

History of Hip Hop DANC 1013- 001
University of Utah

Instructor: Sara Pickett

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Schedule: Oct. 7-11th M-F, 8:00AM-5:00PM

Available hours: after class by appointment

Location: TBD

Text: There are no required textbooks for this class.

This course will incorporate **assigned readings** from various texts to aide topics of open forum discussion in class and will be available as pdf's through Canvas. The readings will be made available through Canvas weeks before the course begins. As part of the out-of-classroom requirements for this course, students are expected to have read all the material BEFORE the first day of instruction.

We will use the computer lab for some of the class (internet research, in-class writings, etc.). If you have a laptop you are welcome to use your own.

A. Course Catalog Description

This course is designed to introduce students to a basic understanding of hip-hop history and culture, and its elemental ties to art, spoken word, music and particularly dance. This course fulfills a Fine Arts Exploration (FF) and Diversity (DV) General Education Requirement.

B. Course Overview

This course is designed for undergraduate students who wish to examine and explore hip-hop culture, while developing background knowledge of hip-hop history from the early 1970's South Bronx to its national and international role today. This course will also utilize a movement component, where several classes will be devoted to spending time in the studio physicalizing styles of hip-hop dance.

Hip-hop is not only a form of dance or a genre of music, it is polycultural ...one that is very much alive and evolving today. Though hip-hop is relatively young in terms of its historical background, the cultural and artistic impact it has on each and every one of us is difficult to ignore. It holds strong ties to art, music and dance. Hip-hop has undergone a series of explosive transformations and evolutions, while also drawing from important social, political, and economic issues and challenges.

Other topics include (but are not limited to) hip-hop's root ties to elements of the African Diaspora, Latino/Puerto Rican/Dominican influences, commercialization and commodification of the hip-hop industry, feminism and its role within the emergence of female rap artists, issues on misogyny/homophobia within rap, sexual politics, legitimacy of the white rap artists, and hip-hop dance/theatre as performance.

Much of this course relies on open forum discussion, where questions presented by the instructor and the class aim to probe and dissect the reasoning within social, political, and economic factors/disparities that serve as prime movers for inciting change in the culture of hip-hop's evolution and history. This employs both groupthink critical reasoning and the developing of individual critical thinking skills. Students are encouraged to draw upon personal experiences or connections with material- or acknowledge the lack thereof, to form well-rounded perspectives and opinions while also taking into account diverse viewpoints

that may differ from their own. As we investigate and create theoretical discourses around these topics, the class will also be encouraged to give thought to the implications and consequences that historical events, cultural shifts, and social, political, and economic factors/disparities may have within the larger framework of hip-hop.

All work within this course will be conducted with the highest respect of others in an environment that welcomes risk-taking, supports students working outside of their normal comfort areas, invites discussion, independent and perhaps divergent opinions, and integrates experiential, creative and theoretical knowledge in order to come to a deep understanding of the subject.

This course contains adult material.

C. Course Goals/Objectives

1. Develop a base knowledge of the timeline of events within East Coast and West Coast hip-hop history.
2. Examine the foundational structures, concepts and forms within the roles of the DJ, MC, B-boy/B-girl, and Graf artist.
3. Identify key figures and innovators within the evolution of hip-hop and their influences on historical and cultural shifts.
4. Examine the social, political, and economic factors that contributed to and have impacted hip-hop history and culture.
5. Discuss contemporary theoretical issues surrounding hip-hop culture (i.e. racial stereotypes, issues of gender/homophobia/masculinity/misogyny in rap, feminism and sexual politics, commercialism of the Hip-Hop industry, etc.)
6. Create an environment that employs critical thinking skills in a communal forum, where students can respectfully analyze and dialogue about vital topics.

D. Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course the student will...

1. Acquire a clear understanding and familiarity with hip-hop history and culture.
2. Understand how hip-hop culture infuses each individual's personal experiences of social culture.
3. Identify the arts and aesthetics employed within hip-hop and analyze these through varying contexts.
4. Possess a familiarity with the social, political, and economic factors that have affected, influenced, and shaped historical and cultural contexts of hip-hop.
5. Investigate and develop a topic of interest within the scope of hip-hop through scholarly/creative research.

E. Teaching & Learning Methods

1. This course will be comprised of lectures/discussion in addition to supplemental video and audio materials to help enrich the scope and depth of concepts covered in class.
2. This course will include in-class writings/responses (quizzes) to the reading material to be handed in daily.
3. This course will also utilize several introductory dance/movement experiences throughout the week to help facilitate a well-rounded physical experience of various hip-hop dance styles.

F. Email: Each student is required to use their utah.edu e-mail address for information and correspondence on this course. This course will use Canvas and in-class discussions for all communication, handouts, and assignments.

G. Attendance Policy: This is a participation-based class and your attendance and active participation in class discussions is crucial to your success in this course.
Students must attend all 5 days of class to pass the course.

H. Requirements and Assignments:

Readings: This course includes 8 hours of out of classroom work. Six readings/articles will be on Canvas in the "Readings" folder under files. It is the student's responsibility to read and study them carefully and come to class prepared to discuss the material. There will be a schedule of readings that accompany discussion days. *Students are encouraged to read ALL of the articles BEFORE the week of class, as they will be time consuming.

In-class writings: Students will reflect daily on material covered in class lectures, discussions, videos and readings and write a two-page summary for the following sections of class:

1. Early influences/the birth of Hip Hop
2. The "Golden Age" of Hip Hop
3. The Gangsta and the 90's
4. 2000's and beyond

The format of these writings are flexible. The point is to **demonstrate comprehension** of ideas, important people, innovations, and events and an **ability to organize** the ideas in written form. The writing will not only offer a summary of the ideas covered, but will include **personal reflections** on the information presented. This is your chance to make connections to the material either within your own life, or to the larger art-world in general. This written work can be formatted in paragraphs, formal outlines, complete bulleted ideas, etc., *whichever works best for the student*. We will use the computer lab for this in-class writing and papers will be submitted through Canvas by the end of each class time.

Movement experiences:

Each student is expected to fully participate on movement experiences. These will be fun if you commit to trying your best with an open mind. Guest teachers will be present, and I expect them to be treated with the utmost respect. LOCATION FOR MOVEMENT EXPERIENCES WILL BE HELD IN THE MARRIOTT CENTER FOR DANCE.

We will dance every day. Students are encouraged to wear clothing that permits movement (shorts/sweats, t-shirts, sneakers). Bring water, wear clean shoes, no gum or large jewelry.

Element Identity: Each student will choose an element of hip-hop culture they would like to dive into more thoroughly. This should be something in hip-hop culture that speaks to you, that feels like it connects to your identity. This can be focused on turntablism, beat making, spoken language, movement derivatives, visual art or style or other if cleared by the instructor. Students will write a manifesto of sorts about what this element means to you and how you would use it to express your personal identity. Then create a small sample the manifesto in action. (For example, if you choose spoken word/rapping you would write a few

verses. If you wanted to design clothing look/style, turn in sketches of the ideas. Or choreograph hip-hop moves and turn in video. Or create a few phrases of beats and samples and turn an audio file). The manifesto will be turned in on the 4th day of class and the sample will be due the morning of the 5th day of class.

Final: There will be one comprehensive final in class the last day of class. This will consist of short answer and essay questions.

I. Evaluation/Possible Points

- Participation and engagement (20% of grade)100 points
 - Summary Writings (40% of grade)4 x 20 points each
 - Element Identity (20% of grade)50 points (25 manifesto/ 25 sample)
 - Final (20% of grade)100 points
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J. Grading Scale:

95-100	A	Excellent, goes beyond expectations
90-94	A-	
87-89	B+	Good, solid, completes work
83-86	B	
80-82	B-	Average
77-79	C+	
73-76	C	
70-72	C-	
64-69	D+	
60-63	D	Poor, incomplete or sub-standard work
0-59	E	Failure

K. ADA STATEMENT

“The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.” (www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/)

L. Student Code of Conduct

“All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, and I will so do, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.”