

AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC IN THE UNITED STATES
One Semester Upper-Level Undergrad and Graduate Course
Jason Squinobal
Instructor
SIXTEEN WEEKLY LECTURES

Music Building, Room _____
Instructor: Jason Squinobal
Office: Music Building, Room _____
Phone:
E-mail: jjs75@pitt.edu
Office Consultation: By appointment

Course Description

African American Music in the U.S. will concentrate on the music and related cultural contributions of African-Americans in North America. The course is designed to examine in detail the contributions of Africans and Europeans to the historical development of African American Music. The course will be divided into five areas of focus: the music of African American slaves, African American religious music, the blues, jazz, and African American contributions to American popular music. Specific attention will be paid to important periods of time in History of the United States including, the beginning of slavery, the abolition of slavery, the Harlem Renaissance, and 1950-60 Civil Rights movement.

Each class will be divided into two periods. The first half will consist of a lecture focused on the topics at hand and will include audio and visual examples. The second half of the class will consist of student presentations. Each presentation will be followed by a general discussion with pre-assigned responders. Graduate students will be expected to contribute to and guide the discussions in a scholarly manner.

Required Text

Floyd, Jr., Samuel A. *The Power of Black Music*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1995.

Shipton, Alyn. *New History of Jazz*. London; New York: Continuum, 2001.

Southern, Eileen, Ed. *Readings in Black American Music*. London; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1983.

Weekly Readings

Weekly reading assignments will be drawn from the required texts and sources placed on reserve in the music library. You do not need to purchase the reserve sources.

Grades

Graduate:

Students taking the course to fulfill graduate requirements are expected to submit a mid-term and a final paper (approximately 25-30 typewritten pages). In addition, graduate students must present two 25-30 minute classroom presentation (mid-term and final) on a topic selected by the instructor.

Undergraduate:

Undergraduate students are expected to submit a midterm and a final paper (approximately 10 typewritten pages); and take a midterm and final exam (both exams will include questions from the lectures; required texts, and audio and video examples in class). In addition, undergraduate students must present a 25-30 minute classroom presentation.

All students must participate in classroom discussions.

Week 1: First meeting of class: Orientation, discussion of grades, test, papers, research projects, expectations, goals, etc.

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Prologue” (pp.1-12) Johnson, Charles and Patricia Smith. *Africans in America: America’s Journey through slavery*. New York; London: Harcourt, Inc., 1998. (Library Reserve)
and
“Chapter 1” (pp.14-34) Floyd, Jr., Samuel A. *The Power of Black Music*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1995. (Required Text)

Week 2: Lecture #1

Lecture topic:

African Slaves in the New World

References for lecture #1: “Prologue” (pp.1-12) *Africans in America*.
“Chapter 1” *The Power of Black Music*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Part III” (pp.41-51) Southern, Eileen, Ed. *Readings in Black American Music*. London; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1983. (Required Text)
And
“Chapter 2” (pp.35-57) *The Power of Black Music*.

Videos and Films: *Roots of Rhythm*, Parts 1 Harry Belafonte

Week 3: Lecture #2

Lecture Topic:

The Music of African American Slaves

References for lecture #2: “Part III” (pp.41-51) *Readings in Black American Music*
“Chapter 2” (pp.35-57) *The Power of Black Music*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Chapter 14” (pp.82-87) , “Chapter 26” (pp.203-211) *Readings in Black American Music*
And
“Chapter 3” (pp.58-66) *The Power of Black Music*

Videos and Films: *Roots of Rhythm*, Parts 2 Harry Belafonte

Week 4: Lecture #3

Lecture Topic:

The Abolishment of Slavery and the Fisk Jubilee Singers

References for lecture # 3: “Chapter 14” (pp.82-87), “Chapter 26” (p.203-211) *Readings in Black American Music*.
“Chapter 3” (pp.58-66) *The Power of Black Music*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Part IV” (pp.52-70) *Readings in Black American Music*.
And
“Chapter 3” (pp.67-86) *The Power of Black Music*

Videos and Films: *Roots of Rhythm*, Parts 3 Harry Belafonte

Week 5: Lecture #4

Lecture Topic:

The Establishment of African American Religious Organizations

References for lecture #4: “Part IV” (pp.52-70) *Readings in Black American Music*

“Chapter 3” (pp.67-86) *The Power of Black Music*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Chapter 36” (pp.291-297) *Readings in Black American Music*
and
“Chapter 4” (pp.87-100) *The Power of Black Music*

Week 6: Lecture #5

Lecture Topic:

Gospel and African American Religious Music

Reference for lecture #5: “Chapter 36” (pp.291-297) *Readings in Black American Music*
“Chapter 4” (pp.87-100) *The Power of Black Music*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Chapter 1” (pp.3-29) Titon, Jeff Todd. *Early Down Home Blues: A Musical and Cultural Analysis*. North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1994. (Library Reserve)

And

“Chapter 6” (pp.60-80) Jones, LeRoi. *Blues People: Negro Music in White America*. New York, W. Morrow, 1963. (Library Reserve)

Week 7: Lecture #6

Lecture Topic:

Early Blues from African American string bands to W.W. II

References for lecture #6: “Chapter 1” (pp.3-29) *Early Down Home Blues*
“Chapter 6” (pp.60-80) *Blues People*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Chapters 7-8” (pp.81-121) *Blues People* (Library Reserve)

Videos and Films:

Land of the Blues

Week 8: Lecture #7

Lecture Topic:

Post W.W. II Blues: Detroit, Chicago and St. Louis

References for lecture #7: “Chapters 7-8” (pp.81-121) *Blues People*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Chapter 5” (pp.100-135) *The Power of Black Music*
and

“Chapter 4” (pp.259-282 only) Shipton, Alyn. *New History of Jazz*. London; New York: Continuum, 2001. (Required Text)

Week 9: MIDTERM EXAMINATION- Midterm Papers Due

Week 10: Lecture #8

Lecture Topic:

The Harlem Renaissance

References for lecture #8: “Chapter 5” (p.100-135) *The Power of Black Music*
“Chapter 4” (pp.259-282 only) *New History of Jazz*

Reading assignment
for next lecture:

“Chapter 7” (pp.437-500) *New History of Jazz*

Videos and Films:

Cotton Club Remembered

Week 11: Lecture #9

Lecture Topic: **Bebop**

References for lecture #9: "Chapter 7" (pp.437-500) *New History of Jazz*

Reading assignment

for next lecture: "Chapters 13&14" (pp.667-716) *New History of Jazz*

Videos and Films: *Bird* (Clint Eastwood)

Week 12: Lecture #10

Lecture Topic: **Cool Jazz, Hard Bop, and Latin Jazz**

References for lecture #10: "Chapters 13&14" (pp.667-716) *New History of Jazz*

Reading assignment

for next lecture: "Chapter 8" (pp.183-211) *The Power of Black Music*
and

"Chapter 6" (pp.199-237) Monson, Ingrid. *Freedom Sounds*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. (Library Reserve)

Videos and Films: *Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers*

Week 13: Lecture #11

Lecture Topic: **The Civil Rights Movement and African American Music**

References for lecture #11: "Chapter 8" (pp.183-211) *The Power of Black Music*
"Chapter 6" (pp.199-237) *Freedom Sounds*

Reading assignment

for next lecture: "Chapters 3-11" (pp. 10-74) Taylor, Harold Keith. *The Motown Music Machine*. New York: Jadmeg Music, 2003. (Library Reserve)

Week 14: Lecture #12

Lecture Topic: **The Early Rock N' Roll, R+B and Motown**

References for lecture #12: "Chapters 3-11" (pp. 10-74) *The Motown Music Machine*

Reading assignment

for next lecture: "Chapters 1-4" (pp. 7-87) Chang, Jeff. *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip Hop Generation*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005. (Library Reserve)

Week 15: Lecture #13

Lecture Topic: **From Funk to Hip Hop**

References for lecture #12: "Chapters 1-4" (pp. 7-87) *Can't Stop Won't Stop*

Reading assignment

for next lecture: Review For Final

Week 16: FINAL EXAMINATION- Final Paper due