COURSE DESCRIPTION

Does music matter anymore? In an age of atomized listening and digital availability, one in which the grain of the voice has been auto-tuned and the manic pop thrill of discovery formatted to fit the cheap drama of a televised talent show, what happens to pop as a cultural force and a social phenomenon? This course examines the work of pop in an era of its digital reproducibility, connecting media and memory and bridging the gap between rhythm and reflection. The conceit of the course is not simply that critical theory tells us something about pop music (its commodity status, its affective charge, its historical permutations), but that pop music tells us something about critical theory (its analytical shifts, its momentary enthusiasms, its frequent allergic reactions to mass culture).

The course will eschew a straightforward historical overview of either pop or theory, and is organized instead as a series of investigations and interventions into the current state of things in both fields. We begin with the question of form itself, thinking about format and technology, archivization and collection, in an effort to understand pop memory in the age of the mp3. From there, the course works through questions of genre, periodization, and globalization, paying particular attention to how pop performs gender and how race has been the most radical force in the renewals and revolutions of pop music.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Books

THE FOLLOWING PDFS WILL BE AVAILABLE VIA NEXUS:

Maconie, Stuart. “The privileged are taking over the arts – without the grit, pop culture is doomed.” New Statesman February 4, 2015.

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Students should have access to a style guide that provides details on proper MLA formatting and documentation. The 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* by Joseph Gibaldi is the authoritative resource for all questions of style, format, and documentation. A legitimate online source of information regarding MLA documentation is Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html)

**ASSIGNMENTS**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pecha Kucha Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unessay #1 (Top Ten List)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due October 20, 2016</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>First Term Essay</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1500-2000 words)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due December 8, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unessay #2 (Open Format)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1000-1500 words)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due February 16, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2500-3000 words)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due March 30, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation in Group Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Note: Details of the Pecha Kucha presentation format will be covered in the opening class. For further information and a history of Pecha Kucha visit [www.pecha-kucha.org](http://www.pecha-kucha.org). A sign-up sheet for both the regular Seminar Presentation and the Pecha Kucha presentation will circulate in the opening class.

**PARTICIPATION RUBRIC**

Participation is based on attendance, but more importantly on the quality of your contributions to class discussion and demonstrated evidence that you have read and thought about the material in advance of class. The rubric below is freely adapted from the guidelines provided by the University of Winnipeg’s Senate Curriculum Committee.

**Outstanding (9.0-10):** Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate thorough preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that builds expertly and insightfully on discussion and formulates new and original questions about the course material. Demonstration of exceptional in-class ability.

**Excellent (8.0-8.9):** Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate thorough preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that builds on discussion and formulates interesting questions about the course material. Demonstration of excellent in-class ability.

**Very Good (7.5-7.9):** Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate strong preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that shows the ability to contribute to discussion and to formulate interesting comments and questions about the course material.

**Good (7.0-7.4):** Consistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that demonstrate satisfactory preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor that shows the ability to contribute to discussion and offers some insights into course material.
**Fair (6.5-6.9):** Inconsistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities that suggest partial or inadequate preparation for the class. Collegial interaction with peers and professor, but characterized by some level of disengagement or the inability to grasp, communicate, or formulate questions about fundamental aspects of the course material. Occasional distracting behavior (mobile phone use, inattention) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere and collective work of the course.

**Poor (6.0-6.4):** Inconsistent on-time attendance and participation in class discussions and activities. Participation marked by a disengagement with the course material resulting in infrequent or irrelevant contributions to class discussions. Frequent distracting behavior (mobile phone use, laptop or tablet use, other forms of inattention or misbehaviour) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere of the classroom and compromises the collective work of the course.

**Very Poor (5.0-5.9):** Inconsistent on-time attendance or extended absences that compromise ability to participate fully in the work of the course. Frequent distracting behavior (mobile phone use, laptop or tablet use, other forms of inattention or misbehaviour) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere of the classroom and compromises the collective work of the course.

**Fail (0.0-4.9):** Frequent absences and consistently poor preparation that compromise required classroom contributions. Frequent distracting behavior (mobile phone use, laptop or tablet use, other forms of inattention or misbehaviour) that takes away from the collegial atmosphere of the classroom and compromises the collective work of the course.

**GRADING SCALE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90 - 100%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85 - 89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70 - 74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>65 - 69%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60 - 64%</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 50%</td>
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**FACULTY OF ARTS/ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NOTES**

1. This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some of the above topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.

2. Work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed.

3. Cellular phones and other electronic devices MUST be turned off during classes.

4. It is the student’s responsibility to retain a photocopy or digitized copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.

5. Students are advised to read the pertinent pages of the current course calendar for the rules regarding Registration, Voluntary Withdrawals, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals. **Concerning plagiarism, please note** that as a general rule, an F in the course will be the penalty recommended by the English Departmental Review Committee to the Senate Committee on Academic Misconduct, for plagiarism on major assignments in English Department courses.

6. Accessibility Services: Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during
lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or email accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about AS is available on-line at http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility. All information about a student’s disability or medical condition remains confidential.

7. The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of fellow classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposures to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities.

8. Students facing a charge of academic or non-academic misconduct may choose to contact the University of Winnipeg Students’ Association (UWSA) where a student advocate will be available to answer any questions about the process, help with building a case, and ensuring students have access to support. For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit our website at www.theuwsa.ca/academic-advocacy or call 204-786-9780.

9. Please note that registering in this course commits you to the date and time of the course final examination. If you are aware of possible conflicts with that date, please see me immediately during the first week of the course, in case you need to register in another course to accommodate the conflict. For appeals for deferred exams, please see the Calendar.

10. Thursday, January 19th, 2017 is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses that begin in September 2016 and end in April 2017 in the 2016-17 Fall/Winter term.

11. Late Assignment Penalties: 10% will immediately be deducted from any assignment handed in late. A further 5% will be deducted for each additional day late, including weekends. No late assignments will be accepted more than 7 days after the due date has passed unless official documentation (i.e. a medical or legal note) is provided.

12. The English Department wishes to ensure your right to privacy regarding handing in and getting back assignments is protected. Most assignments will be handed in and handed back in class or at the Instructor’s office. If assignments are to be handled in another way and you are concerned about others having access to your work, you should attach to your assignment a self-addressed envelope that can be sealed. If this is not done, it is assumed that you have waived your concerns in this area.

13. Students may be asked for identification when writing a test or examination.

14. No unauthorized material or equipment may be brought with you to the final exam.

15. Students registered for this course are expected to demonstrate competency in English appropriate to the first-year level. Students needing additional assistance may contact the Writing Centre at http://rhetoric.uwinnipeg.ca/Tutoring_Centre/index.html for writing resources and tutoring services, or contact the English Language Program at http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/elp-information for classes in English as an Additional Language and related services.

16. Students are advised that the UW Bookstore may run out of textbooks early in the term. Also, the bookstore always ships textbooks back to the publisher if they are not purchased
within the first few weeks of term. Students are responsible for communicating directly with the bookstore if they need to order texts or ask for texts to be held for them.

17. For more information regarding the English Department, please refer to our website at http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/english-index

18. Students who plan to conduct research interview, focus groups, surveys, or any other method of collecting data from any person, even a family member, must obtain the approval of the UHREB before commencing data collection. Exceptions are research activities in class as a learning exercise. See http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/research-human-ethics for submission requirements and deadlines

19. All students, faculty and staff have the right to participate, learn and work in an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. The UW Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy may be found online at www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect

20. Students may choose not to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religion, but they must notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance. Instructors will then provide opportunity for students to make up work examinations without penalty. A list of religious holidays can be found at http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf

21. Reading Week for Fall term is **October 9 – 15, 2016**. Reading Week for Winter term is **February 20 – 24, 2017**.

**INSTRUCTOR NOTES**

1. **Punctuality:** Due the need for in-class screenings, this seminar will begin promptly at 2.30pm. Please ensure that you have arrived in class in advance of this start time so that we may maximize discussion time.

2. **Email:** I am most readily reachable by email, but due the volume of email I receive, I may take up to 24 hours to respond. I will answer email received on the weekend on Monday. Please use your University of Winnipeg account as email sent from other accounts, including gmail, often ends up in my junk mail.

3. **Phones:** Phones should be set to silent and inaccessible during course time. You should not send or receive calls or texts while class is in session.

**SCHEDULE**

**SEPT 8, 2016**

**WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION TO POP AND THEORY**

**SEPT 15, 2016**

**WEEK TWO: FORMAT, ARCHIVE, MEMORY**


**SEPT 22, 2016**
**WEEK THREE: MEMORY AS BANDWIDTH**

**SEPT 29, 2016**
**WEEK FOUR: COLLECTING AND CRATE-DIGGING**

**OCT 6, 2016**
**WEEK FIVE: MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC WASTE**

**OCT 13, 2016**
**READING WEEK**

**OCT 20, 2016**
**WEEK SIX: PESSIONISM OR POPTIMISM!**

**OCT 27, 2016**
**WEEK SEVEN: CULTURAL CAPITAL AND KITSCH**

**NOV 3, 2016**
**WEEK EIGHT: PERIODIZING AND POP**


**Nov 10, 2016**

**Week Nine: Pop and Precarity**


Maconie, Stuart. “The privileged are taking over the arts – without the grit, pop culture is doomed.” *New Statesman* February 4, 2015.

**Nov 17, 2016**

**Week Ten: The Old, Weird America**


**Nov 24, 2016**

**Week Eleven: Iconicity, Gender, and Sexuality**


**Dec 1, 2016**

**Week Twelve: Black Feminism and Pop Performance**


**Jan 5, 2017**

**Week Thirteen: I Feel Love: Disco and Stranger Sociability**


**Jan 12, 2017**

**Week Fourteen: Bring that Beat Back**


**Jan 19, 2017**

**Week Fifteen: Is This the Way They Say the Future’s Meant to Feel?**


**JAN 26, 2017**

**WEEK SIXTEEN: THE BLACK ATLANTIC**


**FEB 2, 2017**

**WEEK SEVENTEEN: SPACE IS THE PLACE**


**FEB 9, 2017**

**WEEK EIGHTEEN: AFROBEAT, POP AND DECOLONIZATION**


**FEB 16, 2017**

**WEEK NINETEEN: #BLACKLIVESMATTER**


**FEB 23, 2017**

**READING WEEK**

**MAR 2, 2017**

**WEEK TWENTY: VOICE, VOCODER, AUTOTUNE**


**MAR 9, 2017**

**WEEK TWENTY-ONE: J-POP, K-POP, AND THE GLOBALIZATION OF POP**


**MAR 16, 2017 + MAR 23, 2017**

**WEEKS TWENTY-TWO + TWENTY-THREE: MODULE ON POP AND THEORY NOW**

The readings for these two weeks will be confirmed by February 16, 2017. We will take the opportunity in these two classes to catch up with the pop and theory events and interventions of 2016-17.

**MARCH 30, 2017**
WEEK TWENTY-FOUR: REVIEW.