The Beatles: Their Music and Their Times

Fall 2017
Course no. MUSC 422
Section no. 47220
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:
   Mitch Thomas mitchelltomas.music@gmail.com
   Tamzin Elliott tamzinelliott7@gmail.com

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.
Examinations and Grades

There will be three examinations: two midterms and a final. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions on Scantron answer sheets. In addition, students will circle the answers in the examination question booklets as a backup.

The Scantrons will be graded by computer, and Blackboard will add your three scores and determine your final grade based on the following ranges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>Maximum Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>134</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>126</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>95</td>
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</table>

The second midterm and final examination will be non-cumulative.

Texts

The required texts this semester will be:


The Beatles
Schedule of Lecture Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture MONDAY</th>
<th>Discussion WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>Lecture Topic/Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Aug. 21</td>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
<td>Preliminaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Aug. 29</td>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td>Early years</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Sept. 4 (Holiday)</td>
<td>Sept. 6</td>
<td><em>Please Please Me</em></td>
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</table>

Sept. 8 – Last Day to Drop or Change
1. Sept. 11  Sept. 13  *With the Beatles*
2. Sept. 18  Sept. 20  *A Hard Day’s Night*
3. Sept. 25  Sept. 27  *Beatles for Sale*
4. Oct. 2    Oct. 4     *Help!*
5. Oct. 9    Oct. 11   *Rubber Soul*
6. Oct. 16   Oct. 18   *Revolver*
7. Oct. 23   Oct. 25   “Strawberry Fields/Penny Lane”
8. Oct. 31   Nov. 2    *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*
9. Nov. 7    Nov. 9    *Magical Mystery Tour/Yellow Submarine*
10. Nov. 14  Nov. 16  *The Beatles*
11. Nov. 21  Nov. 23  *The Beatles/Get Back*
12. Nov. 28  Nov. 30  *Abbey Road*
13. Dec. 7   **FINAL EXAMINAION, Wednesday, 4:30 – 6:30**

**Devices - Texting**

Studies show that the use of cell phones, ipads, laptop computers, and other digital communication devices distract students from the subject at hand. Therefore their use will not be allowed in this class. Notes are to be taken by hand.

If you have a special need that requires use of a laptop computer, notify the professor. You will be required to sit in the front row.

**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. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776, http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html.

**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, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

**The University’s Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct:**
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in Scampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in Scampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

**Support Systems:**
- **Student Counseling Services (SCS)** - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
  Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** - 1-800-273-8255
  Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

- **Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)** - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call
  Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/

- **Sexual Assault Resource Center**
  For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: http://sarc.usc.edu/
Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. [https://equity.usc.edu/](https://equity.usc.edu/)

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/)

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. [https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/](https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/)

Diversity at USC – [https://diversity.usc.edu/](https://diversity.usc.edu/)
Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students

**Bibliography (books consulted while creating this course)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Byrne, David</td>
<td><em>How Music Works</em></td>
<td>McSweeney’s, San Francisco</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>978-1-938073-53-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editors of <em>Billboard</em></td>
<td><em>Rock Movers and Shakers</em></td>
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</table>
Editors of *Rolling Stone*  
*The Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock and Roll*  

Editors of *Rolling Stone*  
*The Rolling Stone Interviews, 1967-1980*  
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

Lefcowitz, Eric  
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Terra Firma Books, San Francisco, 1987  
ISBN 0-943249-02-3

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

Riley, Tim  
*Tell Me Why*


