



C-ID Descriptor

History of American Popular Music

Descriptor Details

- **Descriptor Title:** History of American Popular Music
- **C-ID Number:** 130
- **Units:** 3
- **Date of Last Revision:** 1/27/2026 11:43:31 PM GMT+0000

General Description

A survey/study of the popular music styles of America, including but not limited to jazz, rock, hip-hop, electronic popular music, country, and folk, including the social, political, and economic influence these styles have had on society.

Prerequisites

None

Corequisites

None

Advisories

None

Content

The topic of this course is broad, such that various styles of American popular music may be covered, including but not limited to: Blues, Jazz, Rock, Pop, Rock and Roll, Hip Hop, Electronic Popular Music, Country, and Folk.

Studies of these styles should include:

- History, evolution, and influences
- Musical elements and terminologies such as: Melody, Rhythm, Texture, Timbre, Harmony, Expression, Form, Text
- Relation to historical and cultural contexts
- Technological influences
- Critical listening

Lab Activities

No information provided

Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Understand the evolution and features of American popular music styles
- Understand the interrelationship between music, culture, the music business and technology
- Aurally distinguish styles of American popular music

Evaluation Methods

Students will be evaluated for progress in and/or mastery of student learning outcomes using methods of evaluation which may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Oral or written reports/presentations designed to evaluate the individual student's cognition of specific course topics.
- Quizzes/examinations designed to evaluate student progress and knowledge in course topics.
- Class and/or individual projects designed to evaluate student understanding of basic music knowledge and the history of the music of America.
- Assess student understanding through participation and discussions of specific course topics.

Textbooks

- David Brackett, *The Pop, Rock, and Soul Reader: Histories and Debates*
- Larry Starr & Christopher Waterman, *American Popular Music: From Minstrelsy to mp3*
- Elizabeth Barkley, *Crossroads: The Multicultural Roots of America's Popular Music*
- Richard Crawford and Larry Hamberlin, *An Introduction to America's Music*
- John Covach and Andrew Flory, *What's That Sound: An Introduction to Rock and Its History*
- Rachel Rubin and Jeffrey Melnick (ed), *American Popular Music New Approaches to the Twentieth Century*
- Philip G. Simon, *A History of American Popular Music*
- Michael Campbell, *Popular Music in America: The Beat Goes On*
- Extensive use of related videos, audio recordings, and/or live performances