

MUMH 2060: History of Rock
Fall 2026
MWF 9:05am–9:55am, 3 credit hours
ESSC 255

Instructor:

Megan Alexis Looknauth
(she/her/hers)

Contact:

meganlooknauth@my.unt.edu

I check emails between 8am–6pm Monday to Friday and aim to answer within 24 hours. Use “URGENT” in the subject line if your e-mail is time sensitive.

Office Hours:

Mondays 11:00am–1:00pm via Zoom,
or by appointment.

Teaching Assistant:

Alfonso Eduardo Quintela
alfonsoquintelagonzales@my.unt.edu

Course Overview:

This course examines the history of mostly American popular music from the 1940s to the early 2000s. We will cover crucial moments in popular music history and its impact on greater popular culture. We will engage with topics including ethnic and racial identity, gender, identity through musical performance, the evolution of recording and listening technology, and the business practices of the music industry.

This course is structured into 7 units: American popular music prior to 1950, the 1950s, the 1960s, the 1970s, the 1980s, the 1990s, and the 21st century.

Regular use of sound and video recordings of music will play an integral role in the class, but prior musical ability (including the ability to read music) is not required or expected. There are no prerequisites for this course, and it fulfills the Creative Arts and Component Area Option A of the UNT Core Curriculum.

Materials:

- There is no textbook for this course. All required readings will be made available on Canvas and/or are accessible through the UNT Library website.
- Required: iClicker student account (provided by UNT) and a compatible device (i.e., laptop, tablet, smartphone) to use for each lecture.
- Suggested: music streaming service (i.e., Spotify, Tidal, Apple Music, etc.) or access to YouTube (application or website).

Learning Objectives:

- Students will identify, examine, and describe the role of popular music in the formation of identity. In order to most effectively examine these issues, students will discuss problems and questions; present, interpret and analyze historical documents and contemporary scholarship related to the music being studied in this course; consider the context and credibility of source material; develop and present arguments; and present conclusions, while assessing their implications. (**Core LO: Critical Thinking**)
- Students will evaluate and communicate how popular music has both reflected and shaped American culture. To communicate effectively, students will be asked to present a central idea; organize material cohesively; develop content; and apply rules of Standard English in their arguments. (**Core LO: Communication**)
- Students will identify issues of social responsibility by engaging with music from a wide variety of cultural contexts. Students will acknowledge and apply diverse perspectives; acknowledge and apply civic responsibility; and articulate insights about personal attitudes, behaviors, or beliefs as they relate to the history of American popular music. (**Core LO: Social Responsibility**)
- Working in assigned groups, students will participate in class activities and will work together to complete a final creative project. Throughout these activities, students will reflect frequently on how best to contribute to a group; prepare and collaborate with a team; foster a constructive team climate; and respond to feedback constructively. (**Core LO: Teamwork**)

Assignments and Evaluations (1000 possible points)

1. Syllabus Quiz and Introduction: (50 points total, 5% of final grade)

A short multiple-choice quiz (30 points total) is available on Canvas and due before Monday's class in Week 2 (08/24 at 8:59am). This quiz is designed to ensure your understanding of the course and its expectations.

Before Friday's class in Week 1 (08/21), each student must post in the discussion thread titled "Class Introductions" (20 points total). Further instructions and details are available on Canvas.

2. Attendance and Participation: (5 points per day, 180 points total, 18% of final grade)

Students are expected to attend each class and participate in lecture; each day is worth 5 points (2.5 for attendance and 2.5 for participation). Attendance and participation will be recorded through iClicker in the form of attendance check-ins, listening questions, polls, and/or short-answer responses.

Your health and the health of your peers is important. If you are sick and contagious, do not come to class. If you miss class due to illness, or other circumstances, please email the instructor (meganlooknauth@my.unt.edu) and CC the teaching assistant (alfonsoquintelagonzales@my.unt.edu) at your earliest convenience and these absences will be excused on a case-by-case basis. Lecture slides will not be posted to Canvas, outside of ODA accommodations. Students are responsible for acquiring lecture notes from their peers.

Students are expected to attend every class and will be allowed up to five unexcused absences without penalty to their attendance and participation grade. Keep in mind that attendance will also impact other assignments—such as group discussions and the final project. There are 41 total class meetings throughout the semester and attendance and participation grades will be awarded as follows:

- Attending and participating in 36+ classes will get full points.
- Attending and participating in 34 classes will get 170/180.
- Attending and participating in 31 classes will get 155/180.
- Attending and participating in 28 classes will get 140/180.
- Attending and participating in 25 classes will get 125/180.
- Attending and participating in 22 classes will get 110/180.
- Attending and participating in 19 classes will get 95/180.
- Attending and participating in 16 classes will get 80/180.

Regular attendance and participation are essential to success in this course. Therefore, attending and participating in fewer than 16 classes will result in a 0 for attendance and participation.

3. Group Discussions: (20 points each, 160 points total, 16% of final grade)

There are 8 group discussion days held throughout the semester. Refer to the course schedule for discussion days. Students will be automatically assigned a group during the first week of the semester, which will be the same groups for the final group project.

4. Music & Media Reports: (70 points each, 280 points, 28% of final grade)

There are 5 short-answer worksheet assignments and your lowest score will be dropped at the end of the semester and not count towards your final grade. These assignments will prepare you for topics that we will cover that week. The use of AI is *not* permitted for this assignment.

5. Final Group Project: (330 points total, 33% of final grade)

Students will work in assigned groups to create a 1500-to-2000-word essay, which each group will defend in a group interview on 11/20, 11/30, or 12/02. Prior to this interview, each

group will submit their final essay, and each student will submit a group assessment and AI statement, stating how they individually used AI in their contribution to this assignment. Each student is expected to contribute equally to the final project and therefore, the results of group assessment and interview may influence individual student grades (i.e., students in each group may not receive the same grade).

Your grade is determined by the following:

- i. 4 in-class group workshops (10 points each, 40 points total, 4% of final grade)
- ii. In-class group interviews (60 points, 6% of final grade)
- iii. Group essay (180 points, 18% of final grade)
- iv. Group assessment and AI statement (50 points, 5% of final grade)

*** Grades will be posted to Canvas 1 week after the due date. ***

Extra credit opportunities will be communicated to students throughout the semester.

Grades will be calculated according to the following scale:

A	Excellent academic work	895 – 1000
B	Good academic work	795 – 894
C	Fair academic work	695 – 794
D	Passable academic work	595 – 694
F	Failed course	0 – 594

How to succeed in this Class:

- Attend class regularly and participate in iClicker questions/discussion.
- Plan ahead for readings, listenings, and assignments.
- Bring required readings to every in-class discussion to reference.
- Highlight important parts of required readings and make note of content questions you may have to ask in class.
- Take detailed notes in lectures and discussions.
- Ask questions! You can ask questions in class, via email (meganlooknauth@my.unt.edu) or during office hours.

Late Work Policy

Assignments and evaluations are due at 8:59am or 11:59pm and are marked on Canvas. All assignments, except for the final project, are subject to a 24-hour submission grace period, where assignments can be submitted for a 10% deduction. In the event of illness and other extenuating circumstances, assignments may be accepted past the due date for full marks or small deductions on a case-by-case basis. Be sure to email me (meganlooknauth@my.unt.edu)

at your earliest convenience to discuss extensions and late work submissions. Opportunity for late submission will no longer be available 2 weeks after the original due date.

AI Policy

The use of AI writing tools, programs, LLMs, etc.–such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Notebook LM, and Claude– is not permitted for any assignment unless explicitly stated otherwise. AI use is permitted for the final group project as described in the assignment instructions. All submitted work should be in accordance with the [UNT Academic Integrity Policy](#).

If you are a non-native English speaker, you may write your individual assignments in your preferred language and use AI to translate your writing to English. You must submit *both* the original text and the translated text for full marks and you must appropriately cite AI in your translated assignment, including the prompt you used, when applicable.

Scheduling of Juries

Music students may *not* schedule juries during class hours. For more information, visit [this link](#).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. You should make it very clear—through proper citations—when you are using someone else’s words or ideas. All plagiarism will result in a “0” for that particular assignment, will be reported to the Dean of Students and Office of Academic Integrity, and may result in further penalty.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited, to:

- Not properly citing a direct quote or paraphrased passage.
- Relying on sources not approved by the instructor.
- Using your own work from another class.
- Unauthorized use of AI and LLMs.

For more information, please refer to <https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/integrity/index.html>.

Academic Integrity

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam [or specify alternative sanction, such as course failure]. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students (Office of Academic Integrity), who may impose further penalty.

According to the UNT catalog, the term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to: A) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another

person without full and clear acknowledgment; and B) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

See: [Academic Integrity](#)

Link: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>.

Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

See: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Link: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>.

Access to Information – Eagle Connect

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect.

See: [Eagle Connect](#)

LINK: <https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk/eagleconnect>.

ODA Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter. You can now request your Letters of Accommodation ONLINE and ODA will mail your Letters of Accommodation to your instructors. You may wish to begin a private discussion with your professors regarding your specific needs in a course. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access. See: ODA LINK: disability.unt.edu. (Phone: (940) 565-4323)

Health and Safety Information

Students can access information about health and safety at: <https://music.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness>.

Registration Information for Students

See: [Fall Academic Calendar Information](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>.

Semester Calendar, Fall 2026

See: [Fall Semester Calendar](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>.

Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

Undergraduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total hours registered. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

Students holding music scholarships must maintain a minimum 2.5 overall cumulative GPA and 3.0 cumulative GPA in music courses.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended that you to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

Link: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>.

Graduates

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per term. Music scholarships require a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Students cannot exceed maximum timeframes established based on the published length of the graduate program. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may have the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. It is recommended you schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college, an advisor in UNT-International or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course.

See: [Financial Aid](#)

Link: <http://financialaid.unt.edu/sap>.

Counseling and Testing

UNT's Center for Counseling and Testing has an available counselor for students in need. Please visit the Center's website for further information: See: Counseling and Testing Link:

<http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>.

For more information on mental health resources, please visit:

See: [Mental Health Resources](#)

Link: <https://disparities.unt.edu/mental-health-resources>.

Add/Drop Policy

Please be reminded that dropping classes or failing to complete and pass registered hours may make you ineligible for financial aid. In addition, if you drop below half-time enrollment you may be required to begin paying back your student loans. See Academic Calendar for additional add/drop Information.

See: [Academic Calendar](#)

Link: <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/fall-academic-calendar.html>.

Student Resources

The University of North Texas has many resources available to students. For a complete list, go to Student Resources.

See: [Student Resources](#)

Link: <https://success.unt.edu/aa-sa-resources>.

Care Team

The Care Team is a collaborative interdisciplinary committee of university officials that meets regularly to provide a response to student, staff, and faculty whose behavior could be harmful to themselves or others.

See: [Care Team](#)

Link: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care-team>.

UNT Policy Statement on Diversity

The University of North Texas values diversity and individuality as part of advancing ideals of human worth, dignity and academic excellence. Diverse viewpoints enrich open discussion, foster the examination of values and exposure of biases, help educate people in rational conflict resolution and responsive leadership and prepare us for the complexities of a pluralistic society. As such, the University of North Texas is committed to maintaining an open, welcoming atmosphere that attracts qualified students, staff, and faculty from all groups to support their success. The University of North Texas does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in its application and admission process, educational programs and activities, employment policies and use of university facilities. For more information, visit [this link](#).

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where

appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at +1 (940) 565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.ed or at +1 (940) 565 2759.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. You have a right to view your individual record; however, information about your records will not be divulged to other individuals without the proper written consent. You are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the university's policy in accordance with those mandates. For more information, visit [this link](#).

Technology Assistance:

- Should you encounter technology issues please contact the UIT Help Desk:
 - UIT Help Desk: <https://aits.unt.edu/support>
 - Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
 - Call: +1 (940) 565-2324
 - In Person: Sage Hall, Room 330

For extra support with Canvas visit [this link](#).

Additional Student Services

Registration Information for Students: <https://registrar.unt.edu/students>.

UNT Student Counselling and Mental Health Resources:

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/student-counseling/index.html>.

Writing Resources: <https://writingcenter.unt.edu/>.

Campus Resources: <https://www.unt.edu/success/resources/index.html>.

UNT Campus Police: <https://police.unt.edu/index.html>.

*** This syllabus is subject to change. ***

Changes will be communicated to students in lecture and/or via Canvas announcements.

Course Schedule

	Date	Topic	Reading(s)	Assignment(s)
American Music Prior to 1950				
Week 1	08/17, M	Introduction		
	08/19, W	Foundation I: Blues, Country, and Pop		
	08/21, F Last day to add a class	Foundations II: New Technologies, Crooners, and R&B		“Class Introduction” Discussion due
The 1950s				
Week 2	08/24, M	Early Rock ‘n’ Roll		Syllabus Quiz due
	08/26, W	Elvis Presley		
	08/28, F Last day to drop class without a W	Group Discussion	Paul Linden, “Race, Hegemony, and the Birth of Rock & Roll” Optional: Entire article Required: From subheading ‘Identifying and Confronting the Threat’ on p. 50 until the end	Group Discussion #1
The 1960s				
Week 3	08/31, M	Motown, Stax, and Atlantic		
	09/02, W	The Beatles and the British Invasion		Music & Media Report #1 due
	09/04, F	Discussion: Beatlemania and Moral Panic	Nicolette Rohr, “Yeah, Yeah, Yeah: The Sixties Screamscape of Beatlemania”	Group Discussion #2
Week 4	09/07, M	No class		
	09/09, W	Early Funk, Late-‘60s Soul, and Black Pride		
	09/11, F	Discussion: Political Protest Music	Jerome L. Rodnitzky, “The Sixties Between the Microgrooves: Using Folk and Protest Music to Understand American History, 1963–1973” “How Protest Songs Changed Music” short-film; follow this link	Group Discussion #3

	Date	Topic	Reading(s)	Assignment(s)
Week 5	09/14, M	Urban Folk Music in 1960s New York		Music & Media Report #2 due
	09/16, W	Psychedelic Rock and Music Festivals in the 1960s		
	09/18, F	Discussion: The Live Concert Experience	Simon Frith, "Live Music Matters"	Group Discussion #4
The 1970s				
Week 6	09/21, M	Hard Rock and Heavy Metal		
	09/23, W	Glam Rock and Shock Rock		
	09/25, F Last day to change to pass/no pass grade option	Discussion: Gender and Sexuality in Rock Culture	Maria Myer, "Purposefully Feminizing Masculinity: Femininity in Male Rock and Metal Stars, 1950s–1980s" Rat Magazine, "Cock Rock: Men Always Seem to End Up on Top"	Group Discussion #5
Week 7	09/28, M	Singer-Songwriters		
	09/30, W	Disco		
	10/02, F	In-Class Workday: Brainstorming Topics		Final Project Part I due
Week 8	10/05, M	American Punk and New Wave		Music & Media Report #3 due
	10/07, W	British Punk and Post-Punk		
	10/09, F	In-Class Workday: Dividing the Work and Research		Final Project Part II due
The 1980s				
Week 9	10/12, M	MTV, pt. 1		
	10/14, W	MTV, pt. 2		
	10/16, F	Discussion: Can you Separate the Art from the Artist?	Jake Truncale, "Separating Art from the Artist"	Group Discussion #6
Week 10	10/19, M	Metal		Music & Media Report #4 due
	10/21, W	Hip-hop		
	10/23, F	Discussion: Music and Censorship	Brian K. Simmons, "The Effects of Censorship on	Group Discussion #7

	Date	Topic	Reading(s)	Assignment(s)
			Attitudes toward Popular Music”	
The 1990s and Early 2000s				
Week 11	10/26, M	Grunge and Alternative Rock		
	10/28, W	Boy Bands and Teen Pop		Music & Media Report #5 due
	10/30, F	Jazz Fusion		
Week 12	11/02, M	Country in the Mainstream		
	11/04, W	Punk Goes Pop		
	11/06, F	Discussion: Supporting Artists in the Age of Streaming	Ben Sisario, “Musicians Say Streaming Doesn’t Pay. Can the Industry Change?”	Group Discussion #8
Week 13	11/09, M	Electronic Dance Music		
	11/11, W	The “Golden Age of Piracy”		
	11/13, F	The Rock Revival		
Week 14	11/16, M	In-Class Workday		Final Project Part III due
	11/18, W	In-Class Workday		Final Project Part IV due
	11/20, F	Final Project Interview Day 1		
Week 15	Thanksgiving Break (no class)			
Week 16	11/30, M	Final Project Interview Day 2		
	12/02, W	Final Project Interview Day 3		
	12/04, F	Reading Day (no class)		