubiquity in America and the world? What role does hip-hop play in America today--and in the future?

A listing of the major topics to be covered with an approximate length of time allotted for their discussion:

UNIT 1 (Weeks 1 - 4) | Major Topics: Post-World War II urban crises, urban "renewal," deindustrialization, Afro-diaspora, politics of culture, cyphers, "the break," hip-hop's creative expressions, scholarly approaches to hip-hop.

UNIT 2 (Weeks 5 - 9) | Major Topics: Authenticity politics, social categories (race, class, gender, sexuality, geography, etc.), commercialism, the minstrel, hip-hop's musical genres, competition ethos, hip-hop's death, trap, pimp/ho/gangsta, b-word, n-word.

UNIT 3 (Weeks 9 - 15) | Major Topics: Hip-hop's preoccupation with injustice and inequality, "long" civil rights movement, hip-hop worldview(s), integrative analysis (of a current rap album), hip-hop's "tanning" of America, hip-hop at the White House.

Course Description:

This course will examine the politics of hip-hop art and culture. To do so, we will place hip-hop in broad historical context and trace its aesthetic and cultural roots from Africa to Jamaica to 1970s New York City and then forward to 1980s gangsta rap and former President Barack Obama's iPod. We will think through the implications of hip-hop's addiction to Italian-American mobsters, bling, and all-things keepin' it real. We will also search for hip-hop's political foundations in funk records, 1960s community organizing, and poetry of the Harlem Renaissance. All the while, we will analyze the varieties of hip-hop politics by paying close attention to how hip-hoppers vie for authenticity, recognition, and power through cultural practices—b-boying/girling, graffiti art, emceeing, djing, e.g.—at odds with the State, inequality, and injustice. We will also situate hip-hop politics within the ongoing history of American social movements.

To avoid over-romanticizing, we will equally examine hip-hop's appetite for conspicuous consumption, misogyny, homophobia, trappin', and criminality. A deep understanding of hip-hop politics, then, requires examining its contradictions as well as the ways race, class, gender, sexuality, and geography shape hip-hop—and therefore American—culture, art, and identity. To get at these and other ideas, we will read, listen, and think broadly about why a full understanding of hip-hop truly matters.

The name(s) of the faculty member(s) responsible for the development of the course:

Name: JUSTIN DE SENSO (jxd367)

Title:

Phone:

Address:

Campus: BK

City:

Fax:

Course Justification

Instructional, Educational, and Course Objectives:

This section should define what the student is expected to learn and what skills the student will develop.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

Recognize and explain hip-hop's cultural and historical significance in America and the world;

Analyze and interpret the art and aesthetics of hip-hop, including verse, music, performance, and visual art, and situate those analyses in social, historical, and political contexts;

Construct oral and written critiques of hip-hop texts using integrative methods from both knowledge domains (GA and GH);

Determine and evaluate the political and social dimensions of hip-hop art and culture, including race, gender, class, geography, and historical context.

Evaluation Methods:

Include a statement that explains how the achievement of the educational objective identified above will be assessed.

The procedures for determining students' grades should be specifically identified.

Student performance will be evaluated by:

Oral Introductory & Exit Interviews: to assess incoming and outgoing analytical competencies and knowledge in which students must respond to fundamental course questions

(Demonstration of improved knowledge and analytical skills = outcome achieved) [10%]

Mid-term & Final Examinations: students must demonstrate their ability to explicate both concrete and conceptual implications of hip-hop art, culture, and politics.

(Students must offer novel, cited explanations for exam questions and successfully synthesize course readings to support their argument = outcome achieved) [30%]

Online Posts, In-class Quizzes & Reading Responses: These weekly assignments will hold students accountable for readings/listenings/viewings as well as assess their grasp of each week's key concepts. Posts and quizzes will also evaluate reading comprehension and their overall understanding of the integrative threads and connections between course materials and GA/GH learning domains. (Student answers post and quiz questions accurately and offers substantive analysis in regard to assigned reading = outcomes achieved) [30%]

Capstone Research Project & Presentation: Students must construct a final creative and/or critical project that answers a student-generated research question. The student must conduct original research, address core course questions or concepts (e.g., queer African American women in hip-hop, gangster aesthetics, sampling), and demonstrate understanding of chosen questions or concepts. (Student must deliver a coherent argument and/or project supported by good reasons and/or a rationale and sound evidence while engaging central course questions = outcome achieved) [20%]

Participation: through group work, leading discussion, and robust engagement, students must demonstrate preparation and offer thoughtful contributions on each week's materials. (Successful participation that demonstrates preparation and thoughtfulness as outlined in the "participation rubric" = outcome achieved) [10%]

Relationship/Linkage of Course to Other Courses:

This statement should relate the course to existing or proposed new courses. It should provide a rationale for the level of instruction, for any prerequisites that may be specified, or for the course's role as a prerequisite for other courses.

Because hip-hop art, culture, and politics are inseparable from American life, art, and history, as well as the study of language, human relationships, freedom struggles, and identity categories (gender and sexuality, e.g.), "AM ST 226N: Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop" relates to many Arts, Humanities and Social Science courses. In particular, AM ST 226N is related to:

AF AM 100 (GS;US) Living While Black: Themes in African American Thought and Experience

AF AM 126 (GA;US) (INART 126) The Popular Arts in America: The History of Hip-Hop

AF AM 212 (US) African Americans in the New Jim Crow Era, 1968-present (3)

AF AM 235 (US) (ENGL 235) From Folk Shouts and Work Songs to Hip Hop Poetry (3)

AF AM 409 (US) (SOC 409) Racial and Ethnic Inequality in America (3)

AF AM 465 (US) (HIST 465) The Post-World War II Civil Rights Movement (3)

AM ST 100 (GH;US) Introduction to American Studies (3)

AM ST 103 (GH;US) American Masculinities (3)

AM ST 105 (GH;US) (ENGL 105) American Popular Culture and Folklife (3)

AM ST 363 American Music (3)

AM ST 406 Contemporary America (3)

HUM 453 Texts and Culture (3)

SOC 015 (GS) Urban Sociology (3)

SOC 019 (GS) Sociology of Popular Culture (3)

SOC 110 (GS;US) (WMNST 110) Sociology of Gender (3)

SOC 409 (US) (AF AM 409) Racial and Ethnic Inequality in America (3)

SOC 432 Social Movements (3)

WMNST 105 (GS;US) Living in a Diverse World (3)

To date, there are only two classes that directly reference hip-hop in the title, "AF AM 126/INART 126: The Popular Arts in America: The History of Rock and Roll -- Hip-Hop" and "AF AM 235/ENGL 235: From Folk Shouts and Work Songs to Hip Hop

Poetry." The former is the only course exclusively on hip-hop, a course that ostensibly attends mostly to hip-hop history and music. This proposal, "AM ST 226N: Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop," indeed engages hip-hop history and music but will do so with a focus on power and the ways in which all hip-hoppers -- in America and around the world -- craft community, identity, and politics as they vie for social meaning and recognition—and the implications therein. At the same time, by understanding hip-hop as a postwar social movement that has changed over time, AM ST 226N also takes on race, gender, class, and geography politics examined in AF AM 212, AF AM/SOC 409, AF AM/HIST 465, AM ST 103, AM ST 406, SOC 019, SOC/WMNST 110, and SOC 432, but extends its analyses to include transnational hip-hop in the present. AM ST 226N, then, takes social, aesthetic, historical, conceptual, and political approaches to hip-hop, whereas "AF AM 126/INART" and "AF AM 235/ENGL 235" focus mainly on art and history in the US and beyond. And with such breadth and integrative analyses similar to related 200- and 400-level courses, "Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop" is best suited for 200-level instruction.

Relationship of Course to Major, Option, Minor, or General Education:

This statement should explain how the course will contribute to the major, option, or minor and indicate how it may function as a service course for other departments.

This course is meant for General Education purposes and to fulfill Integrative / Inter-domain (N) requirements.

A description of any special facilities:

There are no special facilities needed for this course other than standard audio-visual classroom technology.

Frequency of Offering and Enrollment:

This course will be offered every spring term.

Alignment with General Education Objectives

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION – the ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchange, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.

KEY LITERACIES – the ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate and compute using materials in a variety of media and contexts. Literacy acquired in multiple areas, such as textual, quantitative, information/technology, health, intercultural, historical, aesthetic, linguistic (world languages), and scientific, enables individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, to lead healthy and productive lives, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING – the habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion. It is the intellectually disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.

INTEGRATIVE THINKING – the ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information. Individuals who engage in integrative thinking are able to transfer knowledge within and beyond their current contexts.

CREATIVE THINKING – the capacity to synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of performing, making, thinking, or acting in an imaginative way that may be characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and intellectual risk taking.

GLOBAL LEARNING – the intellectually disciplined abilities to analyze similarities and differences among cultures; evaluate natural, physical, social, cultural, historical, and economic legacies and hierarchies; and engage as community members and leaders who will continue to deal with the intricacies of an ever-changing world. Individuals should acquire the ability to analyze power; identify and critique interdependent global, regional, and local cultures and systems; and evaluate the implications for people's lives.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICAL REASONING – the ability to assess one's own values within the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, describe how different perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Individuals should acquire the self-knowledge and leadership skills needed to play a role in creating and maintaining healthy, civil, safe, and thriving communities.

What component(s) of the course will help students achieve the General Education Learning Objectives covered in the course? Provide evidence that students in the course have adequate opportunities to achieve the identified learning objectives.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Students will practice effective communication through written, oral, and visual assignments, namely in-class discussion, group work, essays, mid-term and final examinations, instructor-student interviews, and oral presentations. As a discussion-based course, students will be tasked with leading discussion, answering questions in class, and conducting written and oral analyses every week of the semester, all the while receiving constant feedback on the clarity and persuasiveness of their work and participation.

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING

Students will practice critical and analytical thinking through all course "reading" methods, including literary, cultural, visual, sonic, and historical lenses. Both weekly and semester-long assignments will require questioning the textual, social, historical, political, and conceptual implications of hip-hop art and culture, especially the role of race, class, gender, geography, sexuality, and related social categories. Students will also read hip-hop scholarship and become familiar with how scholars question and analyze hip-hop "texts." The assignments that will help students practice critical and analytical thinking include online discussion posts, group work, capstone creative-critical project, in-class discussion, and exams.

INTEGRATIVE THINKING

To help students hone integrative thinking, students will analyze hip-hop art, music, and culture within diverse social and historical

contexts every week of the semester in class and/or on CANVAS. By synthesizing cultural analysis (hip-hop art & practices), historical analysis (hip-hop's changes over time), primary source analysis (of hip-hop artifacts), and lyrical analysis (music) in all assignments and examinations, students will constantly practice identifying and evaluating the political implications of art and social movements. Through a semester-long capstone project and intro/exit interviews, students will apply learned integrative methods and explain the insights of integrative methods for the study of hip-hop.

How will students be assessed to determine their attainment of the Learning Objective(s) of General Education covered in this course? This assessment must be included as a portion of the student's overall performance in this course.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

To assess effective communication skills, students will be required to submit weekly reading responses, quizzes, or discussion board posts. I will use their submissions for in-class discussion, giving students an opportunity to elaborate on their arguments, challenge one another, or think of new ways to strengthen their ideas. Students will also be evaluated for their quality and frequency of class discussion. Students will be responsible for a capstone project presentation at the end of the semester where they will synthesize their semester-long creative-critical projects and present their findings/work to their colleagues. Finally, students will be required to sit for introductory and exit oral interviews on their incoming and outgoing understandings of hip-hop, giving them an opportunity to grasp what they learned throughout the term and articulate how that learning helped them become a better writer and integrative thinker.

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING

To assess critical and analytical thinking, I plan on administering weekly reading responses, quizzes, or discussion board posts to gauge how well students are applying and understanding key course concepts, methods, and overall GA/GH integrative approaches. Students will be particularly challenged to think through the social and political dimensions of culture, art, and identity while connecting these politics to the interplay of race, gender, class, geography, and related social categories. Students will also be held responsible for crafting a creative-critical final capstone project that requires synthesis of course materials and analytical methods from both knowledge domains.

INTEGRATIVE THINKING

To assess integrative thinking throughout the course, I plan on teaching students diverse methods of inquiry and analysis from the arts (GA) and humanities (GH) and using such methods as integrative or "layered" lenses through which to understand class materials. I will also assign frequent compare and contrast activities to help students analyze the strengths and weaknesses of certain lenses or methods over others. All the while, students will work on a capstone project that requires them to integrate two to three lenses or methods to analyze a particular hip-hop text or social problem. For example, students might examine hip-hop party flyers from the 1970s and 80s (GA) and what they may reveal about the politics and lives of hip-hop youth at that time in American history (GH). Students might also evaluate inter-racial authenticity politics in hip-hop through a creative-critical podcast (GA) and connect those politics to everyday American life (GH). Assessing how well students use integrative thinking, therefore, will be inseparable from how students engage all course materials and assignments.

General Education Domain Criteria

General Education Designation: Inter-Domain

GA Criteria

- Explain the methods of inquiry in arts fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas
- Demonstrate an expanded knowledge and comprehension of the role that the arts play in various aspects of human endeavor
- Demonstrate competence in the creation of works of art and design
- Demonstrate competence in analysis, critical thinking and interpretive reasoning through the exploration of creative works
- Identify and explain the aesthetic, historic, social, and cultural significance of important works of art and critically assess creative works, their own or others', through evaluative processes of analysis and interpretation

What components of the course will help students achieve the domain criteria selected above?

Students will achieve the domain criteria by analyzing the social, historical, and aesthetic significance of hip-hop's core cultural expressions -- DJing, emceeing, b-boying/b-girling, graffiti art -- in all course assignments. Students will also examine hip-hop language and fashion, and their place in America today.

Some assignments may include:

- * Song/album/lyrical analysis, especially the implications of sampling, word choice, rhyme structure, cultural references, slang, imagery, narrative, figurative language, choruses/refrains, and cover art;
 - * "Reading" Dance/rap/graffiti/DJ cyphers, particularly the cultural significance of race, gender, and authenticity;
 - * Comparing and contrasting the meaning, genesis, and implications of hip-hop's various musical genres and styles, including trap, socially conscious, gangsta, East Coast, West Coast, lyrical, underground, Dirty South, and boom bap;
 - * Examining the role of hip-hop culture and art in everyday American life, including community arts movements, social justice work, K-12 education, mental health programs, and incarcerated youth programs.
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GH Criteria

- Explain the methods of inquiry in humanities fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas
- Demonstrate competence in critical thinking about topics and texts in the humanities through clear and well-reasoned responses
- Critically evaluate texts in the humanities-- whether verbal, visual, or digital-- and identify and explain moral or

ethical dimensions within the disciplines of the humanities

✘ Demonstrate knowledge of major cultural currents, issues, and developments through time, including evidence of exposure to unfamiliar material that challenges their curiosity and stretches their intellectual range

✘ Become familiar with groups, individuals, ideas, or events that have influenced the experiences and values of different communities

What components of the course will help students achieve the domain criteria selected above?

Students will achieve the domain criteria by examining the art, history, and politics of hip-hop culture through documentary films, music, digital archives, and scholarly works. Course materials, assignments, and assessments will help students grasp how hip-hopers understand their environments, America, and themselves, all the while situating hip-hop art, culture, and politics within historical contexts. Course components that align with GH criteria also include:

- * Tracing hip-hop's transnational roots;
 - * Examining the hip-hop "cypher" and how hip-hopers craft community;
 - * Analyzing the troubling yet revealing place of misogyny, homophobia, and hypermasculinity in hip-hop and America;
 - * Evaluating the interplay of race, gender, class, sexuality, and geography for crafting authenticity in hip-hop.
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Integrative Studies

Explain how the intellectual frameworks And methodologies of the two Knowledge Domains will be explicitly addressed in the course and practiced by the students.

As an American Studies, African American Studies, and Integrative Arts course, AM ST 226N uses many intellectual frameworks from the arts and humanities. In particular, AM ST 226N examines the social, political, and aesthetic significance of hip-hop with an awareness of history, power, and identity formation. This broad framework requires integrative methods, and this course will address both arts (GA) and humanities (GH) methodologies through:

GA

- Textual analysis and interpretation of sonic, visual, kinesthetic, dramatic, and literary hip-hop works;
- Comparative analysis of hip-hop with reggae, dub, jazz, blues, and punk.

GH

- Historical analysis of hip-hop culture and art over time;
- Analysis of how hip-hopers narrate and understand their past, their identities, and what hip-hop is and isn't;
- Analysis of the politics of identity categories, e.g., race, gender, class, geography, sexuality, and their intersectionality.

Students will practice the above analyses throughout the course by starting with textual analysis of hip-hop's creative expressions and then placing that analysis in larger conceptual, historical, social, and political contexts.

Demonstrate that each Of the two domains will receive approximately equal attention, providing evidence from course topics, assignments, or other course components, and that students will integrate material from both domains.

From the very beginning of the course and throughout all units, students will be required to analyze hip-hop's creative expressions within social, political, and historical contexts -- and vice versa. This means that students will be held accountable for integrating both arts and humanities analytical methods whenever they approach a hip-hop "text," be it a music video, graffiti piece, stage performance, or hip-hop writing workshop with incarcerated youth.

With this integrative ethos in mind, here is what a "50% Arts / 50% Humanities" integrative approach might look like for each unit:

UNIT 1*

- GH - Post-World War II history and urban changes, politics of culture, hip-hop community and tension
- GA - Afro-diasporic roots & aesthetics, the break, hip-hop's creative expressions, reggae, train graffiti, beginnings of rap music

UNIT 2

- GH - Social/identity categories, authenticity politics, competition ethos
- GA - Minstrel shows, hip-hop types and genres, race and gender representations in visual art and music

UNIT 3

- GH - Social movement history and politics, Congressional Hearings on Hip-Hop, Paul Butler's "hip-hop theory of justice"
- GA - Hamilton the musical, Common's White House performance, socially conscious hip-hop, analysis of current rap music

Course assessments, including weekly quizzes and exams, will reinforce and test students on this 50/50 integrative approach.

*Please keep in mind that I can name countless music albums to use for each unit, but I only refer to "music" in general.

Briefly explain the staffing plan. Given that each Inter-Domain course is approved for two Knowledge Domains, it will be taught by an instructor (or instructional team) with appropriate expertise in both domains.

Because American Studies, African American Studies, and Integrative Arts are all fundamentally interdisciplinary/interdomain, "Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop" can be taught by faculty who have familiarity with post-World War II American history, African American oral traditions, cultural studies, gender studies, sociology, integrative arts, or music AND mixed analytical methods from both the arts and humanities. Faculty will need familiarity with the political and social implications of hip-hop art and culture within certain contexts over time, and how identity and power shape cultural production, human relationships, and self / community understandings. Faculty who teach this course will also need to have familiarity with how social (political) categories -- race, gender, sexuality, or class, e.g. -- not only shape human experience and life chances, but are also sites of contest and identity formation. Finally, faculty should also be able to situate hip-hop within larger historical, aesthetic, and even transnational contexts.

Describe the assessments that will be used to determine students' ability to apply integrative thinking.

To assess integrative thinking, course assessments will require students to practice combining two or more analytical methods

from the arts (GA) and humanities (GH). Assignments, that is, will require students to examine the human, historical, or political implications of particular hip-hop expressions or cultural practices. Students will be assessed by mid-term and final exam, weekly quizzes/online posts/reading responses, intro and exit interviews, and a capstone project.

Here are the assessment descriptions:

Mid Term and Final Exams: exams will include short and long essay questions that require integrated GA and GH analysis of new (on-the-spot) and covered material. [30%]

Quizzes/Online Posts/Reading Responses: As part of a student's weekly work, he or she will be held accountable for all reading, listening, or viewing assignments. Response prompts may include quizzes, reflections, identification/definition, and textual analysis that require two or more analytical methods from the arts or humanities. [30%]

Intro-Views and Exit Essays/Interviews: There will be two (2) self-reflective papers/interviews that ask students to explore incoming and outgoing knowledge and attitudes about hip-hop and of the advantages of integrative methods. [10%]

Capstone Project: There will be a semester-long creative-critical project that emphasizes "integrative competency." Examples include mix-tape analysis, music video/performance and rationale, oral history interview and analysis, or other creative-critical work that integrates both GH and GA learning criteria. [30%]

Campuses That Have Offered () Over The Past 4 Years

semester	AB	AL	BK	BR	BW	CR	DS	ER	FE	GA	GV	HB	HN	HY	LV	MA	NK	PC	SH	SL	UP	WB	WC	WS	XC	XP	XS	YK
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AM ST/AF AM / IN ART 226N
Critical Approaches to Hip-Hop
Syllabus Shell
General Education - Integrative Studies (GA & GH)

Instructor

Name:
Office:
Email:
Office phone:
Office hours:

Meeting Times/Place

Location/Time/Place TBD

Recommended Preparation

It is recommended for students to have already passed either AF AM 126, INART 126, or AM ST 100.

This course satisfies three (3) credits of Inter-domain (N) Gen Ed requirements.

Course Description

This course will examine the politics of hip-hop art and culture. To do so, we will place hip-hop in broad historical context and trace its aesthetic and cultural roots from Africa to Jamaica to 1970s New York City and then forward to 1980s gangsta rap and former President Barack Obama's iPod. We will think through the implications of hip-hop's addiction to Italian-American mobsters, bling, and all-things **keepin'** it real. We will also search for hip-hop's political foundations in funk records, 1960s community organizing, and poetry of the Harlem Renaissance. All the while, we will analyze the varieties of hip-hop politics by paying close attention to how hip-hoppers vie for authenticity, recognition, and power through cultural practices—b-boying/girling, graffiti art, emceeing, djing, e.g.—at odds with the State, inequality, and injustice. We will also situate hip-hop politics within the ongoing history of American social movements.

To avoid over-romanticizing, we will equally examine hip-hop's appetite for conspicuous consumption, misogyny, homophobia, **trappin'**, and criminality. A deep understanding of hip-hop politics, then, requires examining its contradictions as well as the ways race, class, gender, sexuality, and geography shape hip-hop—and therefore American—culture, art, and identity. To get at these and other ideas, we will read, listen, and think broadly about why a full understanding of hip-hop truly matters.

General Education Learning Objectives

INTEGRATIVE THINKING - the ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information. Individuals who engage in integrative thinking are able to transfer knowledge within and beyond their current contexts.

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING - the habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion. It is the intellectually disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION - the ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchange, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students should be able to...

- Recognize and explain hip-hop's cultural and historical significance in America and the world;
- Analyze and interpret the art and aesthetics of hip-hop, including verse, music, performance, and visual art, and situate those analyses in social, historical, and political contexts;
- Construct oral and written critiques of hip-hop texts using integrative methods from both knowledge domains (GA and GH);
- Determine and evaluate the political dimensions of hip-hop art and culture, including race, gender, class, geography, and historical context.

Course Overview

This course is broken down into three (3) units. Each unit integrates both learning domains (GH & GA) and builds on concepts and methods learned along the way. Course content will be determined by the core questions each unit aims to answer. Core unit questions include:

- UNIT 1: "Hip-Hop Contexts & Origins": How do scholars talk about hip-hop? What does it mean to approach hip-hop academically, and what analytical methods does that require? What is hip-hop and where does it come from? What are the politics of hip-hop? What do hip-hop's roots and politics teach us about American life and democracy?
- UNIT 2: "Keepin' it Real: Race, Gender, Bling & The 'Death' of Hip-Hop": What does it mean to be an "authentic" hip-hopper? Why does authenticity matter, and in what ways do hip-hoppers express authenticity? What do these differences tell us about culture, politics, and human expression? What do hip-hop's authenticity politics teach us about race, gender, class, and related social categories? Considering its ubiquity and cultural power in the present, how and why has hip-hop changed since the 1970s? What do these changes reveal about American life and culture?
- UNIT 3: "We Gon' Be Alright: Hip-Hop Politics - Past, Present & Future": Considering its cultural and aesthetic changes over time, why and how has hip-hop endured? What aspects of hip-hop politics have endured, and what do these aspects reveal about America? What have been some of the aesthetic, cultural, social, and political consequences of hip-hop's ubiquity in America and the world? What role does hip-hop play in America today--and in the future?

Required Texts

All required books will be available at the bookstore on campus, or you may purchase the book online.

Other Course Materials

Note: Readings should be completed BEFORE classes begin that week.

Grading

You will receive a letter grade for this course.

A=93-100, A-=90-92, B+=87-89, B=83-86, B-=80-82, C+=77-79, C=70-76, D=65-70, F<65

General Grade Descriptors

A+= An extraordinary, exemplary work that defies comparison.

A= Superior achievement beyond the basic assignment requirements: creative, unique, and interesting solutions to the problem.

A-/B+= Excellent work. All components of each assignment thoroughly and thoughtfully completed. Clear writing style adjusted to the demands of the assignment.

B= All components of each assignment completed on time with very few writing errors and a competent and clear writing style.

B-/C+= All components of each assignment completed on time. Competent writing.

C= Most components of the assignment completed in full and on time. Comprehensible writing.

*D= Partially completed assignment. Work suggests it was hurriedly completed.

*F< Incomplete, not submitted, or otherwise unacceptable

Technology Policy

Your successful participation in this course requires you to be actively attentive in class, contributing to discussions and constantly processing. Therefore, please **SILENCE all cell phones**, iPods, etc. unless you have an extenuating circumstance. If you absolutely must respond to a text message or phone call during class, please step outside of the classroom to do so and put the device away upon your return. We also prefer that you take notes by hand, if possible. If taking notes with a tablet or computer, we ask that you avoid multitasking, as current research has found that we are not able to pay full attention while multitasking. We will occasionally use technology in class, and students will be made aware that technology use is acceptable at those times.

Communication

You are expected to check your Penn State email every day. Further, you should check your CANVAS account every day. These will be the primary methods of communication, and anything you miss as a result of not checking your PSU email or CANVAS is your responsibility.

Your instructors will always respond to PSU email within 48 hours during the regular school week, if not much sooner! Response time is not guaranteed on the weekends. The fastest, best way to reach us is always through email.

Further, this course deals with sensitive subject matter. If you feel like you need to talk to your professors for any reason, we are happy to meet with you. Please email us or see us in person to set up a time to talk.

Late Assignments

Unless in the case of a pre-approved, extenuating circumstance, late assignments will not be accepted. If you think you will not be able to turn an assignment in on time due to an extenuating circumstance, you should contact your instructors well ahead of time (not the night before a due date) to discuss options.

Academic Integrity

This course, as well as all of your courses in the D.I. Block, operates under the guidelines for academic integrity defined by the statement at the following WEB site: http://www.ed.psu.edu/edservices/certification/academic_integ.htm. Please consult this statement if you have any questions about the definition and ramifications for infraction of Penn State's academic integrity policy. In particular, it is inappropriate to turn work in for one course that also counts as credit for another course without express approval of each instructor. It is also inappropriate to borrow someone else's ideas, and claim credit for them as your own. Be a good scholar. Give intellectual credit when it is due. Cite your sources.

University-Wide Attendance Policy¹

Students who will miss a class in accordance with Senate Policy 42-27, should, where appropriate, present a [class absence form](#) to the faculty member as soon as possible and, except in unavoidable situations, at least one week in advance of a planned absence. In the case of illness, students are **not** required to secure the signature of medical personnel.

Students should be provided with a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work. Ordinarily, it is inappropriate to substitute for the missed assignment the weighting of a semester's work that does not include the missed assignment. Completion of all assignments assures the greatest chance for students to develop heightened understanding and content mastery that is unavailable through the weighting process. The opportunity to complete all assignments supports the university's desire to enable students to make responsible situational decisions without endangering their academic work.

¹ Taken from PSU Senate Policy: 42-27: Class Attendance (<http://www.psu.edu/oue/aappm/E-11.html>)