

Iconic Figures of Popular Music: The Grateful Dead

Fall 2019

Course no. MUSC 424

Section no. 47225

Units: 2

Time: Mondays 10:00-11:50pm

Room: KDC 241

Course instructor: Bill Biersach

Instructor's office: MUS 316

Instructor's office hours: M 9 – 9:50 am; 2 – 3 pm

Office phone: (213) 740-7416

Instructor's email: biersach@usc.edu

The Premise

The Grateful Dead were not just a band, or a musical institution, but a way of life—a way of life for the band members who worked and lived closely together for decades, and also for many “Dead Heads” who have molded their musical and personal lives over the years around the activities of the band. The band is probably most noted for their live performances, of which there are volumes and volumes, with lost tapes emerging all the time. Their official discography includes 130 albums, most of them live performances or compilations, but also 17 studio albums. The primary member about which the band formed and progressed was lead guitarist Jerry Garcia. Not only was his playing exemplary, but his guitars themselves with their intricate connections and electronics are legendary in their own right; as were the band's legendary and revolutionary concert sound systems. Definitely a band worth examining and exploring.

Course Goal

In the course of this semester, we will scrutinize eleven of their albums, eight studio and three live. Students will be divided into small groups who will listen to these albums, make judgments as to the strengths and weaknesses of the tracks, also relevancy, and present their findings to the class. Meanwhile, we will be reading and discussing two books by group insiders, in hopes of gleaning insights into what made this band tick.

My goal is to guide my students as they come to grips with this cache of music, but in their own time frame and on their own terms. If indeed the Grateful Dead were the musical geniuses many claim them to be, then let us see if their tracks hold up today. There can be no doubt of their relevance to an older generation; let us see if they are speaking to us today.

Grades

Grades will be based on the following:

Weekly assignments (written discussion points based on the texts)	25 Points
Oral presentations (album reviews)	25 Points
Three essay exams	25 Points
Class participation	25 Points

Scores for course grade will be tabulated as follows:

94 - 100	A
90 - 93	A-
87 - 89	B+
84 - 86	B
80 - 83	B-
77 - 79	C+
74 - 76	C
70 - 73	C-
67 - 69	D+
64 - 66	D
60 - 63	D-
0 - 59	F

Texts

Required:

McNally, Dennis. *A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the Grateful Dead*. Broadway Books, New York, 2002. ISBN: 0-7679-1186-5 (Pbk.).

Skully, Rock. *Living with the Dead: Twenty Years on the Bus with Garcia and the Grateful Dead*. Cooper Square Press, New York, 2001. ISBN: 0-8154-1163-4 (Pbk.).

Recommended, not required:

Dodd, David (annotated by). *The Complete Annotated Grateful Dead Lyrics*. Free Press, New York, 2005. ISBN: 0-7432-7749-X (Pbk.).

Jackson, Blair. *Grateful Dead Gear*. Backbeat Books, San Francisco, 2006. ISBN 13: 978-0-87930-893-3. (Pbk.).

Lesh, Phil. *Searching for the Sound: My Life with the Grateful Dead*. Back Bay Books, New York, 2005. ISBN 13: 978-0-316-15449-9 (Pbk.).

THE GRATEFUL DEAD— —REVISED
Schedule of Album Presentations and Reading Assignments

Fall 2019

WEEK	ALBUM	DATE	Dennis McNally <i>Long Strange Trip</i>	Rock Scully <i>Living with the Dead</i>
1.	Preliminaires	Aug. 26		
2.	Holiday	Sept. 2		
3.	[1] <i>Anthem of the Sun</i> (1968)	Sept. 9 Sept. 7	Chpt. 1-5	Chpt. 1-2
			Last day to drop or add classes, or to change letter grade to P/NP, etc.	
4.	[2] <i>Two from the Vault</i> (1968)	Sept. 16	Chpt. 6-10	Chpt. 3-4
5.	[3] <i>Aoxomoxoa</i> (1969)	Sept. 23	Chpt. 11-15	Chpt. 5-6
6.	[4] <i>Live/Dead</i> (1969)	Sept. 30	Chpt. 16-20	Chpt. 7-8
7.	1ST MIDERM	Oct. 7 Oct. 5		
			Last day to drop w/o a "W," or to change P/NP to a letter grade.	
8.	[1] <i>Workingman's Dead</i> (1970) [2] <i>American Beauty</i> (1970)	Oct. 14	Chpt. 21-25	Chpt. 9-10
9.	[3] <i>Wake of the Flood</i> (1973)	Oct. 21	Chpt. 26-30	Chpt. 11-12
10.	[4] <i>From the Mars Hotel</i> (1974)	Oct. 28	Chpt. 31-35	Chpt. 13-14
11.	2ND MIDTERM	Nov. 4		
12.	[1] <i>Blues for Allah</i> (1975)	Nov. 11 Nov. 9	Chpt. 36-40	Chpt. 15-16
			Last day to drop with a "W"	
13.	[2] <i>Terrapin Station</i> (1977)	Nov. 18	Chpt. 41-45	Chpt. 17-18
14.	[3] <i>Shakedown Street</i> (1978)	Nov. 25 Thanksgiving Week	Chpt. 46-50	Chpt. 19-20
15.	[4] <i>In the Dark</i> (1987)	Dec. 2	Chpt. 51-54	Chpt. 21-22 and Afterword
16.	FINAL EXAM	Monday, Dec. 16	8:00 – 9:00 am (Yikes!)	

LAPTOP COMPUTERS, PRINTERS, AND CELL PHONES

It is expected that students in this class will have their own (or access to a) laptop computer for the giving of presentations and a printer for submitting assignments.

However, during class the professor asks that you not use your digital phones, laptops, and/or other communication devices. Studies show that the use of these devices tends to distract students from the subject under discussion.

Notes should be taken by hand.

If you wish to use a device to look up a fact under discussion, please request permission to do so, and put away the device immediately afterwards.

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/academicssupport/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/>

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/>

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/>

Diversity at USC – <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Tab for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students

- Greenfield, Robert *Dark Star: An Oral Biography of Jerry Garcia*
It Books, New York, 2009.
ISBN 978-0061715723 (Pbk.)
- Jackson, Blair *Grateful Dead Gear*
Backbeat Books, San Francisco, 2006.
ISBN 13: 978-0-87930-893-3. (Pbk.)
- Kubernick, Harvey *Canyon of Dreams:
The Magic and the Music of Laurel Canyon*
Sterling, New York, 2009
ISBN 978-1-4027-9761-3
- Larson, Thomas E. *History of Rock & Roll*
Kendall Hunt, Dubuque, 2012
ISBN 978-1524948696
- Lazell, Barry
(editor) *Rock Movers and Shakers*
Billboard Publications, New York, 1989
ISBN 0-8230-7608-3
- Leary, Timothy *The Politics of Ecstasy*
Ronin Publishing, Berkeley, 1990
ISBN 0-914171-33-X
- Lesh, Phil *Searchin for the Sound: My Life with the Grateful Dead*
Back Bay Books, New York, 2005.
ISBN 13: 978-0-316-15449-9 (Pbk.)
- McNally, Dennis *A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the
Grateful Dead*
Broadway Books, New York, 2002.
ISBN: 0-7679-1186-5 (Pbk.)
- Parles, John and
Romanowski, Patricia *The Rolling Stone Encyclopedia of Rock and Roll*
Rolling Stone Press, New York, 1983
ISBN 0-671-44071-3
- Pattison, Robert *The Triumph of Vulgarity:
Popular Music in the Mirror of Romanticism*
Oxford University Press, New York, 1987
ISBN 0-19-503876-2
- Pichaske, David *A Generation in Motion:*

Popular Music and the Culture of the Sixties
Ellis Press, Peoria, 1989
ISBN 0-944024-16-5

Rees, Dayfdd and
Crampton, Luke

VHI Rock Stars Encyclopedia
DK Adult, New York, 1999.
ISBN 978-0789446138

Schloss, Joseph G.,
Starr, Larry, and
Waterman, Christopher

Rock Music, Culture., and Business
Oxford University Press, New York, 2012
ISBN: 978-0-19-975836-4

Skully, Rock

*Living with the Dead: Twenty Years on the Bus
with Garcia and the Grateful Dead*
Cooper Square Press, New York, 2001
ISBN 978-0815411635

Taruskin, Richard and
Gibbs, Christopher H.

The Oxford History of Western Music, College Edition.
Oxford University Press, New York, 2013.
ISBN 978-0195097629.