



MUS-106: HISTORY OF ROCK & ROLL

Effective Term

Fall 2026

BOT Approval Date

06/12/2025

Discipline

MUS - Music

Course Number

106

Course Title

History of Rock & Roll

Short Title

Hist of Rock & Roll

Credit Status (CB 04)

D - Credit - Degree applicable

Units**Lecture Units**

3.00

Total Units

3.00

Hours**Lecture Contact Hours**

48-54

Out of Class Hours Lecture

96-108

Total Contact Hours

48 - 54

Total Out of Class Hours

96 - 108

Total Student Learning Hours

144 - 162

Distance Education

Yes

Distance Education**Distance Education Type**

Both Fully Online and Hybrid Online

Fully Online Delivery Requirements:

- a. Students must be notified via the college schedule of classes and the syllabus for the class if proctored tests are required for this course
- b. Any planned face-to-face meetings, such as an orientation or study session, must be optional



c. The MSJC curriculum committee requires the use of accessible, asynchronous discussion as a component of every fully online course

Are you using publisher content?

No

Regular Substantive Interaction

Instructor-to-student, student-to-student, and student-to-content contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure regular substantive interaction (RSI) is maintained not only weekly but also for the duration of the course. Instructor interactions should be equivalent in time, quality and consistency to the engagement students would receive in a face-to-face course—for example, through announcements, discussion participation, personalized feedback, video messages, or other instructional communications. Instructors are expected to be responsive to student inquiries within a 24-72 hour time frame excluding holidays. RSI will be maintained through a variety of methods:

- Orientation - Students must be oriented to the online and face-to-face portions at the start of the course.
- Announcements - Announcements using the course management system must be posted at least weekly to keep students current on course events, due dates, materials, etc.
- Discussion Forums - Content-related discussion forums within the designated CMS will include appropriate instructor participation and will be initiated and maintained, with timely feedback provided. Instructors are required to monitor the discussions and related activities to provide guidance and direction. Open-ended discussion boards may be used to further learning and interaction.
- MSJC Communication – Instructor will use MSJC-administered communication tools (such as email or the designated CMS communication tools) to regularly communicate with and provide ease of access to students.
- Timely Feedback - Timely feedback on student work will be provided by the instructor, which may include comments and/or rubrics, within the Grades area of the designated CMS.
- Scheduled Meetings – Hybrid and synchronous courses will meet at regularly scheduled times.

ADA Compliance - All course interactions and content must be designed with accessibility in mind and meet ADA requirements.

Catalog Description

This course examines the history of rock music, with an emphasis on its role in reflecting and shaping history and culture in the United States from the 1950s to today. Beginning music listening and appreciation skills and vocabulary are taught using historically important recordings in rock and other related popular music genres.

Codes

TOP Code (CB 03)

1004.00 - Music

CIP Code

50.0902 - Music History, Literature, and Theory.

Repeatability Code

No

Grading Option

Letter grade OR P/NP

Minimum Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Music (Masters Required)	End

GE Information

Check GE Types Requested

AA/AS C - Humanities

Cal-GETC Areas

Approved Cal-GETC Area

AREA-3A

Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives

Learning Objective
1. Analyze musical characteristics including rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, texture, and form.
2. Differentiate between musical instruments common to various styles of rock performance.
3. Illustrate the roots of rock by analyzing the music of various cultures including those from Africa, Europe, and the Americas.
4. Compare various rock style periods and recognize the musical characteristics of different rock innovators throughout history.
5. Inspect common musical characteristics associated with songs within the same historical style period.
6. Diagram the adaptation and appropriation of music made by historically underrepresented minority groups into the rock music mainstream.
7. Inspect how rock music developed and was continually influenced by African-American genres such as blues.
8. Assess the impact and influence of American-made rock music on other genres, both within the United States and world-wide.

Learning Outcome Information

Course Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome
1. Students will compare and contrast the music from different artists and periods of jazz and blues history using the foundational elements of music.
2. Students will identify the sub-genre of a jazz or blues recording by listening to it.
3. Students will recognize the diverse cultural influences on jazz and blues.

Content

Course Lecture Content

1. Fundamentals of Music
 - a. Pitch and Melody
 - b. Rhythm and Syncopation
 - c. Harmony
 - d. Texture
 - e. Timbre and Musical Instruments
 - f. Arrangement and Form
2. Influences of 19th and Early 20th Century Popular Music
 - a. Ragtime
 - b. Tin Pan Alley
 - c. Blues
 - d. Jazz
 - e. Gospel
 - f. Country
 - g. African-American origins and contributions to the above genres
3. Early Rock and Roll in the 50s
 - a. Rhythm & Blues becomes Rock and Roll
 - b. Role of race and segregation on marketing; repackaging and rerecording of minority-made music for a non-minority audience
4. Teenagers as a new market segment
 - a. American Bandstand
 - b. The Payola Scandal
 - c. Phil Spector's Wall of Sound
 - d. The Surf Sound
5. Soul and Motown
 - a. Continuing Black American music influences on the broader popular music industry
 - b. Girl Groups
 - c. Chicago Soul

-
- d. Memphis Soul
 - e. Atlantic Records
 - f. Motown
 6. The British Invasion
 - a. Skiffle and Black American music influence on British musicians
 - b. The Beatles
 - c. The Rolling Stones
 - d. British Blues Revival Bands
 - e. American Reaction
 7. Folk-Rock
 - a. Folk Music
 - b. Bob Dylan
 - c. Folk-Rock Music
 - d. The Singer/Songwriters
 8. Psychedelic Rock
 - a. The San Francisco Sound
 - b. Jam Bands
 - c. Psychedelic Rock beyond San Francisco
 9. Country and Southern Rock
 - a. Country Rock
 - b. Southern Rock
 10. Jazz Rock
 - a. Miles Davis
 - b. Jazz-Rock
 - c. Fusion
 11. Hard Rock and Heavy Metal
 - a. Hard Rock
 - b. British Heavy Metal
 - c. American Heavy Metal
 - d. Speed Metal and Thrash
 - e. Death Metal
 - f. Gender Identity and Presentation in Hard Rock and Heavy Metal
 12. Art Rock
 - a. Combining Rock and Western Classical Music
 - b. Instrumentation/Performers
 - c. Art Rock Influenced by Avant-Garde Trends
 - d. Art Rock with Roots in Hard Rock
 - e. Glam and Glitter Rock
 - i. Gender Identity and Presentation in Glam and Glitter Rock
 13. Ska and Reggae
 - a. Ska
 - b. Reggae
 - c. Ska and Reggae Influences on Rock
 - d. Ska Revival
 - e. Dub, Dancehall, and Ragga
 14. Punk Rock and New Wave
 - a. Relationship to 1950's simplicity and live performance
 - b. New York Punk
 - c. British Punk
 - d. Hard-core Punk on the West Coast
 - e. "Straight Edge" punk from Washington, D.C.
 - f. American New Wave
 - g. British New Wave
 15. Funk and Disco

- a. Funk
 - b. James Brown
 - c. Philadelphia Soul
 - d. Psychedelic Funk
 - e. Disco
16. Hip Hop and Rap
- a. Hip-Hop Culture and East Coast Rap
 - i. Themes relating to race, gender and sexuality in hip-hop
 - b. West Coast Rap
 - c. Latino Rap
 - d. Rap Combined with Other Styles
17. MTV and The Music Video Revolution
- a. Michael Jackson
 - b. Prince
 - c. Madonna
18. Other Rock Styles of the 80s
- a. Alternative Rock from Britain
 - b. Gothic Rock
 - c. Post punk in the United States
 - d. Industrial Rock Rock
19. Styles of the 90s and early 2000s
- a. Grunge Rock
 - b. Pop Punk
 - c. Jam Bands
 - d. Alternative Country
 - e. Return of Art Rock
 - f. Techno Music and Rave Culture
 - g. The DJ as Artist
 - h. Rap Rock
20. Contemporary Trends

Methods of Instruction

Method

Discussion

Integration

Instructor-directed classroom discussions and debates about key topics including analysis of various rock styles and the relationship between music and culture (including an examination of race, gender, sexuality, politics, etc.).

DE Adaptations for MOI

Discussions will be adapted to an online format within the CMS. Discussions begin with a prompt from the instructor. Students post and reply to each other, with the instructor taking an active role to facilitate discussion over a set, limited time period, with grading and feedback provided within a week of the discussion closing.

Method

Directed Study

Integration

Guided listening of historically or pedagogically significant music recordings. Students are led by the instructor to develop listening skills and vocabulary for describing and discussing the sound of the music, eventually leading to comparative analysis of different songs, genres, and artists.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Guided listening can be adapted to the CMS, with accessible written, video and/or audio guides developed by the instructor, supplemented with links to music streaming services or embedded audio, and CMS quizzes, assignments and/or discussions for students to check their understanding.

Method

Lecture

Integration

Instructor will present and lead discussion of various topics, including basic elements of music, instruments, style periods, analysis of historically important musical works, and biographies of artists, including historically marginalized musicians. Accessible audio and visual materials will support the presentation/discussion.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Presentations will be covered using a combination of e-Lecture and online audio-visual resources embedded or linked in the CMS.

Method

Film/video Viewing and Discussion

Integration

Instructor will play video examples of professional performances to illustrate musical forms, styles, and genres.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Online videos will be embedded or linked on the CMS, with appropriate introduction/explanation from the instructor. The instructor will also ensure that videos are made accessible, adding captions, transcripts, audio/text descriptions, etc. as necessary.

Method

Reading

Integration

Instructors will assign readings appropriate to the course content, including chapters from the required textbook and additional readings, such as scholarly articles, that fill in gaps or present alternate perspectives from the textbook reading. Particularly important are the inclusion of primary and secondary texts authored by and/or concerning important but historically underrepresented groups. For example, a published journal article from the "new musicology" movement that incorporated feminism, gender studies, queer theory, postcolonial studies critical theory into musical analysis.

DE Adaptations for MOI

Through the syllabus, announcements, and other postings on the CMS, students will be directed to read and study textbook chapters. Additional readings can be linked to or embedded within the CMS, using accessible resources such as those provided by the college library.

Methods of Evaluation**Method**

Exams/Tests

Integration

Comprehensive tests will measure students' understanding of historical and factual materials and over-arching concepts. Exam format may include essay, short answer, multiple choice, true/false and listening questions. Listening portions test for student understanding, recognition and ability to describe musical characteristics (such as tempo or instrumentation), genre/style, and specific artists. Exams will be presented in a format accessible to all students and special accommodation adjustments may be made at the instructor's discretion.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Exams will be delivered via the CMS and comply with all accessibility requirements. The listening portion of exams will be accomplished via a test that requires students to listen and respond to excerpts of audio recordings embedded in the CMS. Many types of questions can be auto-graded by the CMS, providing instant feedback for the student; other question types, such as short answer or essays will be graded manually with feedback provided within a week of the due date.

Method

Quizzes

Integration

Periodic short exams will measure students' retention of facts and concepts covered in recent lectures and reading assignments. Listening quizzes will require students to recognize musical characteristics, instruments, composers, and musical works upon listening to a recording. Quizzes will be presented in a format accessible to all students and special accommodation adjustments may be made at the instructor's discretion.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Listening quizzes will be accomplished via a timed test that requires students to listen and respond to excerpts of audio recordings within the course management system.

Method

Homework

Integration

Homework includes written reflections on assigned reading and listening, such as guided worksheets or longer-form responses to prompts. Infused throughout homework assignments is content related to the African-American origins of rock music, and how rock music has expanded outside of the borders of the United States. Assignments are evaluated based on the students' ability to critique and evaluate musical works, formulate and support responses to readings, and synthesize connections between music and the cultures (including African-American cultures) that created it.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Homework assignments to be posted and completed on the CMS, following instructions from the instructor. Feedback provided to students within a week of the due date.

Method

Research Projects

Integration

Topics for research projects are given and/or approved by the instructor, and might include a study of specific performers, locations, or time periods as appropriate to an intro-level music history course. Research projects are used as a summative assignment to assess students' ability to connect the sound of rock music with extra-musical elements such as culture and politics, with particular attention given to how the student's chosen music is the product of the adaptation and appropriation of music made by historically underrepresented minority groups. Research projects might take any number of forms, such as a research paper, presentation, or artistic project such as a museum panel. Projects are evaluated based on the students' ability to critique and evaluate musical works on a deep level, find and utilize supporting primary and secondary sources (including recorded music), and formulate, state and defend their thesis.

DE Adaptations for MOE

Research projects are adapted for distance education by breaking the project into multiple assignments and content pages in the CMS, supported by direct communication with the instructor via the CMS messaging system and written grade feedback on each step of the project. Peer evaluations and interactions use the discussions feature of the CMS. All steps of the project are submitted via the CMS, with instructor feedback provided in time for students to apply feedback to the next step of the project.

Assignments**Assignment Type**

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

Concert Report

Attend a live concert of rock music, or music from a related genre such as blues, and submit a report (at least 2 pages) that describes the sound of the music (using specific musical vocabulary) and the role of the audience in the performance. The instructor will provide a list of eligible performances in the area (including options with free admission) or will pre-approve other performances at the student's request.

How assignment will be adapted in online format

Instructions will be posted in the CMS and students will submit their written reports electronically. For a fully online format, more care must be taken (for example by adding an additional assignment) to prompt students to find performances on their own and submit them for approval.

Assignment Type

Writing

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Comparative Listening Exercise

Listen to the two versions of "Hound Dog" played in class, one by Elvis and the other by Big Mamma Thornton. As you listen, take notes on the musical elements you hear, using specific musical vocabulary, then compare your analysis with a classmate, discussing similarities and differences and checking for accuracy. As a class, discuss the nature and value of authenticity, musical sharing and appropriation in the context of race and culture of the 1950s United States.

How assignment will be adapted in online format

Recordings of the songs will be linked to or embedded within the CMS, with student writing submitted via a file upload or as part of a discussion forum.

Assignment Type

Reading

In-class and/or outside of class

In-class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Summative

Assignment

Madonna Analysis and Discussion

From Susan McClary's *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality*, read the essay, "Living to Tell: Madonna's Resurrection of the Fleshly" (available via our library's journal article database). Take notes on the reading and use other class materials such as your textbook to prepare for a class discussion centered on McClary's statement: "[Madonna's works] explore - sometimes playfully, sometimes seriously - various ways of constituting identities that refuse stability, that remain fluid, that resist definition." Prepare for the discussion by watching the music videos for "Live to Tell," "Open Your Heart" and "Like a Prayer" and by reflecting on the many seemingly contradictory (but often actually complimentary) aspects that McClary describes in Madonna, such as commodified sexuality, feminism and abstinence.

How assignment will be adapted in online format

The essay is available via the college's JSTOR subscription; the instructor will link to the article on the CMS. Student discussion will take place online in the CMS. For efficiency and clarity, students may be broken up into groups to focus on specific prompts, such as looking at a particular music video or tasked with defending a specific position.

Assignment Type

Other

In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

Formative or Summative

Formative

Assignment

Active Listening and Musical Description

Listen to one of the songs on this week's assigned playlist, taking notes on the musical characteristics in the song, using specific and precise musical vocabulary. Make a post on the discussion board where you make an intentionally false statement about the song, while still using precise and specific vocabulary. For example, you might say that a song with a fast tempo has a "slow tempo." Once you've made your discussion board post, you'll be able to see other students' posts. Choose another student's post and make a reply that corrects their false statement. Your reply post should begin with the phrase, "Um, actually" as in "Um, actually, that song has a fast tempo."

How assignment will be adapted in online format

In an online format, the discussions feature of the CMS is used to provide instructions for the assignment, a link to the assigned playlist, and space for the students to read and reply to posts.

Course Materials**Textbooks**

Katherine Charlton, Rock Music Styles: A History, 9th Edition (McGraw Hill, 2024).
ISBN: 9781265698294

Class Size Information**Class Size**

40

Class Size Category

A - Lecture/discussion 40

Diversity and Inclusion

Course Design and Materials: Course will incorporate diverse perspectives, authors, and examples that reflect a variety of cultures, identities, and lived experiences. Instructional materials will be reviewed regularly to ensure representation, inclusivity, and alignment with equity-minded practices across disciplines.

Inclusive Learning Environment: Instructors will establish classroom norms and policies that promote respect, civil discourse, and belonging in both online and face-to-face classes. Clear expectations for communication and engagement will support a learning space where all students feel valued and heard.

Accessible Instruction: Course content will be delivered using accessible design. Materials will follow accessibility guidelines within the CMS, including captioned media, readable document formats, and multiple means of engagement to support diverse learning.

Equitable Teaching Practices: Instructors will use transparent and grading criteria, varied assessment methods, and timely feedback to promote fairness and student success. Opportunities for revision, reflection, and multiple demonstrations of learning may be incorporated when appropriate to the discipline.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogies: Instructional strategies will encourage critical thinking about diverse perspectives and systems of power relevant to the course content. Faculty will foster opportunities for students to connect course material to real-world contexts.

Ongoing Reflection and Improvement: Faculty will engage in continuous professional development related to IDEAA principles and reflect on course practices using metacognition to identify opportunities for increased equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Explain how diversity and inclusion(e.g., gender, culture/race, sexuality, etc.) is infused into the course.

This course focuses on recent American history (1950s to today) and on mainstream cultural and historical issues in the United States. An essential component of understanding the course content is examining the appropriation/adaptation of minority cultures into the American mainstream, for example, examining the role that race played in the birth of 1950s rock and roll, and examining the reasons for white musician re-recordings of songs by Black Americans. Rock music is, across all of its subgenres, a multicultural, multiracial music that any student taking this course can see themselves represented in. Rock music also has a uniquely theatrical component that often asks listeners to confront their understanding of sexual orientation, gender roles, presentation and identity, race and culture, and many other similar topics. The study of rock history is also a study of all of these topics.

Describe how assignments, instruction, evaluation, course content, and interactions are contextualized for diverse learners promoting an equitable course.

As an intro-level course in music, the content assumes no prior knowledge of music or the academic study of music. Instructors develop student listening skills gradually throughout the semester, through extensive explanation and demonstration, reinforced by class discussion and writing, and eventually moving on to larger summative assignments.

Collaborative learning activities, such as discussions, give students a chance to check their understanding and build confidence in their responses and analysis.

A variety of instruction methods are used, included lecture, reading, discussion and guided listening, using a wide variety of music and musical artists, reflecting the multicultural diversity inherent in rock music.

As a listening course, the class is inherently inaccessible to some students with significant hearing impairment, however many students with partial hearing impairment have successfully completed the course. As an intro-level course, listening skills are not expected to develop to the level of entry-level music major courses. Further, evaluation of listening-based assignments is able to be individualized, allowing for some subjectivity of responses, as there often isn't one correct answer in how individuals experiences and evaluate music. Each student can be evaluated individually based on where they currently are, with individualized feedback that gets all students to a level of mastery of the Learning Objectives.

Interactions

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-student interaction.

Students will regularly be asked to compare their listening experiences to check for accuracy and practice using musical vocabulary appropriate to describing the sound of rock music and popular music genres objectively. For online modalities, this is accomplished via discussion assignments in the CMS (at least one every week).

Explain how the course will incorporate instructor-to-student interaction.

The instructor will interact with students as a class through weekly lectures (video or written), as well as providing introductions and explanations of assigned guided listening samples of rock and popular music. The instructor will also participate in weekly group discussions (in the classroom or in the CMS), responding to student comments either individually or as a group. The instructor will provide individual feedback on students written analysis of assigned listening exercises. The instructor will also communicate to the class via weekly announcement posts, such as an overview of each new module and information and reminders of upcoming musical performances in the community that students may attend.

Unique to this course in the history of rock and popular music is the instructor guiding students to an inspection of the roots of rock music from various cultures, an understanding of music made by historically underrepresented minority groups into the popular music mainstream, and an assessment of the continual and lasting influence of Black American genres and musicians on rock music. These topics require more direct interaction with students (as opposed to student-to-content interaction).

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-content interaction.

Students engage with content via assigned readings, listening to music recordings, watching videos of music performances, taking interactive online listening quizzes, and attending live music performances. As a course in rock and popular music, audio recordings and music videos are widely available through online streaming platforms, and instructors will create playlists to distribute to the course via the CMS. Non-music primary sources such as interviews with rock musicians, blog posts, etc. are also plentiful and will be used to enrich student learning of the course content.

Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-self interaction (metacognitive).

Students are encouraged to reflect on their personal responses as they listen to various musical examples and consider ways that they personally use and enjoy music. As students correlate the relationship between rock music and American culture, they also reflect on their participation within our culture as well as how others with different backgrounds place themselves in the culture.

Key: 2230