**The Beatles: Their Music and Their Times**

**Spring 2015**

Course no. MUSC 422  
Section no. 47220D  
Units: 4  
Time: MW 4 – 5:50 pm  
Room: THH 202

Course instructor: Bill Biersach  
Instructor’s office: MUS 316  
Instructor’s office hours: MW 9 – 10:30 am  
Office phone: (213) 740-7416  
Instructor’s email: biersach@usc.edu

Teaching assistants: Julia Adolphe and Matt Dievendorf

**Introduction and Purpose**

The purpose of this course is to familiarize the student with the music, lyrics, recordings, personal and public lives, production techniques, career strategy, social ramifications, and technological impact of the musical group known as The Beatles. The goal is to imbue the student with an appreciation for the music itself, a basic understanding of the primitive technology available at the time (both recording and playing back), and a broader comprehension of the social, economic, political, and cultural upheavals that gave rise to the musical trends of the Sixties.

**Instructional Strategy**

Each week the professor will present a lecture which will include musical examples, lyrics, and pertinent background information on the four Beatles, their personal and professional dealings, their approach to live performance and studio recording, and the activities of their managerial and production staff.

There will also be a section devoted to the viewing of films, pertinent film clips, documentaries, and discussion of the texts led by the teaching assistants.

Typically lectures will be on Mondays and the discussions on Wednesdays.

**Grades**

The course grade will be determined by averaging the three exam scores (33.33 percent + 33.33 percent +33.34 percent).
Each midterm and the final exam will have two parts. The first part will be written by the professor and will be based on the lectures. The second part will be written by the teaching assistants and will be based on films, documentaries, the texts, and the discussions regarding them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-63%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0-59%</td>
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**Texts**

The required texts this semester will be:


**Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP:

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

**Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook,
(www.usc.edu/scampus or http://scampus.usc.edu) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

**Emergency Preparedness in a Crisis**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

**Schedule of Lecture Topics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture MONDAY</th>
<th>Discussion WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>Topic/Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Jan. 19</td>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
<td>Liverpool, Hamburg</td>
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<td></td>
<td>[Holiday]</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jan. 26</td>
<td>Jan. 28</td>
<td>Please Please Me Friday, Feb. 1st Last day to drop without “W”, P/NP, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Feb. 2</td>
<td>Feb. 4</td>
<td><em>With the Beatles/A Hard Day’s Night</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Feb. 9</td>
<td>Feb. 11</td>
<td><em>A Hard Day’s Night/Beatles for Sale</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Feb. 16</td>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
<td><em>Help!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Holiday]</td>
<td>1st Midterm Exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Feb. 23</td>
<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Help!!Rubber Soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Mar. 2</td>
<td>Mar. 4</td>
<td>Rubber Soul/Revolver</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mar. 9</td>
<td>Mar. 11</td>
<td>Revolver/”Strawberry Fields Forever”/”Penny Lane”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Mar. 16</td>
<td>Mar. 18</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Mar. 23</td>
<td>Mar. 25</td>
<td>Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Mar. 30</td>
<td>Apr. 1</td>
<td>Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band cont’d.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Apr. 6</td>
<td>Apr. 8</td>
<td>Magical Mystery Tour/Yellow Submarine</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Friday, Apr. 12 Last day to drop with “W”</td>
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</table>
15. Apr. 20 Apr. 22  *The Beatles* (“The White Album”) cont’d
   *Let It Be* (“Get Back”)

16. Apr. 27 Apr. 29  *Abbey Road*

17. May 6 Wednesday  FINAL EXAM — 4:30-6:30 pm

**Bibliography**

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Signet (McGraw-Hill), New York, 1983
ISBN 0-415-12797-8

Byrne, David  *How Music Works*
McSweeney’s, San Francisco, 2012

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ISBN 0-07-011789-6

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ISBN 0-8230-7608-3

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Billboard Publications, New York, 1989
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Rolling Stone Press, New York, 19981
Garofalo, Reebee  

Gitlin, Todd  
*The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*  
Bantam Books, New York, 1987  
ISBN 0-553-05233-0

Gunthur, Curt  
*The Beatles ’64: A Hard Day’s Night in America*  
Doubleday, New York, 1989  
ISBN 0-385-24583-1

Larson, Thomas E.  
*History of Rock & Roll*  

Lefcowitz, Eric  
*Tomorrow Never Knows: The Beatles Last Concert*  
Terra Firma Books, San Francisco, 1987  
ISBN 0-943249-02-3

Lewisohn, Mark  
*The Beatles Recording Sessions*  
Harmony Books (Crown Publishers), New York, 1989  
ISBN 0-517-57066-1

Martin, George  
*All You Need Is Ears*  
St. Martin’s Press, New York, 1979  
ISBN 3-312-02044-9

McDonald, Ian  
ISBN 978-1-55652-733-3

Norman, Philip  
*Shout! The Beatles in Their Generation*  

Pattison, Robert  
*The Triumph of Vulgarity: Rock Music in the Mirror of Romanticism*  
Oxford University Press, New York, 1981  

Riley, Tim  
*Tell Me Why*  
Vintage Books, New York, 1988  
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Runstein, Robert E. and Huber, David M.</td>
<td><em>Modern Recording Techniques</em></td>
<td>Howard W. Sam &amp; Co., Indianapolis</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>0-672-22451-8</td>
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<td>Wenner, Jann</td>
<td><em>Lennon Remembers</em></td>
<td>Straight Arrow Publishers, San Francisco</td>
<td>1971</td>
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