MUET 2000: Global Pop: Music, Media, and Society

Fall 2026

Instructor
Mr. Salvador Hernandez (he/they)

Email
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Class Time
Tuesday/Thursday
9:35 AM – 10:55 AM
Music Building Room 321

Office Hours
Tuesday/Thursday
7:00 am – 9:25 am
11:00 am – 12:00 pm
Bain Hall Room 316

Course Overview
This course uses popular music as a window into discourses about society, culture, and identity happening in the United States and other parts of the world. Each week, we will discuss specific themes and examine songs, genres, and artists from around the world that demonstrate how people from different cultures engage with that concept via popular media. Broader questions addressed in the course include:

- How do artistic or creative goals interact with commercial goals and industrial models of production and distribution?
- How can technology reshape creative process and human relationships?
- How does popular music transcend, reinforce, or negotiate popular conceptions of identity in the era of globalization?

Students do not require any training in music to participate fully in this course.

Disclaimer: The views of musicians or artworks used in class discussions are not reflective of the views of UNT or any faculty or staff affiliated with the institution.

Evaluation
The course will be graded on a cumulative 1000-point scale. To pass the course, students must maintain a passing grade of 600 (D) or higher. Points will be divided as such:

Daily Updates	400 points
Team Building	100 points
Team Assignments (3)	
Deliverables (3)	150 points
Presentations (3)	150 points
Peer Evaluations (3)	300 points
Extra Credit	200 points
Total	1300 points

Teamwork is an essential part of this course. To pass this course, a student must participate in all three team assignments. Failing to participate in any team assignment without prior approval from the instructor will result in an automatic grade of F.

Grading Rubric

Percentages listed on Canvas are **not** used to calculate final grades. Rather, final grades are dependent on the points accumulated from completed assignments (also visible on the Grades page on Canvas). Final grades are based on the following key:

0 – 599 points:	F
600 – 699 points:	D
700 – 799 points:	C
800 – 899 points:	B
900+ points:	A

Core Objectives

Critical Thinking: Students will engage critically with popular music as both a commodity and a significant aspect of contemporary life. They will analyze musical examples in relation to broader social and cultural processes, understand interplays between music and discourses of identity, and interrogate their personal engagement with popular music.

Communication: The core assignments will challenge students to use multiple forms of media to communicate social, cultural, and artistic ideas to different types of audiences. Students must demonstrate a mastery of precise and nuanced English at a level appropriate for academic discourse, in assignments as well as class discussions.

Teamwork: Students will work in teams to complete complex projects that require engaging with different points of view. Collaborations within teams and beyond will expose students to the plurality of meanings, practices, and ideas listeners ascribe to various styles of popular music.

Social Responsibility: Students will develop broader cultural horizons through exposure to diverse sounds, societies, and ideologies. They will explore the many social, cultural, ideological, and political discourses surrounding the transition to globalized mass media in many parts of the world, and will engage in discussions of these issues with their peers.

Personal Responsibility: Students will develop an awareness of the ethical issues surrounding the production, marketing, and consumption of popular music. They should develop sensitivity to the role of popular music in large-scale public debates about cultural and social values, and also about the issues of representation, exploitation, and oppression that may underlie popular music's production or message. They will also be encouraged to reflect on the ethical dimensions of their own participation in popular culture.

Required Text

- None. All readings are optional and will be posted on Canvas

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory for all students. Starting on the second week of class, attendance will be taken after the first 15 minutes of class through a distributed sign-in sheet.

For this course, students are allowed up to three unexcused absences, after which each additional unexcused absence will result in a 100-point deduction on the student's final grade. Non-emergency absences that have not received prior approval from the instructor will be counted as unexcused. Please be aware that some excuses may require documentation. A document on UNT's authorized absence policy will be available to you on Canvas.

If an emergency arises that forces you to leave class in the middle of a lecture, please inform the instructor as soon as possible; as failure to do so will result in you being marked absent. If you arrive tardy to class, you may ask the instructor to sign in after class as tardy, with three tardies counting as one unexcused absence.

Teamwork

Students will be expected to work in teams, and assignments in this course are designed to require contributions and collaborations between teammates. With the exception of daily updates and student/peer evaluations, students will complete assignments as a team.

In the second week of class, students will develop teams that they plan to work in for the remainder of the semester. Given that team assignments will require a combination of ethnographic (i.e. in-person) and academic research, students are encouraged to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses; and align themselves with teammates that can complement those traits. In brief, teams will be expected to include an effective speaker, a good listener, a curious academic researcher, a music researcher, and an archivist who enjoys organizing data. The instructor reserves the right to modify teams as needed.

All team members are expected to contribute toward the creation of deliverables and the development of project presentations. An example of labor distribution is provided below under the "Team Projects" section.

Assignments

Daily Team Updates

Starting on Thursday of Week 2, there will be an on-Canvas journal assignment (20 total, worth 20 points each) asking teams to share updates on the work they did for a given class period, and any progress they have made toward their team projects. Students are also encouraged to share questions or concerns, as the instructor will be using these assignments to assess how group projects are progressing and to provide assistance as needed.

Updates must be within 250 to 1000 words, and students will be given roughly ten minutes to discuss the Update at the end of each class. All team updates for a given class session must be submitted by 10 pm that day.

Completed, on-topic, and on-time daily updates will receive full points for everyone in that team. Missing submissions, off-topic updates, vague updates, or those that are below 250 words will receive a 0.

There are two ways to complete this assignment:

1. A team member takes notes of team discussions and work completed in class. They get approval from their teammates in- or after class that these notes will work for an update, and submit them on everyone's behalf.
2. Some team members take notes and a team member compiles them all together themselves or using generative AI, before submitting an approved version.
    a. *If your team goes with this route*, every student who contributed to the Update must upload a copy of their notes on Canvas for review.

Team Projects

Most points for this course will come from the completion of three team projects spread out across the semester. The successful completion of these projects will depend on students effectively applying theoretical frames discussed in class toward analyzing the forms of popular music that exist in their everyday lives.

Students will be given three weeks to complete the first team assignment, three weeks for the second, and five weeks for the third. For each assignment, students will be graded based on:

- *Deliverables*: Evidence collected by teams that effectively address assignment criteria.
- *Presentations*: End-of-Module presentations in which teams demonstrate their findings in whatever medium they see fit (e.g. PowerPoint, podcast, video), so long as it is appropriate and effective. It is recommended that experimental modes of presentation receive prior approval from the instructor to avoid any unexpected grade penalties.
- *Self & Peer Evaluations*: End-of-Module reports in which students evaluate themselves and their colleagues based on everyone's contributions to the team.

Grades for Deliverables and Presentations are *shared* across all team members. That is: if a team gets an A on the deliverables they submit as a team, *all* team members receive an A.

Grades for Self & Peer Evaluations are individualized and formulated by the instructor based on a combination of a student's self-evaluation and how that student is evaluated by their teammates. All evaluation grades will come with a comment from the instructor explaining the logic behind their grade. The instructor *will not* share the contents of student evaluations with their peers, but will share the *anonymized* grades that teammates gave each particular student.

Project 1 - Live Ethnography: Pop Music Communities

Teams will choose a venue that occasionally features live music. Then, they will conduct in-person interviews and observations at that venue to interrogate how the types of popular music used there contribute to the inclusion, exclusion, and celebration of certain identities.

Provisional deliverables [and sample labor division] for this project include:

- Speakers providing at least three recordings or transcriptions of interviews with people attending that venue, including (but perhaps not limited to) patrons, employees, or performing musicians.
    - Interviews should be at least 5 minutes long (1 to 3 questions)
    - ***Please get permission from people and employees before recording them.***
- Listeners/Observers providing a write-up describing the types of music played at that venue and how other symbols present at the venue resonate with that music.
- Academic researchers providing a write-up describing how the music present at the venue invites or deters people tied to certain identities, tying the discussion to the theoretical frames discussed in class.
- Music researchers providing a write-up describing relevant histories behind the styles of music present at the venue, and how they connect with certain listeners based on identity, background, or experience.
- Archivists providing a write-up blending data collected by researchers with data collected from interviews.

Project 2 - Digital Ethnography: Building a Sonic Meaning Map

Teams will identify a piece of popular music tied to a trend on social media, then explore the various historical routes that led toward how that piece is understood in the present day. They will also be expected to explore the meanings tied to that piece, and the routes behind those meanings. Students will not be expected to use personal social media accounts for this data collection, and are encouraged to create new accounts.

Provisional deliverables for this project include:

- ***Anonymized*** evidence of online conversations demonstrating that these meanings exist: be it from existing comments, or new conversations initiated by team members.
- Write-ups describing the historical routes behind this piece of popular music according to Appadurai's Five Scapes framework (at least one per scape).
- A visual concept map showing how all of these historical incidents built up to the trend being analyzed.

Project 3 – Research Project: Explore Something New

Teams will identify and explore an issue or phenomenon related to popular music that has rarely been explored in existing scholarly literature. Teams will learn how to develop strong thesis statements, and will be expected to collect evidence via scholarly or ethnographic research, at each team's discretion.

Deliverables for this assignment will vary based on each team's topic, but will be expected to provide convincing support for the team's argument.

Course Outline

The following is a general outline of the topics discussed in this course. Please be aware that slight changes may occur due to unexpected circumstances. All readings are optional and will be provided for your reference on Canvas.

Week	Date	Topic	Musical Styles
1	8/18 8/20	Course Introduction – What is Popular Music?	• Syllabus & Class Discussion
2	8/25 8/27	Team-Building Exercises	• Various
		Module 1 - Production	
3	9/01 9/03	The Culture Industry: Standardization and Glocalization	• Pop, Rock, and World Music • The Caribbean - Reggaeton, Reggae, Merengue, Calypso
4	9/08 9/10	Pseudo-Individualization and Boundary Work	• Music of Eurovision • Tejano
5	9/15 9/17	Listening, Noise, and Counterculture	• Rock, Punk, Rap, Gangsta Rap, Corridos, Corridos Alterados • Muzak
6	9/22 9/24	Module 1 Review and Presentations Project 1 Deliverables Due by 9/29 @ 6 am	
		Module 2 - Transmission	
7	9/29 10/01	Appadurai's Five Scapes, Part 1	• Son, Mariachi, Steelband • Hip-Hop, Electropop

8	10/06 10/08	Appadurai's Five Scapes, Part 2	• Rock, Reggae, K-pop • Andean Folk Music
9	10/13 10/15	Schizophonia & Schismogenesis	• Blues, Hip-Hop, & Country • Punta
10	10/20 10/22	Module 2 Review and Presentations Project 2 Deliverables Due by 10/27 @ 6 am	
		Module 3 - Consumption	
11	10/27 10/29	Harms: Hearing Loss, Copyright, and Power	• Various • World Music & other lawsuits
12	11/03 11/05	NO CLASS	• Extra work time for projects
13	11/10 11/12	Bliss: Absorption & Self-Narratives	• Class-informed
14	11/17 11/19	Fandom & Parasociality	• K-Pop, U.S. Pop, & Vocaloid
		THANKSGIVING BREAK (11/23 – 11/27)	
15	12/01 12/03	Module 3 Review and Presentations Project 3 Deliverables Due by 12/08 @ 6 am	
16	12/08 12/10	FINALS WEEK NO FINAL	

Electronic Device Policy

Students are encouraged to use electronic devices while working in teams to assist with data collection and groupwork in class. However, recording of class lectures in any way without prior permission is prohibited.

AI Policy

You may use AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Grammarly, etc.) for any part of the assignment process, including brainstorming, research, writing, and editing. However, you are still responsible for ensuring the accuracy and quality of your work. Please refer to UNT citation basics [https://guides.library.unt.edu/citations-style-guides] for guidance on how to credit and cite your use of these tools appropriately.

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: UIT Student Help Desk site (http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)
Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940-565-2324
In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130
Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm
Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Students caught engaging in academic dishonesty for a particular assignment will receive a written warning and an automatic "0" for that assignment. The incident will also be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalties. Subsequent offenses may lead to the deduction of the student's final grade by one letter grade (-10%), or to the student automatically failing the course; depending on the severity of the offense.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website (https://disability.unt.edu/).

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

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. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable 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 classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect
Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail Eagle Connect (https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates
Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (http://spot.unt.edu/) or email spot@unt.edu.

Survivor Advocacy
UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as 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. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648.

Student Verification
UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses. See UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002).

Use of Student Work
A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.

- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Student Support Services

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Student Health and Wellness Center (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- UNT Care Team (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- UNT Psychiatric Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
- Individual Counseling (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)