MUSIC 166 Popular Music In America  
Fall 2010  
MW 1:30 PM - 2:45 PM  
Hale Palanakila 104

INSTRUCTOR: So Jin Kimura  
OFFICE: Hale Palanakila 152  
OFFICE HOURS: MW: 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM  
TTH: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Also by appointment  
TELEPHONE: 236-9152

WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Windward Community College is committed to excellence in the liberal arts and career development; we support and challenge individuals to develop skills, fulfill their potential, enrich their lives, and become contributing, culturally aware members of our community.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

MUS 166 Popular Music in America (3)  
A survey of Pop Music (including Blues, Jazz, Rock and Folk), in the United States in the twentieth century. Activities will include listening to recordings, writing lyrics and tunes and learning various aspects of the business of music. Field trips and concert attendance required. (3 hrs. lect.) WCC: D

Activities Required at Scheduled Times Other Than Class Times

TBA

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student learning outcomes for the course (as listed in the current catalog) are:

1. Describe the role of music in different communities

2. Describe and compare the distinctive aural features and music aesthetics of the various style of popular music.

3. Describe the historical, religious, social and political aspects of a society that contribute to the development of diverse musical styles.

4. Compare/contrast different styles of popular music.

COURSE CONTENT

This course is a survey of Pop Music in the United States in the twentieth century. This includes blues, jazz, rock and folk and many other related styles performed in America during this time period. We will pay special attention to the origins and influences of popular American music during this period, influences pop music has had on the music of the many ethnic
groups in the United States, as well as the influences that many ethnic
groups have had on the development and evolution of popular music in
America.

Format:
The class will focus on two main areas: 1) developing an understanding of
the cultural context
and underlying metaphor (world view) with which the music we study has
developed and is performed and, 2) the development of listening skills
required to hear, understand, differentiate and articulate the expressive
and musical characteristics for each piece of music or style that we study.
To achieve our objectives, we will use a variety of learning methods
including focused listening, performance, games, video clips, and
lecture/discussion.
Learning to listen with an open, fresh, relaxed mind and heart is a crucial
first step toward opening to and developing an awareness of the rich
beauty, diversity and relevance of music of
any culture or period of time. The idea of “deep listening” is not a skill or
attitude that is generally emphasized in the dominant Western culture,
but is one that we will consistently work with throughout the semester.
In addition, understanding the context in which music is made is another
critical factor in learning to fully appreciate it on its own terms.
Therefore, we will spend a great deal of time trying to gain an
understanding of the contexts and views of the people who play or played
the music we are studying.
As we begin to develop these skills of deep listening and
contextualization, it is my hope that
many other areas of our lives will also open and relax and we will begin
to notice more vividly the rich tapestry, the deep mystery and beauty that
music of all cultures often seeks to describe or work with.

Concepts or Topics
• Musical genres
• Musical styles
• World view
• Chord
• Hook
• Instrumentation
• Lyrics
• Melody
• Rhythm
• Style

Skills or Competencies
• Musical genres
• Capacity to listen deeply
• Describe music and our
experience listening to and
playing music
• Understand correlation
between culture’s world view
and its music
• Distinguish between music of
different styles, genres and
time periods
• Grasp cross-fertilization
between various cultures,
ethnic and social groups
related to American music

Course Tasks

Attendance and Reading/Listening Assignments
Students are required to attend every class, with allowances made for
emergencies (see
This course requires substantial reading and listening. I expect reading and listening assignments to be done prior to the class for which they are assigned, since class discussion will center around these.

**Daily Listening Journals**
Each student is required to listen to a piece of music of his or her relative choice twice each day and to keep a daily listening journal which will contain brief comments related to the music to which the student just listened. This journal will be turned in 3 times during the semester for review and grading. More detail about the nature of this daily listening assignment and of the journal entries will be offered in class.

**Interest and Inquiry Assignments**
There will be several “interest and inquiry” assignments given over the course of the semester, which generally require a brief reflection paper to be submitted. These papers should be from 1-3 typed pages (11 pt. Times Roman, DS) in length. More specific details will be presented with each assignment.

**Performance Summaries**
Each student is required to attend 2 live concerts and submit a summary of each. More details about this assignment will be given in class.

**Research Project**
Each student will be required to present to the class a final project on a contemporary (performing within the last 15 years) performer (solo artist or group) of popular American music of his or her choice. At the heart of this project will be a graphic representation of all the precedents and stylistic influences that have led to this particular artist or group. **Each student will speak for 10 (minimum) -15 (maximum) minutes explaining his or her work to the class. This will be an opportunity for each student to demonstrate their comprehensive knowledge of the various genres of American pop music as well as the influences each has had on American music. Each student must also submit a written reflection on the project. It is NOT a biographical sketch of your chosen artist. This paper should be 2-3 pages in length (11 pt. Times Roman, DS). Additional guidelines and details about this culminating project will be given in class.**

**Final Exam**
There will be a final listening exam given during the final exam period. Students will be required to identify songs by ear (title and artist/performer) that we have worked with throughout the semester. More details will be given during the semester.

In general, if you are present and attentive in class and you listen comprehensively to the music outside of class time, you will do well in the course regardless of any previous knowledge of music or of popular American music. Openness and a willingness to learn is more important than what previous knowledge you may bring to this class. Participation (both in class and outside of class) is a key factor in doing well in the course. If you choose not to attend
class, or not participate in other ways outside of class, your grade will more than likely directly reflect this. On average, each student will need to spend roughly 2-5 hours per week to adequately keep up with the material we are covering.

**ASSESSMENT TASKS AND GRADING**

Grades will be determined based on the following accumulation of points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular Attendance/Discussion/Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Journals</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Summaries</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiry and interest assignments</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final research project</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final listening exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Attendance Policy:**

Since attendance is such a crucial factor in learning music, each student is expected to attend every class and arrive promptly. Every two unexcused absences will automatically lower your grade by one letter. Each two unexcused tardies will be calculated as a tardy. Any absence or tardy for which the instructor is not informed prior to class is considered **UNEXCUSED**. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

**IMPORTANT DATES**

**Performance Summaries Due**
December 8

**Listening Journals Due**
December 8

**Final Research Project**
December 3
December 6
December 8 (Review day)

**Final Exam**
12/13/10 1:30 PM - 3:20 PM

**LEARNING RESOURCES**

**Course Materials:**
- **Required Textbook (w/accompanying CD):**

**Additional Information**

Some of our objectives will be to:
- Develop our capacity to listen deeply
• BEGIN TO DEVELOP A VOCABULARY AND THE SKILLS NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE MUSIC AND OUR EXPERIENCE
  LISTENING TO AND PLAYING MUSIC
• BEGIN TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF PROGRESSION AND EVOLUTION THROUGHOUT THE EXTENSIVE STYLES OF AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC
• CULTIVATE AN APPRECIATION FOR THE MUSIC OF OUR OWN CULTURE AS WELL AS CULTURES OTHER THAN OUR OWN
• BEGIN TO APPRECIATE THE CORRELATION BETWEEN A CULTURE’S WORLD VIEW AND IT’S MUSIC
• BEGIN TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN MUSIC OF DIFFERENT STYLES, GENRES AND TIME PERIODS
• BEGIN TO APPRECIATE THE CROSS-FERTILIZATION BETWEEN VARIOUS CULTURES, ETHNIC AND SOCIAL GROUPS AS IT RELATES TO POPULAR AMERICAN MUSIC

FORMAT:
THE CLASS WILL FOCUS ON TWO MAIN AREAS: 1) DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CULTURAL CONTEXT AND UNDERLYING METAPHOR (WORLD VIEW) WITH WHICH THE MUSIC WE STUDY HAS DEVELOPED AND IS PERFORMED AND, 2) THE DEVELOPMENT OF LISTENING SKILLS REQUIRED TO HEAR, UNDERSTAND, DIFFERENTIATE AND ARTICULATE THE EXPRESSIVE AND MUSICAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR EACH PIECE OF MUSIC OR STYLE THAT WE STUDY.

I BELIEVE THAT LEARNING TO LISTEN WITH AN OPEN, FRESH, RELAXED MIND AND HEART IS A CRUCIAL FIRST STEP TOWARD OPENING TO AND DEVELOPING AN AWARENESS OF THE RICH BEAUTY, DIVERSITY AND RELEVANCE OF MUSIC OF ANY CULTURE OR PERIOD OF TIME. THE IDEA OF “DEEP LISTENING” IS NOT A SKILL OR ATTITUDE THAT IS GENERALLY EMphasized IN THE DOMINANT WESTERN CULTURE, BUT IS ONE THAT WE WILL CONSISTENTLY WORK WITH THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER. IN ADDITION, UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT IN WHICH MUSIC IS MADE IS ANOTHER CRITICAL FACTOR IN LEARNING TO FULLY APPRECIATE IT ON ITS OWN TERMS. THEREFORE, WE WILL SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TRYING TO GAIN AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTEXTS AND VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY OR PLAYED THE MUSIC WE ARE STUDYING.

AS WE BEGIN TO DEVELOP THESE SKILLS OF DEEP LISTENING AND CONTEXTUALIZATION, IT IS MY HOPE THAT MANY OTHER AREAS OF OUR LIVES WILL ALSO OPEN AND RELAX AND WE WILL BEGIN TO NOTICE MORE VIVIDLY THE RICH TAPESTRY, THE DEEP MYSTERY AND BEAUTY THAT MUSIC OF ALL CULTURES OFTEN SEeks TO DESCRIBE OR WORK WITH.

WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE COMFORTABLE SPEAKING OR LEARNING MUSIC IN GROUPS, YOU CAN LEARN TO MAKE YOUR PARTICIPATION MORE VARIED. ASIDE FROM ACTIVELY ENGAGING IN DIALOGUE AND PLAYING AND SINGING THE MUSIC WHICH IS TAUGHT, YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS (PLUS MANY MORE).
  • LISTENING CAREFULLY
  • OFFERING SUPPORT
  • RECALLING SOMETHING FROM YOUR RELEVANT PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
  • RAISING A NEW ISSUE
  • ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION
  • NOTICING THAT SOMEONE IS TRYING TO BE HEARD
  • EXPLAINING YOUR IDEA
  • EXPLAINING YOUR CONFUSION
  • EXPLAINING SOMEONE ELSE’S CONFUSION
  • ...AND SO FORTH

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT
If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Ann Lemke can be reached at 235-7448, lemke@hawaii.edu, or you may stop by Hale ‘Akoakoa 213 for more information.