

# Syllabus: MUS 362 Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture – Spring Session A (2024) #14937, #14938

Staff: Prof. Jerry Rulon-Maxwell

**Contact Information:** Class E-mail: MusHipHop362@gmail.com

Students will use this email address for any questions or concerns. Office visits or telephone conferences may sometimes be necessary, and can be arranged via email.

Course URL: <http://hiphop.hol.asu.edu/>

**Required Text (ebook):**

Mook, Rulon-Maxwell, ed. *Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture*, Third Edition. ISBN: 9781465295736

Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt, 2015.

Purchase direct from publisher here:

<https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/rap-music-and-hip-hop-culture>

This book is required, and you will be tested on information from readings and listening guides. You may also purchase the ebook from the ASU Bookstore.

Students are also encouraged to purchase and read Strunk and White, *The Elements Of Style*, if they have not done so already. All assignment answers, student emails, and any other writings for this course should follow the rules of English composition explained in Strunk.

**Listening Assignments:** Our listening assignments for this term will be streamed from the ASU library system. To access our listening assignments, follow these instructions:

- Go to: <http://lib.asu.edu/access/reserves/>
- Click “Find Reserves By Course”
- Enter “MUS362” (no spaces)
- Select “MUS362 Hip Hop Streaming Audio”
- Select “MUS362 HipHop” on the left
- Click the box that reads “Click here to view to accept the copyright policy above and listen to the streaming audio.”

**Course Description:** This upper-division course has three objectives: first, it will introduce students to the general history of rap music from its origins to about 2007. This broad overview will include discussions of most, but not all, of the major artists from this period. Second, we will explore connections between the rap music and the other elements of hip hop culture. Third, this course will challenge students to think critically about rap music and its place in society. We will use listening exercises, demonstrations, and conversations with artists to examine how rappers create meaning in their musical works. Drawing on secondary articles by rap critics and scholars, we will consider in detail such controversial subjects as censorship, sexism, obscenity, and race politics in America as they relate to rap music. No previous musical experience is required.

**Workload:** Students should expect to devote at least 20 hours to each unit of this course. As noted below, student obligations include listening assignments, readings, recorded lectures, demonstrations, and interviews, videos, tests, and optional discussion postings.

**Technical Requirements:** Access to a **high-speed Internet connection** is required to take this course. Access to a **non-wireless, high-speed Internet connection** is strongly encouraged for test taking to avoid any internet connectivity issue. Please do not attempt to take the exams on a smartphone. There will be several video clips and a few video presentations lasting 30 to 40 minutes. The examinations may include audio and still images. Adequate bandwidth is essential.

**Offensive Materials Disclaimer:** Every effort is made to limit explicit or potentially offensive content in this class without ignoring essential issues in the history of rap music. This is not always possible when the title of a song or recording, or the lyric within that song or recording may include explicit or culturally sensitive language. In this course, you will be required to listen to, view, and analyze obscene and offensive materials, including language and imagery that is obscene, sexist, homophobic, or racist, and descriptions of sexual conduct and violence. We do not intend in any way to offend, nor do we as the content and technical team, the School of Music, the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, or Arizona State University share in the opinions of the musicians and their songs that may offend. Nonetheless, because these materials speak to issues and controversies in the history of rap music that are essential to this course, no suitable substitutions are available for them, and none will be provided. By continuing with this course, you are agreeing to be held academically accountable for all required materials in the syllabus, regardless of their offensive nature. Students who are unwilling either to hear or think critically about such material are encouraged to drop this course at their discretion.



**Grading: The final grade will be based on an accumulated score of 1000 points. Points can be earned as follows:**

**Vocabulary Quiz -----120 Points**

**Unit 1: Midterm Examination 1 – 200 Points**

**Unit 2: Midterm Examination 2 – 200 Points**

**Unit 3: Midterm Examination 3 – 200 Points**

**Unit 4: Final Examination -----280 Points**

#### **Grading Scale**

**895-1000 = A**

**795-894 = B**

**695-794 = C**

**595-694 = D**

**Below 595 = E**

**Final grades will be calculated by totaling the actual points earned on the exams and the quiz, and then dividing this score by 10. There are no other grading curves available for this course.**

### **EXAM AND QUIZ START/END DATES AND TIMES**

**Vocabulary Quiz: Opens MONDAY, 1/8/24 at 10am and closes on WEDNESDAY, 1/17/24 at 11:59pm**

**Midterm Exam 1: Opens MONDAY, 1/22/24 at 10am and closes on TUESDAY, 1/23/24 at 11:59pm**

**Midterm Exam 2: Opens MONDAY, 2/5/24 at 10am and closes on TUESDAY, 2/6/24 at 11:59pm**

**Midterm Exam 3: Opens MONDAY, 2/19/24 at 10am and closes on TUESDAY, 2/20/24 at 11:59pm**

**Final Examination: Opens MONDAY, 2/26/24 at 10am, closes on TUESDAY, 2/27/24 at 11:59pm**

**Please note that course website materials will not be available during the ENTIRE open exam periods, not just when YOU are logged into the test. You will not be able to access any lectures, videos, readings, or other course materials on the website during exams. The times given are for the Arizona time zone.**

**Exams and Quizzes:** All exams and quizzes will be taken online through the course website. Do not be strongly discouraged to use a wireless internet connection when taking exams or quizzes. Do so at your own risk. Use the “practice test” immediately before each exam and quiz to verify that your computer is properly configured.

**Vocabulary Quiz:** There will be one vocabulary quiz worth 120 points. It will test you on terms covered in Unit 1, Section 1 of the course (“Basic Vocabulary”). The quiz will have 10 questions, worth 12 points each. You may log onto the quiz and view the questions as many times as needed during the five-day open window, however the system will only allow you to submit once. No resets will be granted for this quiz, and there will be no makeup assignments or quizzes offered or allowed to cover the points should you fail to submit the quiz.

**Exams:** There will be four (4) exams during the semester: three non-cumulative midterms and one cumulative final exam. The final exam will also contain questions pertaining to the historical and audio information from the Unit 4 listening list. Be sure to use your listening guides in the textbook for proper study. See the calendar for dates. There will be 40 questions on each exam, and you will have 40 minutes for each exam. Exceeding this time limit will result in the loss of 2 points for each additional minute used. The exams are worth points as follows:

**Exam 1 (non-cumulative): 200 points (5 points for each question)**

**Exam 2 (non-cumulative): 200 points (5 points for each question)**

**Exam 3 (non-cumulative): 200 points (5 points for each question)**

**Exam 4 (cumulative): 280 points (7 points per question)**

Each exam will include questions about readings, recorded lectures, and listening examples. **Course content will be unavailable during the entire exam period.** You will not be able to access any lectures, videos, readings, or other course materials on the website during the exams.

**Exam Reviews:** You may access the questions that you missed on your exam via the “Grades” link on our website beginning two days after the exam closes. Correct answers from tests and the vocabulary quiz **CANNOT** be provided. If you are surprised or concerned about your exam grade, please contact the course email address. We are happy to consult with you about study and testing strategies in this course.

**Discussion Board Postings [Extra Credit]:** Students may also earn credit for up to six (6) substantive, original postings to the class discussion board during the semester. Each posting will be based on a question on the thread, which you will respond to related to the readings in the textbook. Any additional postings will not receive credit. Only one posting per discussion thread will receive credit. Discussion postings will not be accepted via email, or after the discussion thread has closed. A link to the discussion board can be found on your course web site. These postings will be viewed as class extra credit and are worth 20 points each for a maximum of 120 points. There will be 13 discussion topics to choose from. These points will be added to your final grade. For example, if your final test points totaled 760 points (a “C”), and you responded to 4 discussion board questions, your final grade would be 84 (a “B”). Postings that are insubstantial or redundant will not be given credit.

**Discussion Board Schedule:** There will be 13 discussion board threads this semester. They will open and close as follows:

**Discussion Board Schedule (postings close at 11:30pm)**

The Original Essence of the Dance	1/8/24 – 1/22/24
The Politics of Graffiti	1/8/24 – 1/22/24
Mix and Scratch	1/8/24 – 1/22/24
Rupture, Layering, Flow, and Groove	1/8/24 – 1/22/24
Puerto Rocks	1/8/24 – 1/22/24
Never Trust a Big Butt and a Smile	1/22/24 – 2/5/24
Scoring a Black Nation	1/22/24 – 2/5/24
Looking for the Real Ni**a	1/22/24 – 2/5/24
Check Yo Self Before You Wreck Yo Self	1/22/24 – 2/5/24
Black Empires, White Desires	2/5/24 – 2/27/24
Represent	2/5/24 – 2/27/24
Men, Women, and Turntables	2/5/24 – 2/27/24
Elements of Style	2/5/24 – 2/27/24

**Exam Resets:**

If you experience computer or technical problems during an exam, DO NOT SUBMIT IT! Exams that have been submitted can NOT be reset, and those grades will stand as posted. Instead, exit the browser, and take appropriate steps to identify and solve the problem with your computer (by using the practice test, moving to a different computer, or contacting technical support). Once you have resolved the problem, then return to the exams page on your course web site to reset your exam. Use the practice test again before taking the reset. The system will allow you to reset your own exam if you have not already submitted or reset that exam. NOTE: only one online reset per exam is allowed, so you must take all reasonable steps to resolve any technical difficulties before attempting the reset. Two total resets are allowed for the semester. No resets will be allowed outside of the exam period.

**Make Up Exams:**

Make up exams will only be allowed in **documented cases of bereavement or hospitalization**. If one of these unfortunate circumstances befalls you, please notify Professor Rulon-Maxwell within 1 week (7 days) of the exam and be prepared to present documentation of your reason for missing the exam. No make-up exams will be given to students who “miss” or “forget to take” an exam, encounter work or transportation conflicts, do not follow the technical support guidelines outlined above, or do not notify Professor Rulon-Maxwell of an illness or bereavement within 1 week of the test. **Do not submit false documentation.**

**Technical Support:**

Please do not contact your instructor with technical questions. Herberger Online handles all technical questions and issues that may arise in this course. **Please contact the support team immediately if you encounter technical issues while completing an assignment and you are unable to resolve the problem and reset your work.** The Herberger Online support team is available to assist you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You may reach them anytime at:

- holsupport@asu.edu
  - 1-888-298-4117
  - 480-965-3057 (International)
- When contacting support, please provide:
- The full name of this course (ABC 123: Long Name)
  - The title(s) of any assignment(s) you’re having trouble with
  - A brief description of the problem
  - Detailed, step-by-step instructions to reproduce the problem

**Confirmation Numbers:**

All submitted exams and assignments are given a confirmation number via a submission results page if the submission is successful. It is your responsibility to print or write out each confirmation number you receive for each exam or assignment you submit. Inquires about missing grades sent to faculty, staff, or to the help page will be ignored if they do not have the confirmation number(s) for the exam/posts in question.

**Technical Minimums:**

Because this course is entirely delivered via the Internet, you are responsible for making sure that the computer you use to access all course materials meets or exceeds the specified computer minimum qualifications as listed on the course web site. Also, due to the high media content of this course, you will be required to set up and configure a media player that will consistently play the Mp3 files and the Mp4 digital clips delivered via the course web site. **Access to a high-speed Internet connection is required to take this course.** There will be several video clips and a few video presentations lasting 30 to 40 minutes. The examinations will include audio and still images.

Adequate bandwidth is essential. If using a mouse with a “scroll wheel,” please use caution when taking exams. The exams have “pull down” menus, and using the scroll wheel can sometimes result in answers being changed accidentally.

Finally, please **use headphones or stereo speakers** when listening to musical examples. Built-in computer speakers offer poor sound quality (very little bass!), and may reduce scores on assignments.

**PLEASE NOTE!** You are strongly encouraged not to enroll, or to drop immediately, if you do not have computer experience, if you are not willing or prepared to assume the added responsibility of a computer-based course, or if you plan to be away from a computer site with internet access for an extended period of time during the semester. Necessary required skills include downloading mp3 audio files as well as digital video clips, surfing the net, conferring via email, and other intermediate computer knowledge.

#### **Policy Requiring Academic Integrity and Against Plagiarism:**

Under the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy (<http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>), “[e]ach student must act with honesty and integrity, and must respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments.” This policy also defines academic dishonesty and sets a process for faculty members and colleges to sanction dishonesty. Violations of this policy fall into five broad areas that include but are not limited to:

- Cheating on an academic evaluation or assignments
- Plagiarizing
- Academic deceit, such as fabricating data or information
- Aiding Academic Integrity Policy violations and inappropriately collaborating
- Falsifying academic records

I sanction any incidents of academic dishonesty in my courses using University and HIDA guidelines. Should you have any question about whether or not something falls subject to this clause, feel free to contact me or review the university policy on academic integrity at the above link.

No collaboration or use of outside sources of any kind is allowed on any tests, assignments, etc. This includes viewing the course website while taking the exam, listening to audio excerpts on another student's exam, discussing the exam with another student before taking it, and other such behavior. The exams are not open-book or open-note. All words and ideas included in your work that are not your own must be cited. Students **MUST** refrain from uploading to the discussion board material that is not the student's original work, unless the students first comply with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement.

Any violation of this policy will result in sanctions and may result in further disciplinary action. Sanctions may include failure of the course (E), failure by reason of academic dishonesty (XE), and others as outlined by the ASU policy. All violations of the Code detected during the term will be sanctioned, even if the assessment has already been graded and points assigned.

Do not share your course ID and password with anyone. Log out of the course website when you are finished with it. Do not allow another student to use the course website under your password, even if s/he is also in the course. Each student is fully responsible for all activity that takes place on the course website under his/her password.

#### **Policy Against Threatening Behavior:**

Self-discipline and a respect for the rights of others in the classroom or studio and university community are necessary for a conducive learning and teaching environment. Threatening or violent behavior will result in the administrative withdrawal of the student from the class. Disruptive behavior may result in the removal of the student from the class.

**Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation** - Including the fact that the instructor is a mandated reporter and therefore obligated to report any information regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination. Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students, contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information. As an employee of ASU, I am a mandated reporter and obligated to report instances of reported or suspected incidences of sexual harassment.

#### **Special Accommodations:**

To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the ASU Disability Resource Center (Phone: (480) 965-1234; TDD : (480) 965-9000). This is a very important step as accommodations cannot be made retroactively. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me no later than the end of the first week of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need in this class. Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Students should contact the Disability Resource Center on the campus that your class is being held. Campus-specific location and contact information can be found on the DRC website.

**Accommodation for Religious Practices:**

Students may be excused for the observance of religious holidays. Students should notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester about the need to be absent from class due to religious observances. Students will be responsible for materials covered during their absence and should consult with the instructor to arrange reasonable accommodation for missed exams or other required assignments. A list of recognized religious holidays may be found at: [www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/interfaith/religious\\_holidays.htm](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/interfaith/religious_holidays.htm)  
Students who will experience exam conflicts while observing any of these holidays must notify Professor Rulon-Maxwell within the first 3 weeks of class to arrange for accommodation.

**IMPORTANT! Title IX Law and Reporting Policy:**

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <http://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs/students>.

**Adding, Dropping, and Withdrawing**

The following dates have been established by the University and the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts; Professor Rulon-Maxwell cannot make exceptions to them or change them.

January 8th, 2024 - Session A – Classes begin

January 9th, 2024 – Last Day to Register or Drop/Add Without College Approval

January 14th, 2024 - Tuition & Fees 100% Refund Deadline

January 26th, 2024 - Course Withdrawal Deadline - In Person & Online

January 15th, 2024 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday observed - **Classes excused/University Closed**

February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - Complete Withdrawal Deadline – In Person & Online

February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - Last Day of Classes and Last Day to Process Transactions

***PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR UNIT SCHEDULE AND  
BREAKDOWN ->***

## Unit schedule and breakdown

### **1st Quarter - Unit 1: Origins and Emergence / Hearing Musical Style**

#### Lecture Segments:

Vocabulary  
Afro-Diasporic Roots  
Early Emergence  
Old School  
Aesthetics: Rupture and Flow  
Excerpts from “Style Wars” and “Wild Style”

#### Readings:

1. Joseph Schloss, “The Original Essence of the Dance”
2. Craig Castleman, “The Politics of Graffiti”
3. Mark Katz “Mix and Scratch – The Turntable Becomes a Musical Instrument 1975-1978”
4. Felicia Miyakawa, “Rupture, Layering, Flow, and Groove”
5. Listening Guides (Paired with Unit 1 listening list)

#### Listening:

Suso - “Kuruntu Kallafa”  
The Last Poets - “Just Because”  
Rudy Rae Moore, -“Signifying Monkey”  
Incredible Bongo Band – “Apache”  
The Sex Pistols – “Anarchy in the UK”  
James Brown - “Papa’s got a Brand New Bag”  
Parliament -“Give Up The Funk”  
Chic - “Good Times”  
Kraftwerk - “Trans Europe Express”  
The Fatback Band – “King Tim III (Personality Jock)”  
Grandmaster Flash - “Flash Got More Bounce”  
Funky Four Plus One - “Rappin’ and Rocking the House”  
The Sugar Hill Gang - “Rapper’s Delight”  
Afrika Bambaataa & The Soul Sonic Force - “Planet Rock”  
Kurtis Blow – “The Breaks”  
Spoonie Gee and The Sequence - “Monster Jam”  
Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five - “The Message”  
Grandmaster Flash and Melle Mel - “White Lines”

### **2nd Quarter – Unit 2: New School / Reading Music Scholarship**

#### Lecture Segments:

New School Emerges  
New School Develops  
Battles  
Reading Scholarship  
Discourse  
Summary  
Videos by Afrika Bambaataa and Run DMC

#### Readings:

1. Online – Excerpt from “College Thinking” (in Unit 2, segment 4)
2. Juan Flores. “Puerto Rocks”
3. Tricia Rose, “Never Trust a Big Butt and a Smile”
4. Guthrie P. Ramsey, “Scoring a Black Nation”
5. Listening Guides (Paired with Unit 2 listening list)

#### Listening:

Run DMC – “It’s Like That”  
Whodini – “Five Minutes of Funk”  
Run DMC – “Rock Box”  
The Fat Boys – “Jailhouse Rap”  
Schooly-D – “P.S.K. ‘What Does it Mean?’”  
Salt-N-Pepa – “Tramp”  
Ice-T – “6 in the Mornin’”  
Kool Moe Dee – “Go See The Doctor”  
LL Cool J – “I Need Love”  
Biz Markee – “Just A Friend”  
Young MC – “Bust a Move”  
LL Cool J – “Mama Said Knock You Out”  
DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince – “Summertime”

### **3rd Quarter – Unit 3: Gangstas, Politics, Musical Meaning**

Lectures:

New Styles and Artists  
Authenticity: Salary or Reality?  
Government Concerns  
Media Representations  
Who's In Charge? Objectification and Subjectification In Rap  
Video Excerpts - "Hip Hop: A Culture of Influence"

Readings:

1. Robin D.G. Kelly, "Looking for the Real Ni\*\*a"
2. Todd Boyd, "Check Yo Self Before You Wreck Yo Self"
3. Davarian L. Baldwin, "Black Empires, White Desires"
4. Listening Guides (Paired with Unit 3 listening examples)

Listening:

Toddy Tee – "The Batteram"  
N.W.A – "Boyz-N-The-Hood"  
N.W.A. – "Fuck Tha Police"  
N.W.A. – "Gangsta Gangsta"  
Public Enemy – "Night of the Living Baseheads"  
Queen Latifah – "The Evil That Men Do"  
De La Soul, feat. Jungle Brothers, Q-Tip, Phife, Queen Latifah, Monie Love - "Buddy"  
2 Live Crew – "Me So Horny"  
Ice Cube – "The Nigga Ya Love To Hate"  
Public Enemy – "Fight The Power"  
Brand Nubian – "All For One"  
Kid Frost – "La Raza"  
Dr. Dre, feat. Snoop Doggy Dogg – "Rat-Tat-Tat-Tat"  
Dr. Dre, feat. Snoop Doggy Dogg – "The Day The Niggaz Took Over"

**4th Quarter – Unit 4: Final review and Unit 4 listening examples (which will be included in the final exam as well)**

Lectures:

Contemporary Styles and listening examples for the final exam  
Approaches to Analysis  
Conclusion and review for the final exam

Readings:

1. Murray Forman, "Represent"
2. Mark Katz, "Men, Women, and Turntables: Gender and the DJ battle"
3. Joseph Schloss, "Elements of Style: Aesthetics of Hip Hop composition"
4. Richard Mook, "Civil Disobedience"
4. Listening Guides (Paired with Unit 4 listening list)

Listening:

Junior Mafia, feat. Little Caesar, Lil' Kim, and The Notorious B.I.G. – "Get Money"  
Busta Rhymes – "Woo Hah!! Got You All In Check"  
Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliott – "The Rain (Supa Dupa Fly)"  
Black Star (Mos Def & Talib Kweli)– "Definition"  
Method Man and Redman – "Da Rockwilder"  
Eminem – "The Real Slim Shady"  
Jay Z and UGK – "Big Pimpin'"  
NAS – "Ether"  
Dilated Peoples – "Worst Comes To Worst"  
The Roots w/ Cody Chesnutt – "The Seed (2.0)"  
OutKast – "Hey Ya! Radio Mix/Club Mix"  
50 Cent – "In Da Club"  
Lil Wayne – "Go DJ"  
Kanye West – "Gold Digger"