

AMU 221

From Rhythm & Blues to Radiohead:

The History of Rock & Roll

Course Basics

Meets:

TMC 120 Emerson Auditorium
Monday and Wednesday
3:05-4:45pm

Instructor:

Jennifer Milioto Matsue
(Mocha)
matsuej@union.edu

Office Hours:

Office location TMC 201
Tuesday 5:00-6:00pm and
Thursday 4:00-6:00pm (in-
person; zoom by request)

Prerequisites

A willingness to
explore the meaning
of popular music and
a rock and roll
attitude!!



Course Overview

This course explores the historical development of Afro-Anglo-American rock-and-roll through lecture, film and sound recordings. The Szatmary reading provides a brief but thorough introduction to the socio-cultural and musical movements that motivated developments in the history of rock-and-roll. Class lecture will explore key stylistic changes that marked the transformation of blues to early rock through the development of today's eclectic genres, as well as how performers play with gender and sexuality in popular music. Along the way, rock-and-roll has inspired many films in varied categories that capture the essence of the historical moment in which they were produced or the era they depict. The course thus will explore the ways in which rock-and-roll has been represented in film, with an accompanying series featuring documentaries, concert films, musicals and more.



Enduring Understandings

Engaging with music cultures of the world instills respect for diversity, demands equity for all peoples, and creates empathy for the needs of global citizens.

Syllabus Design

Adapted and inspired by the inclusive syllabus design of [Dr. Tona Hangen](#), professor of History at Worcester State University, the *Inclusive Syllabus Survey Tool* by [Dr. Kathy Takayama](#), Senior Science Education Fellow at Howard Hughes Medical Institute, as well as the [Accessible Syllabus](#) project at Tulane.

Course Format

Students must complete assignments as indicated in the schedule and be prepared to discuss them in class. Indeed, lively discussion is absolutely essential in this course, therefore please take adequate notes on your reading, listening, and films to allow you to contribute. We may not discuss everything we read, listen to, or watch. Rather, we will use class time to expand on the materials you cover on your own. If you have any questions or concerns about how to improve your discussion techniques, and in turn your class participation grade, please see me during the term. Please remember that your class participation grade is entirely separate from your grades on your other assignments.

Learning Objectives

Students will gain a greater understanding of the socio-cultural contexts that informed stylistic change and issues related to race, gender and sexuality, while considering the continued relevancy of rock today.

As a Writing Across the Curriculum course (WAC), you will develop reflective thinking and critical analysis, and in turn, critical thinking and argumentative writing in several short assignments throughout the term. The final project allows you to explore themes of the course in a creative project—to turn a critical argument into a creative expression. You will be challenged to reflect on your perception of failure as instead a learning moment through which you can grow both as a writer and as a person.

Classroom Behavior

Students are expected to practice proper classroom etiquette. **Cellphones are prohibited during class time, guest lectures, films and concerts.** Devices may be used to take notes (and to google things when the class has questions!), but should not distract you or your fellow classmates (no YouTube, Facebook, etc. and let's keep the display on a lower setting). If students in back are disturbed by screens in the front, we can switch seats around to best accommodate all learning styles.

Practical Details

Diversity + Inclusion



The readings, class lecture, and my comments in class will suggest a particular point of view. This perspective is my own and does not have to be yours! I encourage you to disagree with the ideas in the readings and lectures as well as the perspectives of your colleagues in the course. Please express yourself!! I want to learn from you.

A significant part of a college education is learning about the complexity of various issues. Therefore, it is important that we listen and respect one another but we do not have to agree. A richer discussion will occur when a variety of perspectives are presented in class for discussion.

Honor Code

Union College recognizes the need to create an environment of mutual trust as part of its educational mission. Responsible participation in an academic community requires respect for and acknowledgement of the thoughts and work of others, whether expressed in the present or in some distant time and place. Matriculation at the College is taken to signify implicit agreement with the Academic Honor Code, available at <http://muse.union.edu/honorcode/>. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that submitted work is his or her own and does not involve any form of academic misconduct. Students are expected to ask their course instructors for clarification regarding, but not limited to, collaboration, citations, and plagiarism. Ignorance is not an excuse for breaching academic integrity. Students are also required to affix the full Honor Code Affirmation, or the following shortened version, on each item of coursework submitted for grading, including daily assignments and compositions: 'I affirm that I have carried out my academic endeavors with full academic honesty.'

[Signed, Jane /John Doe]

Disability Accommodations



Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Accommodative Services to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. For information on documentation requirements or to start the process, students may contact Accommodative Services in Reamer Campus Center 303, call 518-388-8785, or e-mail **S. Harrington** at harrings@union.edu.

Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with me to make appropriate arrangements. All discussions will remain confidential.

Course Materials & Technologies

Available in the Bookstore or as an eBook at Amazon or Pearson:

Szatmary, David P. 2019. Rockin' in Time. New York: Pearson. **9th Edition.**

Additional reading and audio-visual materials will be placed on Nexus or distributed in class.

If any deadlines or other information on Nexus or in the syllabus seems odd, please notify me immediately and I will clarify. All assignment guidelines should state Spring 2022 at the top so there is no confusion with past versions.

In this course, you'll use the following technologies:



Nexus: <https://nexus.union.edu>



Maker Web/Maker Spaces

<https://muse.union.edu/makerweb/>



Student Tech Help

The USTAR TechTeam provides students with a centralized resource for computer support. While virus protection is USTAR's primary focus, they provide basic technical support for all ITS supported software, remedy basic networking problems, and assist with some hardware issues.

USTAR technicians are available five days a week, Sunday through Thursday from 6PM to 10PM and Monday through Thursday from 12:50PM to 1:50PM (common hour) in the Schaffer Library at the far end (away from the front door) of the circulation desk.

Class Attendance & Assignments

Attendance

Regular attendance and participation are both absolutely necessary to successfully complete this course. **Greater than 4 absences** (equivalent to two weeks of class or 20% of the term) **will result in failure of the course.**

Deadlines and Extensions



Each of the course activities is designed to help you build particular skills and gain knowledge while working together in an active learning community. In order to excel in this class, you are expected to complete assignments by the dates and times as indicated.

However, in the real world, things happen (an interview off campus, a required class field trip, multiple major assignments due the same day, etc.). With the exception of the Final Project (proposal, presentation, final submission), you can have two extensions for such legitimate reasons, but must inform me ahead of time. Any other late work will be penalized by a deduction of .25 per each day late. **All assignments must be completed to pass the course.**

Choices

You will see a lot of choices in the assignments for this course. These are designed for your benefit—to allow you the opportunity to explore themes and styles that inspire you and bring your own ideas to the class. Offering choices also requires you to pay attention to the materials in the course and exercise your ability to take action without fear. The increased engagement demanded of choice will ultimately sustain you in the creative process now and build confidence for the future.

Group Work

Several assignments require you to work in a group. Group work poses particular challenges and the potential for great growth as you work as a team, problem solve, and feed on each other's creativity. While group work can be intimidating at times, learning to work with (and respect!) diverse personalities and learning styles will help you in your future education and careers. Working as a team is a part of life that needs to be nurtured and valued.

Assessed Products and Performances

Breakdown

Your performance in this course will be assessed on multiple types of products:



1. Class Participation (10pts)
2. Video Analysis (20pts)
3. Film Analysis (20pts)
4. Short Essay (10pts)
5. Final Project (40pts)
 1. Proposal (5pts)
 2. Presentation (25pts)
 3. Letter to a Future Student (10pts)

Detailed guidelines will be provided for each assignment.



Drafts and Revisions

- If you have concerns about writing, you are encouraged to submit drafts for suggestions ahead of assignment deadlines.
- You do have the option, however, to rewrite some of the assignments (to be determined; see individual assignment guidelines).
- All rewrites must be turned in no later than one week after I have returned the original batch of graded assignments to the class. This means that if for some reason you have turned in the assignment late, the rewrite is still due when everyone else's rewrite is due.
- Please send rewrites as an attachment to e-mail.
- The rewrite grade will be averaged with the original grade to determine the final grade for that assignment.
- Rewrites are NOT automatically graded higher than the original version.
- Rewrite means "to write again," not just to correct a few grammatical errors that I have pointed out. It is an opportunity to rethink and improve your work, and the assignment should display that effort.

Writing Center

Please take advantage of the resources at the Writing Center. You can make an appointment here: <https://www.union.edu/writing-programs/make-appointment>.

Questions? Email writingprograms@union.edu



Special Considerations due to COVID-19

Respect COVID-19

As the term begins, we are slowly returning to normalcy. Please think of others and follow all the safety protocols that Union puts in place. We want to protect you and keep learning on campus this year. Therefore, if you test positive, are symptomatic, or are unvaccinated and are exposed, please follow the latest protocol. (As of March 28, 2022 students who test positive will isolate; students who are symptomatic are to go to the Wicker Wellness Center to be checked out.) Otherwise, please come to class.

Access to materials during COVID-19

If you are isolated for COVID-19-related reasons, I will be notified by the Dean of Students Office that you will not be able to attend classes during the specified time frame and that you may require additional flexibility with regard to your participation in this course. Your responsibility will be to contact me as soon as you are able so that we can discuss your needs. I will make arrangements to provide you with material missed from classes.

Counseling Resources

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health challenges at Union College, please contact the Counseling Center. Please call 518-388-6161 or email hotalinm@union.edu or daym@union.edu to schedule an appointment. All counseling services are free and confidential. Please visit the Counseling Center website at <https://www.union.edu/counseling-center> for updated resources on dealing with Covid-19. Additionally, please follow Wicker Wellness Center on Instagram, where postings will focus on how to address isolation, academics, and stress.

In a crisis situation, or after hours, contact Campus Safety at 518-388-6911. The National Suicide Prevention hotline also offers a 24-hour hotline at [800-273-8255](https://www.suicidepreventionhotline.org).

Tentative Schedule

Week 1

- Mon 3/28 - Are you ready to rock?
Introduction to the course
- Weds 3/30 - From Blues to the beginning of Rock & Roll
Reading: Szatmary Preface, Introduction (viii-xiv), Chap 1 (1-14) and Chap 2 (15-33)
Review Video Analysis Assignment

Week 2

- Mon 4/4 - Elvis and Rockabilly
Reading: Szatmary Chap 3 (34-54)
Review Film Analysis Assignment
- Tues 4/5 - **Film Viewing:** Life of Riley (BB King) 7pm in Emerson Auditorium
- Weds 4/6 - The Teen Market; Surfboards and Hot Rods (Beach Boys)
Reading: Szatmary Chap 4 and 5 (55-74)

Week 3

- Mon 4/11 - The New Frontier of Folk (Seeger, Dylan, Kingston Trio); British Invasion (The Beatles, the Monkees)
Reading: Szatmary Chap 6 (75-91) and Chap 7 (92-105)
- Tues 4/5 - **Film Viewing:** Gimme Shelter (Rolling Stones) 7pm in Emerson Auditorium
- Weds 4/13 - British Blues Invasion (Rolling Stones, The Who, Yardbirds)
Reading: Szatmary Chap 8 (106-118)

Week 4

- Mon 4/18 - Motown; Acid Rock (Haight-Ashbury)
Reading: Szatmary Chap 9 (119-127) and Chap 10 (128-145)
- Tues 4/19 - **Film Viewing:** Janis: Little Girl Blue (Janis Joplin) 7pm in Emerson Auditorium

Weds 4/20 - Fire from the Streets (Protest Music, Soul, Funk)

Reading: Szatmary Chap 11 (146-159) and

Week 5

Mon 4/25 - Guitar Heroes and Heavy Metal

Reading: Szatmary Chap 12 (160-176)

Review Final Project Assignment

Tues 4/26 - **Film Viewing:** Pink Floyd: Live at Pompeii 7pm in Emerson Auditorium

Weds 4/27 - Country Rock (Lynyrd Skynyrd, The Band);

Escaping into the 1970s

(Progressive Rock, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young)

Reading: Szatmary Chap 13 (177-185) and Chap 14 (186-196)

Week 6

Mon 5/2 - Era of Excess; Punk (New Wave)

Reading: Szatmary Chap 15 (197-213) and Chap 16 (214-232)

Tues 5/3 - **Film Viewing:** Velvet Goldmine 7pm in Emerson Auditorium

Weds 5/4 - American Hardcore; MTV (Michael Jackson)

Reading: Szatmary Chap 17 (233-238) and Chap 18 (239-252)

Thurs 5/5 - "Pitch your Plan" Meetings

Fri 5/6

Week 7

Mon 5/9 - Promise of Rock & Roll (Bruce Springsteen, Benefit Concerts); Country Boomers (Garth Brooks)

Reading: Szatmary Chap 19 (253-262) and Chap 20 (263-266)

Tues 5/10 - **Film Viewing:** Stop Making Sense (The Talking Heads) 7pm in Emerson Auditorium

Weds 5/11 - Generation X Blues

Reading: Szatmary Chap 21 (267-284)

Week 8

- Mon 5/16 - Post-Grunge (Radiohead, Oasis); Hip-Hop Nation
Reading: Szatmary Chap 22 (285-291) and Chap 23 (292-308)
- Tues 5/17 - **Film Viewing:** Spinal Tap 7pm in Emerson Auditorium
- Weds 5/18 - Metal Gumbo; The Age of the Internet
Reading: Szatmary Chap 24 (309-314) and Chap 25 (315-323)
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Week 9

- Mon 5/23 - Life in Wartime; Country Counter Culture
Reading: Szatmary Chap 26 (324-333) and 27 (334-339)
- Tues 5/24 - **Film Viewing:** Montage of Heck (Kurt Cobain) 7pm in Emerson Auditorium
- Weds 5/25 - The Rave Revolution
Reading: Szatmary Chap 28 (340-349)
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Week 10

- Mon 5/30 - **Final Essay Due**
Final Project Review
- Weds 6/1 - **Final Project Review**
- Thurs 6/2 - Final Presentations 7pm REQUIRED**
Load-in afternoon (TBD)
Soundcheck 5pm-6:30pm
Doors open 6:30pm
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EXAM WEEK

- Optional final drafts of letter to a future student due by Noon on TBD (**Nexus**)
Final versions of letter to a future student due by Noon on TBD (**Nexus**)