

# History of Hip Hop

## DANC 1013

May. 10-14 (M-F) 8:00AM-5:00PM  
Summer 2021  
[Warnock Engineering Building](#) Rm 2230

**Instructor:** Sara Pickett

**Contact:** sara.pickett@utah.edu

**Available hours:** Daily after class

**Schedule:** May. 10-14<sup>th</sup>, M-F, 8:00AM-5:00PM

**Location:** Warnock Engineering Building 2230

**Credit:** 3

### Course Description

This course introduces students to a basic understanding of the History of Hip Hop as a culture and its elemental ties to art, spoken word, music and dance. This course fulfills a Fine Arts Exploration (FF) and Diversity (DV) General Education Requirement.

**This course contains adult material.**

### Goals & Objectives

This course is designed for undergraduate students who wish to examine and explore hip hop as a cultural and artistic phenomenon, 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 hours will be devoted to spending time in the studio physicalizing styles of hip hop dance.

Additional topics include (but are not limited to) hip hop's root ties to elements of the African Diaspora, Latino/Puerto Rican/Dominican influences, issues of class in the beginnings of hip hop, commercialization and commodification of the hip hop industry, sexual politics, white rap artists, and hip hop as performance.

*At the end of this course, students will be able to:*

- Know the foundational structures, concepts and forms within the roles of the DJ, MC, B-boy/B-girl, and Graf artist.
- Identify key figures and innovators within the evolution of hip hop.
- Examine the social, political, and economic factors that contributed to and have impacted hip hop history and culture.
- Discuss contemporary theoretical issues surrounding hip hop culture (i.e. racial stereotypes, issues of gender/homophobia/masculinity/misogyny in rap, sexual politics, commercialism of the hip hop industry, etc.)
- Participate in an environment that employs critical thinking skills in a communal forum, where students can respectfully analyze and dialogue about vital topics

## Required Materials

- **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 2 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.

- Laptop computer or smart device that connects to the internet for in class assignments.
- Zoom will be used in this course

Ensure you have these ahead of time as they will be required to complete assignments and activities throughout the course.

## Communication

The preferred way to contact your instructor directly is to use the *Inbox*, located in the far left Canvas menu.

## Evaluation

Much of this course relies on open forum discussion, where questions presented in class aim to probe and dissect the reasoning within social, political, and economic factors/disparities in hip hop's evolution and history. This employs both groupthink critical reasoning and the development 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.

Students must attend class EVERY DAY to receive credit for the course.

Your performance in this course will be evaluated by:

- **Readings:** 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 three-page summary for following sections of class:
  1. Early influences/the birth of Hip Hop
  2. Graffiti and going GOLD
  3. The Golden Gangsta
  4. Pop/Underground/Knowledge

The purpose of these summaries are 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. Papers will be submitted through Canvas by 8:00PM each day.

- **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 IS THE UNION EAST BALLROOM

**We will dance Monday through Thursday.** Students are encouraged to wear clothing that permits movement (shorts/sweats, t-shirts, sneakers). Bring water and wear *clean* shoes.

- **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 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

## Course Policies

### Submitting Assignments

All assignments, unless otherwise announced, must be submitted to the designated area of Canvas. Do not submit assignments via email.

### Late Assignments

No late assignments accepted unless under extreme circumstances.

### Grading

#### *Grading for this course*

- **Evaluation/Possible Points**

Participation, engagement (20% of grade) ..... 50 points

In-class writings/ quizzes (15% of grade) ..... 10 points each

Summary Writings (30% of grade) ..... 4 x 20 points each

Element Identity (20% of grade) ..... 50 points (25 manifesto/ 25 sample)

Final (15% of grade) ..... 50 points

#### *University of Utah grading scale*

Letter	Scoring
A	100% - 94%
A-	93.9% - 90%
B+	89.9%–87%
B	86.9%–84%
B-	83.9% - 80%
C+	79.9%–77%
C	76.9%–74%
C-	73.9% - 70%
D+	69.9%–67%
D	66.9%–64%
D-	63.9% - 60%
E	59.9%–0%

## Accommodations

*Disclaimer: Accommodations will be considered on an individual basis and may require documentation.*

Please contact your instructor and/or teaching assistant as soon as possible (preferably shortly before the semester begins) to request accommodations of any kind.

*Content Warnings: Please be aware that some materials and discussions within this course may contain challenging content. Your instructor may choose to notify students of potentially difficult content (e.g. explicit language, graphic images, violent themes, etc.) throughout the course.*

If there are specific subjects that you need advanced notice for, please **contact your instructor at the beginning of the semester.**

*Extreme personal circumstances: Please **contact your instructor as soon as possible** if an extreme personal circumstance (hospitalization, death of a close relative, natural disaster, etc.) is interfering with your ability to complete your work.*

*Religious Practice: To request an accommodation for religious practices, **contact your instructor at the beginning of the semester.***

*Active Duty Military*

If you are student on active duty with the military and experience issues that prevent you from participating in the course **because of deployment or service responsibilities, contact your instructor as soon as possible** to discuss appropriate accommodations.

*Disability Access: All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services (CDS). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. Prior notice is appreciated. To read the full accommodations policy for the University of Utah, please see Section Q of the [Instruction & Evaluation regulations](#).*

If you will need accommodations in this class, contact:

**Center for Disability Services**

801-581-5020

[disability.utah.edu](http://disability.utah.edu)

162 Union Building

200 S. Central Campus Dr.

Salt Lake City, UT 84112

## Changes to the Syllabus

**This syllabus is not a contract.** It is meant to serve as an outline and guide for your course. Please note that your instructor may modify it to accommodate the needs of your class.