

Course Title:	UConn ECE Popular Music and Diversity in American Society
Grade(s):	10-12

Course Description
This course is a rigorous survey of American popular music, focused on the contribution of marginalized identities. This is a discussion-based course, and students are expected to be engaged in nuanced and interdisciplinary thought. Students will also hone their college-level academic writing skills through research essays. This course demands openness to others' ideas and lived experiences and a willingness to engage in a mature way with topics surrounding the experience of marginalized identities.
Approved Curricular Materials/Textbook(s)
<i>American Popular Music: From Minstrelsy to MP3</i> ; Starr & Waterman; 5th edition

Unit Title	Unit Description (Include Unit Objectives)	Unit Pacing
Unit 1: African Roots and the Spiritual	Students will explore how African tribal traditions influenced the songs of enslaved Africans in America. Students will be able to aurally identify the different types of Spirituals and analyze the lyrics, considering their historical context.	2 weeks
Unit 2: Minstrelsy	Students will understand how Blackface performances dominated popular culture in the South and influenced popular cartoons.	1 week
Unit 3: Early Blues, Chicago Blues, and Rhythm and Blues	Students will learn about how the Blues developed and moved North with the Great Migration. Students will explore how racist systems like redlining influenced Black music and culture, and learn about how the Blues transformed into Chicago Blues and then Rhythm and Blues. Students will complete a research project and presentation.	2 weeks
Unit 3: Swing, Big Band, and Orchestral Jazz	Students will explore how Swing and Big Band music developed. Students will learn about the symphonic fusion of Orchestral Jazz and craft a research paper on the evolution of these genres.	2 weeks

Unit 4: Post-WWII Teen Culture	Students will explore how the teen culture of the end of the Second World War led to the proliferation of early Rock (Rock 'n' Roll). Students will learn about how Rhythm and Blues influenced this new genre and how race played a role in the transition. Students will complete a research project and presentation.	2 weeks
Unit 5: Protest Music, Folk, and Folk Rock	Students will explore the elements of a protest song. Students will learn how Folk Rock evolved from American Folk and blended with Rock. Students will explore how early Folk Rock artists used their music to protest systemic issues. Students will create their own protest songs with a partner and engage in a class discussion about the role of art in protest.	3 weeks
Unit 6: The British Invasion	Students will learn about how early Rock and Surf Rock influenced British bands like the Beatles. Students will explore how British Rock (or "beat") bands dominated American teen culture in the 60s.	1 week
Unit 7: Psychedelic Rock and Anti-War Sentiment	Students will explore how Psychedelic Rock developed in tandem with the growing anti-war sentiment in the late 60s. Students will create their own music festival, an interdisciplinary project in which they need to budget and market, in addition to performing a musicological analysis.	2 weeks
Unit 8: Hard and Progressive (Prog) Rock	Students will understand how Hard and Progressive Rock evolved from the early Rock of the 60s. Students will understand how to aurally differentiate between these genres.	2 weeks
Unit 9: Disco and Funk	Students will explore how the underground genre of Disco started in Queer, Latine, and Black communities in cities like New York. Students will learn about how Disco went mainstream and influenced later genres like 80s dance pop and even contemporary popular dance music.	2 weeks
Unit 10: The Music of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic	Students will explore how the political and social climate of the U.S. in the early 80s allowed HIV to proliferate. Students will examine how the Queer community was affected by this epidemic and how popular music influenced this community's sense of belonging.	2 weeks
Unit 11: Popular Music of the 80s	Students will explore the dominant artists and their sound in the 80s. Students will track the influence of earlier genres like Disco through the musical vocabulary of	2 weeks

	80s popular artists. Students will complete a research project on an 80s artist of their choice.	
Unit 12: Hip-Hop	Students will explore how Hip-Hop developed. Students will learn about the diasporic influence of Jamaican immigrants in Brooklyn. Students will trace the evolution of Hip-Hop through Gangsta Rap, Bling Rap, and Contemporary Hip-Hop. Students will explore how female rappers and producers had an outsized influence on the trajectory of the genre compared to other genres. Students will complete a research project and presentation.	4 weeks
Unit 13: The American Musical	Students will learn about how the musical developed in the U.S. Students will explore the influence of European genres as well as American genres like Vaudeville and Minstrelsy on the Musical. Students will watch Hairspray (2007) and craft an essay about how this musical addresses race, gender, and body image.	3 weeks
Unit 14: Teen Pop in the 2000s and 2010s	Students will relate the teen culture of the 50s to the Teen Pop boom in the 21st century. Students will examine how record labels and artists were specifically targeting certain demographics with their lyrics and production.	3 weeks
Unit 15: The Streaming Revolution	Students will examine how music streaming services dramatically altered the landscape of the music industry. Students will compose an academic paper that examines the pros and cons of this shift in how music is distributed and consumed.	2 weeks
Unit 16: Music for Film, TV, and Video Games	Students will examine the history of film music in the U.S. and how it developed to later include TV and video games. Students will examine how race and class influenced this genre and led to a rather homogenous demographic who are producing, making, and scoring film, TV, and video games.	3 weeks
Final Project	Students will craft a 25-minute lesson plan on a genre we did not study during the year. Students will present their lesson and teach their peers.	1 week