Defining the Beatles: Music, Image and Influence

University of North Carolina at Asheville

Fall 2015 Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Brian Felix

Course Number: MUSC 345001

Credits: 3

Class Meets: T/Th 9:55-11:10 am

Classroom: 018 Lipinsky

Instructor Contact Information:

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Office: 117A Lipinsky

Office Hours: TBA
Course Description:
The Beatles are among the greatest popular phenomena of our era. They reshaped the way music was created, produced and consumed. They garnered critical acclaim from all sectors of the music world, including people who previously paid no attention to popular music. They were constantly searching for breakthroughs in their music, along the way turning rock music into art. They were the most important icons of the 1960s generation and continue to influence the world today.

How did this happen?

The Beatles’ success is a function of many factors, some of which were generated by the band members, and some of which were outside their realm of control. In this course, we will investigate the cultural, social and musical history of the Beatles, paying particular attention to the role different media have played in defining their image over the last half-century. By examining music, literature (print media, biography, criticism and original writing by the Beatles) and video/film, we will consider how the parties involved (e.g. record companies, critics, biographers, the audience, the Beatles themselves) have shaped the Beatles phenomenon and defined their legacy.

Course Objectives:
By taking this course, each student will:
• Gain a deep knowledge of and broad perspective on the Beatles and their music
• Develop active listening skills
• Develop musical and cultural analytical skills
• Participate in a group project and presentation
• Investigate different art forms (music, literature and video/film) and be able to:
  1. Articulate the value of the arts studied and their impact on the self and others
  2. Recognize cultural, historical, spiritual, and/or political aspects of the arts studied
  3. Define and articulate the concepts, methods, and organizing principles of the arts studied

Required Texts:
• The Beatles: The Biography by Bob Spitz
• Revolution in the Head: The Beatles’ Records and the Sixties by Ian MacDonald

Items on reserve in the library: These items are owned by the music department and will be kept on reserve at Ramsey library during this semester. Even though much of the audio you will be needing for the course will be available via Moodle, you will find these resources helpful for homework assignments and projects. If you already have access to some/all of these materials at home, feel free to use those.
• CDs: The Beatles Mono Box Set (selected CDs), The Beatles Stereo Box Set (selected CDs), The Beatles Anthology Vols. 1-3, Let It Be...Naked
• DVDs: The Beatles Anthology Vols. 1-10, A Hard Day’s Night, Help!, Magical Mystery Tour, Yellow Submarine, The 4 Complete Ed Sullivan Shows Starring the Beatles
Rules, Regulations & Notes:
• This course satisfies the UNC Asheville ARTS requirement.
• While there are no “official” prerequisites for this course, it is expected that you have a working knowledge of musical terminology and can actively engage in discussions concerning certain technical aspects of music. If you have any questions or concerns about this please see me after the first class session.
• Attendance is required. You are allowed two absences for any reason. After that, you are allowed two additional emergency absences that require appropriate documentation. After that, each absence will lower your final grade by two points.
• Please arrive on time and stay for the full class. Each tardy or early-out will count as half an absence.
• Participation is crucial, and will affect your grade. It is expected that you come prepared to actively engage in class discussions.
• There will be no eating in class.
• You must be able to use Moodle as all take-home assignments will be submitted via our Moodle course-site

• Weekly Reading Assignments
  ‣ The weekly reading assignments will primarily be located in the textbooks, although required supplemental readings will be posted on Moodle.
  ‣ All readings will be accompanied by discussion questions/topics.
  ‣ It is essential that you come to class prepared to discuss these readings.

• Listening Assignments - Most weeks you will have listening assignments. You will be responsible for understanding the following things about each of the songs:
  ‣ The name of the song
  ‣ The album (or single) on which it was originally released (original UK release)
  ‣ The date (month and year) of original UK release
  ‣ The general significance or importance of this song (For example, you should know that “I Want To Hold Your Hand” was the first Beatles’ single to be successful in the US.)
  ‣ You will be tested on this knowledge via quizzes and exams.

• Note on reading/listening assignments from MacDonald book - Each week that there is a listening assignment you are responsible for reading the corresponding entries in the MacDonald book. For example, in week 4, you will be responsible for reading the entries on "Love Me Do" "Please, Please Me" "I Saw Her Standing There" and "Twist and Shout." Note that for your convenience I have attempted to list the tracks in the order they occur in the book.

• General Assignments, Quizzes & Presentations
  ‣ There will be regular assignments throughout the term. This includes take-home assignments and in-class presentations and quizzes.
  ‣ All take home assignments will be submitted via Moodle.
  ‣ No late assignments will be accepted.
  ‣ In-class quizzes will occur during the first 5 minutes of class and there will be no make-ups.
  ‣ The nature of in-class presentations will be announced as the semester unfolds.
  ‣ Grading of Assignments and Quizzes
    ‣ This category will be worth 50% of your final grade.
    ‣ All assignments, quizzes and presentations will be worth a specific value that corresponds to the relative difficulty of that assignment or quiz.
At the end of the semester, the weighted average of your grades in this category will determine your final grade for this category.

- **Exams** - There will be a midterm and final exam that will draw from class, reading, listening and viewing material. You will be required to identify listening examples on a portion of the exams.
  - Exams can be made up only if I am notified beforehand of an emergency conflict. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Group Album Project** - During the term, you will be giving a group presentation that will focus on one Beatles album. You will each be required to hand in a paper that will accompany the presentation. Further details will be discussed in class and posted on Moodle.
- **Plagiarism** - It is illegal to copy directly from another source such as a textbook or internet site. If it is discovered that you plagiarized an assignment it is grounds for failure of that assignment, potential failure of the course and/or potential investigation by the university.
- **Academic Dishonesty** - If it is discovered that you have acted dishonestly in submitting an assignment, it is grounds for failure of that assignment, potential failure of the course and/or potential investigation by the university. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to copying assignments from another student and submitting work completed by someone else.
- **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities** - University of North Carolina at Asheville is committed to making courses, programs and activities accessible to students with documented disabilities. Students requiring reasonable accommodations must register with the Disability Services Office by providing current diagnostic documentation. All information provided will remain confidential. For more information please contact the Office of Academic Accessibility at (828) 232-5050 or academicaccess@unca.edu, visit them in the OneStop Student Services Center or at their website [https://oaa.unca.edu/](https://oaa.unca.edu/).

**Method of Evaluating Student Performance:****

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Assignments &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Percentage</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Grading Scale:**

- A = 93 – 100; A- = 90 – 92; B+ = 87 – 89; B = 83 – 86; B- = 80 – 82; C+ = 77 – 79; C = 73 – 76; C- = 70 – 72; D+ = 67 – 69; D = 60 – 66; F = 59 and below
Course Itinerary

Note: This itinerary is intended to give you a rough idea of what we’ll be doing in class. All assignments will be posted on Moodle.

Week 1: Introduction
Dates: 8/18, 8/20

Week 2: Investigating the Beatles
Dates: 8/25, 8/27

Week 3: Early Years - Liverpool to Hamburg
Dates: 9/1, 9/3

Week 4: Early Years - Early Recordings
Dates: 9/8, 9/10

Week 5: Early Mania
Dates: 9/15, 9/17

Week 6: Beatlemania and the British Invasion
Dates: 9/22, 9/24

Week 7: Help!, Rubber Soul and the oncoming transformation
Dates: 9/29, 10/1

Week 8: Midterm Exam
Dates: 10/8 (Fall Break is 10/5-6)

Week 9: Revolver - The transformation, controversy and the end of touring
Dates: 10/13, 10/15

Week 10: Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band - Rock as Art and the Summer of Love
Dates: 10/20, 10/22

Week 11: The Magical Mystery Tour is coming to take you away: The Beatles in 1967-68
Dates: 10/27, 10/29

Week 12: The Beatles
Dates: 11/3, 11/5

Week 13: The "Get Back" sessions and the great undoing
Date: 11/10, 11/12

Week 14: And In The End...
Dates: 11/17, 11/19

Week 15: Conclusion
Dates: 11/24

Final Exam: Tuesday, December 8th at 8 am