

**HIST 4388 - 004**

**“The History of Hip Hop”**

**Spring 2018**

**Class Meetings:** W, University Hall (UH), 3:00 – 5:50 PM

Instructor: Dr. Kenton Rambsy **Office Number:** 413 Carlisle

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**Office Hours:**

Mon & Wed 10:00 - Noon

And, by appointment

**Course Description:** How do history and hip-hop connect? This course explores that question through a study of hip-hop in the U.S. The course will begin with a look at the 1970s Bronx, where hip-hop originated, and will then journey across New York City and the United States, exploring how the art form evolved into both an artistic genre as well as a political and cultural movement. According to Craig Watkins, “Hip hop has, and continues to produce a remarkable array thinkers who embody complex ideological makeups exemplified through their performances as writers, artists, poets, and scholars.” Accordingly, this course traces the social and musical history of hip hop through analyses of videos, music, dance, and readings.

We will focus on hip hop as a cultural force in American society balanced by lessons that introduce fundamental musical features such as basic freestyle, DJ, and cipher techniques. Topics addressed include the elements of Hip-Hop culture, including deejaying, emceeing, sampling, dancing, beatboxing, rapping, graffiti art, fashion, as well as issues of race, politics, gender, sexual orientation, class, commercialism, capitalism, cultural appropriation, and authenticity.

**In this course, students will cultivate skills in order to:**

* Be able to analyze the historical trajectory of hip hop in American culture Understand the various elements that comprise Hip Hop as well as the variety of forms that Hip Hop takes
* Develop an appreciation of the cultural, political, and artistic value of Hip Hop
* Understand the nuances of mainstream Hip Hop and its development from its origins to present day.
* Develop critical thinking and writing skills as well as skills of observation, synthesis, and connection

**Grading Criteria**

**30% — Daily Grade**

* Because this is a discussion course that covers hip hop from its inception to present day, class attendance is mandatory to fully master concepts.

**35% — Quizzes and Writing Assignments**

* Every week, there will be a quiz given during each class. The quizzes will cover basic information from the day’s reading such as author biographical information and story content. For the writing assignments, you will respond to a specific prompt.

**35% — Final Project**

* For the final project, you will complete an individual portion of a group project.

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**Total 100%**

**History of Hip Hop Reading Schedule**

**Jan. 17 – Class Introduction**

**Class Description:** Introduction to the class.

**Jan. 24 – The Foundations of Hip Hop**

**Class Description:** In the 1970s, an underground urban movement known as "hip hop" began to develop in the Bronx in New York City. It focused on emceeing (or MCing) over "breakbeats", house parties and neighbourhood block party events, held outdoors. Hip hop music has been a powerful medium for protesting the impact of legal institutions on minorities, particularly police and prisons.

1. DJ Kool Herc – Kool DJ Herc describing how he invented the idea of playing two breakbeats together
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hw4H2FZjfpo>
2. Kurtis Blow – The Breaks (1980)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZDUEilS5M>4
3. Kool Moe Dee/ The Treacherous Three – The Body Rock (1980)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KT6DNm5Z1hw>
4. Doug E. Fresh – Just Having Fun (1984)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqtdR9r9ZvY>
5. The Cold Crush Brothers – Weekend (1982)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP_LPxDMzZI>

Music Videos:

1. The Sugarhill Gang – Rapper’s Delight (1980)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKTUAESacQM>
2. Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five – The Message (1982)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PobrSpMwKk4>
3. Afrika Bambaataa – Planet Rock (1982)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLEFDPTrw-o>

**Jan. 31—Hip hop technology**

* Reading: “How Grandmaster Flash’s ‘Torque Theory’ Drove Hip-Hop”
  + <http://www.vulture.com/2014/03/grandmaster-flash-torque-theory-hip-hop.html>

**Class Description:** Hip Hop has led to direct advancements and innovations in the technologies of music engineering equipment. Its producers have revolutionized the use of the technology in ways that incorporate priorities of black culture. In this class, we will discuss the art of manipulating sounds and creating new music, sound effects, mixes and other creative sounds and beats. We will discuss DJs such as Grandmaster Flash and his development of the turntablism and “the torque theory.”

**Feb. 7 - The Producers**

* “The 10 Most Prolific Hip-Hop Producers”
  + <https://www.pastemagazine.com/articles/2017/08/the-10-most-prolific-hip-hop-producers.html>

**Class Description:** Hip-hop producers are the instrumentalists and creative directors involved in guiding a recording session, which can range from a single song to a major album. Although 1970s-era hip hop focused on turntables and a DJ mixer, in the 2010s, hip-hop production uses a range of digital samplers, sequencers, drum machines, and synthesizers. Sometimes hip hop producers use traditional instruments, such as a drum kit or electric bass. In this class, we will focus specifically on Organized Noize, pioneers of rap music responsible for Outkast, CeeLo, the Goodie Mob and the Dungeon Family. Their production shaped the landscape of hip-hop with their own distinctive sound, created in the confines of a dungeon.

**Feb. 14 – Hip Hop Fashion**

* Reading: “How Rappers Took Over the World of Fashion”
  + https://www.highsnobiety.com/2016/01/15/hip-hop-fashion-history/

**Class Description:** Since its emergence in the 1970s, the evolution of hip-hop has been a truly multifaceted phenomenon. As an art form, hip-hop’s journey has taken it from an expression of the embattled South Bronx to being the defining symbol of popular culture worldwide, and in that time it has undergone some huge changes. Though many factors have contributed to the growth in popularity (and inevitable commodification) of hip-hop, few are more noticeable than its evolving relationship with the world of fashion. What was once an innate expression of the culture surrounding the music has since grown into something else entirely — a place where hip-hop artists are some of the biggest commercial influencers on the planet.

**Feb. 21— Music Videos**

**Class Description:** Hype Williams has been showcasing hip hop in its most expressive light for nearly 30 years, making and breaking trends along the way. Whether feeding Bad Boy’s excessive aesthetic, bringing Missy Elliott and Busta Rhymes’ uninhibited visions to life, dropping R. Kelly into the wildest soap operas or taking Kanye West around the world, the legendary director has proven to be one of music’s most brilliant visionaries

* Reading: “From Kanye West to Missy Elliott, Here Are 12 Game Changing Music Videos Directed By Hype Williams”
  + <http://www.vh1.com/news/327051/hype-williams-best-music-videos/>

*Music Video Playlist:*

1. Hype Williams
   1. Nas, If I Ruled the World (1996)
      1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NW55FRXlPEs
   2. The Notorius B.I.G., Mo Money, Mo Problems (1997)
      1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUhRKVIjJtw
   3. Puff Daddy, I’ll Be Missing You (1997)
      1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKMtZm2YuBE
   4. Busta Rhymes, Put Your Hands Where My Eyes Could See (1997)
      1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxhigzl35sw>
   5. Busta Rhymes, Dangerous
      1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8Sw3a1IOCw
   6. Missy Elliott, Sock It To Me (1998)
      1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9UvBX3REqSY>
   7. Missy Elliott, She’s a Bitch (1999)
      1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opkRF3UZSJw

**Feb. 28 — The 1980s**

**Class Description:** The 1980s marked the diversification of hip hop as the genre developed more complex styles. New York City became a veritable laboratory for the creation of new hip-hop sounds. The proliferation of electro hip hop and hip hop records in the early 1980s can be attributed to the new beat-making abilities and the new generation of drum machines that allowed record companies to quickly produce new electro and electro hip hop records to meet the high demand on the street. In this class, we will focus on artists such as LL Cool J, NWA, Slick Rick, Eric B and Rakim, Run DMC, Beastie Boys, Big Daddy Kane, Public Enemy, KRS One/Boogie Down Productions, DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince.

*The 1980s Playlist:*

1. Run DMC – It’s Like That (1984)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcCaycrPIa0
2. Beastie Boys – Paul Revere (1986)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c6hqrpBbeq4
3. LL Cool J – I’m Bad (1987)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVDfyc2lh4Q
4. KRS One/ Boogie Down Productions – South Bronx (1987)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsrOy32nJdI
5. Eric B and Rakim – Paid in Full (1987)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E7t8eoA\_1jQ
6. NWA – Straight Outta Compton (1988)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMZi25Pq3T8
7. Slick Rick – Children’s Story (1988)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HjNTu8jdukA
8. Big Daddy Kane – Aint No Half Steppin (1988)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2l2O-JOXG\_I
9. DJ Jazzy Jeff and The Fresh Prince – Parents Just Don’t Understand (1988)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jW3PFC86UNI
10. Public Enemy – Fight the Power (1990)
    1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PaoLy7PHwk

**Mar. 7 — The 1990s (The Golden Era)**

**Class Description:** In a 1990 article on its commercial breakthrough, Janice C. Thompson of Time wrote that hip hop “has grown into the most exciting development in American pop music in more than a decade.” Despite the lack of support from some black radio stations, hip hop became a best-selling music genre in the mid-1990s and the top selling music genre by 1999 with 81 million CDs sold. In this class, we will discuss MC Hammer, Wu Tang Clan, Snoop Dogg, The Notorious B.I.G., Nas, 2pac, Jay Z, Master P, Outkast, and Eminem.

*The 1990s Playlist:*

1. MC Hammer – U Can’t Touch This (1990)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otCpCn0l4Wo>
2. Wu Tang Clan – CREAM (1993)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PBwAxmrE194
3. Snoop Dogg – Gin and Juice (1993)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWCZse1iwE0
4. The Notorious B.I.G. – Juicy (1994)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_JZom\_gVfuw
5. Nas – The World is Yours (1994)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMJH2XWBQGU
6. Tupac – How Do You Want It (1996)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uA13uMi9Hp0
7. Jay Z – Dead Presidents (1996)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BCsxQg3NE4
8. Master P – Make’em Say Uhh (1997)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5ZvzIOO6aU
9. Outkast – Rosa Parks (1998)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drsQLEU0N1Y
10. Eminem – My Name Is (1999)
    1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNPnbI1arSE>

**Mar. 14 - Spring Break**

**March 21 — The 2000s**

**Class Description:** The popularity of hip hop music continued through the 2000s, and rap influences also found their way increasingly into mainstream pop during this period, mainly during the mid-2000s. During the mid-2000s, alternative hip hop secured a place in the mainstream, due in part to the crossover success of artists such as Kanye West and Lupe Fiasco. Crossover rap artists received critical acclaim from music critics and also manage to appeal to listeners of all ages, and span numerous musical genres – including rap, rock, R&B, punk, jazz, indie, country, pop, electronica and gospel. In this class, we will discuss Nelly, Ja Rule, Ludarics, T.I., 50 Cent, Kanye West, Fabulous, Young Jeezy, The Game, and Lupe Fiasco.

*The 2000s Playlist:*

1. Nelly – Country Grammar (2000)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5qKNlcUwKs
2. Ja Rule – Put It On Me (2000)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIrvZs2plUE
3. Ludacris – Roll Out (2001)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t21DFnu00Dc>
4. T.I. – Rubber band Man (2003)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjDT3rMSQLQ
5. 50 Cent – In Da Club (2003)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qm8PH4xAss
6. Kanye West – Through the Wire (2004)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jr\_5yTNvIt4
7. Fabolous – Breathe (2004)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XE9IDVVXUYs
8. Young Jeezy – And Then What (2005)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\_XhOKIHGH7Q
9. The Game – This is How We Do (2005)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PH34kMOjmQk>
10. Lupe Fiasco – Kick, Push (2006)
    1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gl83mI69nX4>

**March 28 — Women Rappers**

**Class Description:** Hip hop may be male-dominated, but the women who've made a mark on the culture are legends, heroes who broke boundaries and defied doubters. In this class, we will explore some of the legendary women MCs such as Salt-N-Pepper, Queen Latifah, MC Lyte, Da Brat, Foxy Brown, Lil Kim, Missy Elliot, Lauryn Hill, Trina, and Eve.

*Women rapper’s playlist:*

1. Salt N Pepper – Push It (1986)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCadcBR95oU
2. Queen Latifah – U.N.I.T.Y. (1993)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8cHxydDb7o
3. MC Lyte – Ruff Neck (1993)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygteZWP\_tL0
4. Da Brat – Funkdafied (1994)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99JS6ym5FNE>
5. Foxy Brown – I’ll Be Good (1996)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1oCsn39kKk
6. Lil Kim – Crush On You (1996)
   1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWC79TcWWsI>
7. Missy Elliot – Supa Dupa Fly (1997)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHcyJPTTn9w
8. Lauryn Hill – Doo-Wop (That Thing) (1998)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6QKqFPRZSA
9. Trina – Da Baddest Bitch (2000)
   1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABZDZY5aCLY
10. Eve – Who’s That Girl? (2001)
    1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8N9PL3Iz3xc

**Apr. 4 - CLA (No Class)**

**Apr. 11 – The Contemporary Era**

**Apr. 18 — The Contemporary Era Pt. 2**

**Apr. 25 — Research Day PT. 2 – Conferences**

**May 2 — (Final Presentations)**

**Classroom Policies**

**Civility Statement:** I enjoy student ideas and welcome them! Comments, questions, and opinions about the topics covered in class are encouraged, but please be mindful to express yourself using respectful and appropriate language. We would like to maintain a constructive learning environment. Therefore, no one is permitted to make offensive, intimidating, or malicious comments or behave in a disruptive manner. Additionally, the use of cell phones and other electronic communication devices will not be tolerated. Thank you in advance for adhering to the policy.

**Attendance Policy:** Because this course is a discussion course and the work we do in the class is designed to help you understand the reading and improve your writing, you must attend class.

To be excused, you must present sufficient documentation. Approved forms of documentation include medical excuses, police records, and documentation of funeral attendance. Of course, you are excused from class for religious holidays. If you are a member of a group that travels on behalf of the University (intramural teams are non-applicable), you must provide a letter from your coach or director along with a schedule of the classes you will miss due to travel.

**Late Work:** In the event that you are absent, you are STILL RESPONSIBLE for turning in all work by the dates listed on the syllabus. Unless we have made other plans together, in advance of the absence or missed assignment, I will not accept late work, so I encourage you to make arrangements with a classmate to submit any assignments if you will be absent.

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance**. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations: UT** Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).** Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

**The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364.

**Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671.

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

**Title IX:** *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit*[*uta.edu/eos*](http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/index.php)*. For information regarding Title IX, visit* [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX).

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**The English Writing Center (411LIBR)**: Hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mondays-Thursdays, 9 am to 3 pm Fridays and Noon to 5 pm Saturdays and Sundays. Walk In ***Quick Hits*** sessions during all open hours Mon-Thurs. Register and make appointments online at [http://uta.mywconline.com](http://uta.mywconline.com/). Classroom Visits, Workshops, and advanced services for graduate students and faculty are also available. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://www.uta.edu/owl) for detailed information.