

*Music 33: Analysis of Popular Music*  
*Fall 1999*

Instructor: Jocelyn Neal  
Course Time: MWF 11:00 - 11:50am  
Place: Hill Hall room 207

**Course Description:** This course examines the philosophical and methodological issues relevant to the analysis of popular music. Beginning with approaches to songwriting, this course adopts a hierarchical analytical model for popular music. Repertoire from early twentieth-century popular song through contemporary styles of rock will be addressed. Requirements: reading, listening, and transcription assignments, some composition, analysis, homework, quizzes, and exams. Prerequisite: Mus 37 (Theory-Musicianship III).

**Required Materials:**

Jack Perricone, *Melody in Songwriting*. A Berklee course packet -- available in the UNC bookstore.

Pat Pattison, *Managing Lyric Structure*. Boston: Berklee Press, 1991. Distributed by Hal Leonard Publications.

manuscript paper

access to web page <http://metalab.unc.edu/music/music33>

**Contact Instructor:**

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Office Hours: Mon 12 – 2pm  
Tues 12 – 2pm  
Wed 3 – 5pm  
Other times by appointment

*Email is the best way to get in touch with me.  
Don't hesitate to talk to me about any topic we address in this course.*

**Grading:** Grades will be determined as follows:

Homework and short projects:	40%
Midterm Analysis:	15%
Final Analysis Project & Presentation:	25%
Final Exam:	<u>20%</u>
	100%

**Homework:** Homework will be assigned regularly and may involve reading, listening, composing, and working exercises of various kinds. Homework will involve compositions, short individual analysis projects, group projects, and transcription work. Homework due dates will be specified for each assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted. In case of religious observance, extended illness, or extenuating circumstances, see the instructor. The lowest one-tenth of all homework assignments will be dropped in the calculation of the final grade. These dropped grades will account for the unexpected absence or shortfall on an assignment.

**Midterm and Final Analysis Projects:** Two significant analysis projects will be completed over the course of the semester. The final project will include a class-presentation component.

**Final Exam:** A final exam will cover the analytical topics and methods from the course.

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to abide by the University's Honor Code. No form of plagiarism, cheating, or compromising the work of another student will be allowed. At times students will be asked to work together on projects; unless specified, all assignments are to be completed individually.

**Attendance:** Attendance is required for all classes. In case of religious observance, extended illness, or extenuating circumstances, please see the instructor individually. Note that missed work normally cannot be made up.

**Attitude:** Some of the music we'll be studying you probably love; some you probably would never choose to listen to outside of this class. Please adopt a sense of adventure as we explore the variety of musical styles in twentieth-century popular music.

## Syllabus

Week 1	W	8/18	Introduction; Musical parameters, analytical methods, and issues in popular music studies.	Homework #1 assigned.
	F	8/20	Reading: Walser and McClary, "Start Making Sense!" Begin discussion of transcription techniques.	Homework #2 assigned.
Week 2	M	8/23	Notation and vocabulary: techniques of transcription and the language of popular music. Begin topics of lyric phrase. Reading: Pattison, pp. 1-10.	
	W	8/25	Phrase: lyric phrase, musical phrase, phrases in combination, the structure of a period and verse. Reading: Perricone, pp. 1-6, 8-11.	
	F	8/27	Reading: Frith, "Why do Songs have Words?"	Homework #3 assigned.
Week 3	M	8/30	Reading: Covach, "Analysis--What is it good for?"	
	W	9/1	Time Passes: compositional control over the flow of time in popular music. Reading: Pattison, pp. 11-18.	
	F	9/3	Verse analysis: musical analogs to lyric phrases. Reading: Perricone, pp. 25-34, 46-51.	Homework #4 assigned.
Week 4	M	9/6	Labor Day - NO CLASS	

	W	9/8	The Motive: rhythm of lyrics and melody. Reading: Pattison, pp. 19-33; Perricone, pp. 12-21, 66-77,	
	F	9/10	The Motive, continued.	Homework #5 assigned.
Week 5	M	9/13	Rhyme Structures: melodic and lyric rhymes. Reading: Pattison, pp. 34-52.	
	W	9/15	Analysis	
	F	9/17	Analysis	Homework #6 assigned.
Week 6	M	9/20	Form: Definition, purpose, identification. Song Form. Reading: Perricone, pp. 78-82; Pattison, pp. 53-73.	
	W	9/22	Song Form, Continued.	
	F	9/24	Song Form, Continued. Reading: Pattison, pp. 74-88.	Homework #7 assigned.
Week 7	M	9/27	Song Form Analysis. Reading: Forte, chapter 5.	
	W	9/29	Analysis	Midterm project assigned.
	F	10/1	Analysis	
Week 8	M	10/4	Blues: Introduction and 12-bar form	
	W	10/6	Blues analysis	
	F	10/8	Reading: Headlam, "Blues Transformations in the Music of Cream"	
Week 9	M	10/11	Blues analysis	
	W	10/13	Blues analysis; midterm projects due	
	F	10/15	Midterm Break - NO CLASS	
Week 10	M	10/18	Blues-based early rock. The sounds of Chuck Berry, Elvis, etc.	Homework #8 assigned.
	W	10/20	Elvis Analysis.	
	F	10/22	Interlude: Hook. Definitions, functions, identification, role. Reading: Pattison, pp. 89-102.	Homework #9 assigned.
Week 11	M	10/25	Doo-wop, early 50's ballad sounds.	
	W	10/27	Sequences and Modulation: harmonic techniques	
	F	10/29	Sequences and Modulation: harmonic techniques	Homework #10 assigned.
Week 12	M	11/1	Beach Boys analysis. Reading: "After Sundown: The Beach Boys' Experimental Music."	
	W	11/3	Beach Boys analysis.	

	F	11/5	Beatles analysis.	Homework #11 assigned.
Week 13	M	11/8	Beatles analysis.	
	W	11/10	Paul Simon and Simon & Garfunkel analysis. Reading: Walter Everett, "Swallowed by a Song."	
	F	11/12	Paul Simon analysis.	Homework #12 assigned. Final projects assigned.
Week 14	M	11/15	Country Songwriters: Hank Williams, Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson, etc.	
	W	11/17	Country Songwriters, continued.	
	F	11/19	Country Songwriters, continued.	Homework #13 assigned.
Week 15	M	11/22	Bob Dylan analysis.	
	W	11/24	Analysis.	
	F	11/26	Thanksgiving Break - NO CLASS	
Week 16	M	11/29	How to make sense out of what's on the Radio.	
	W	12/1	How to make sense out of what's on the Radio, continued.	
	F	12/3	Class presentations of final analysis projects	
Week 17	M	12/6	Class presentations of final analysis projects	

Final Exam: Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 noon.

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**Sample Assignment:**

For any three songs by Porter, Gershwin, Arlin, Berlin, or Carmichael, produce an analysis of form and harmonic structure that explains their relationship to standard models of song form. Prepare a 15-minute presentation (including an appropriate handout and use of recordings) that introduces your classmates to the songs, their use of song form, and their harmonic and phrase-structure characteristics. The handout should include a form diagram and presentation (a la Pattison) of relevant poetic structures.