

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

TOPICS IN POPULAR MUSIC - 23833

Last update 03-09-2020

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Musicology

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Edwin Seroussi

Coordinator Email: edwin.seroussi@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Tue. 12:00-13:00

Teaching Staff:

Course/Module description:

Given the centrality of popular music in modern life, its research has become a major field in contemporary musicology and ethnomusicology. This field burst into the musicological consciousness relatively late, but since the early 80s of the last century a very extensive academic literature on the subject has developed as well as research institutions focusing on popular music. Popular music is at the heart of a multidisciplinary research that combines musicology, sociology and cultural studies, in a way that challenges traditional disciplinary divisions. This research seminar reflects the development of this field in recent years. We will discuss different approaches to the study of popular music with an emphasis on theoretical and methodological issues. The question that forms the core of the seminar will be how the study of popular music may deepen and enrich historical, cultural and critical research. The critical encounter between technology (in its widest sense) and music will be most naturally addressed in the seminar.

Course/Module aims:

- Acquire research skills in the field of popular music research. This goal includes engaging yourself in the professional literature and its authors and a basic acquaintance with different genres of popular music from around the world.
- Develop the ability to analyze popular music from different angles (musical, aesthetic, historical, social, and political).
- Familiarize yourself with basic concepts relevant to the field, such as pop-rock, cosmopolitanism, hybridity, diaspora, youth culture, center and periphery, musical diplomacy, ethnicity, and nationalism.
- Practice and improve your academic writing skills about popular music.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Ability to analyze popular music from diverse critical perspectives
- Ability to distinguish between different genres of popular music from around the world
- Ability to express yourself about popular music in writing and orally

Attendance requirements(%):

80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The course will be conducted as a seminar, i.e. as a live discussion with the active participation of all the students.

Students should prepare the material for each lesson according to the assignments in the syllabus. Learning to listen critically to popular music will be a major task in this course.

Course/Module Content:

How to define the "popular" in musicology?
Analysis of popular music: textures, forms, tonality, rhythm, text-music relations.
Genres in popular music
Musical production and recording technologies
Popular music and advanced technologies
Original and copy: Hip hop and sampling
Place and displacement (diaspora)
Ethnicity and ethnic identity in popular music
Development of the Indie scene in the global arena
Popular music and social networks
Issues in musical diplomacy

Required Reading:

Fink, Robert Wallace, Latour, Melinda, and Wallmark, Zachary. *The Relentless Pursuit of Tone: Timbre in Popular Music*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Middleton, Richard. *Studying Popular Music*. Milton Keynes, Great Britain, 1990.

Moore, Allan F. 2012. *Song means: Analyzing and interpreting recorded popular song*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Zagorski-Thomas, Simon. *The Musicology of Record Production*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Additional Reading Material:

Shuker, Roy. *Popular Music: The Key Concepts*. 4rd ed. Routledge Key Guides. Lat. London ; New York: Routledge, 2016

Shuker, Roy, *Understanding popular music culture*. New York: Routledge, 2017

רגב, מוטי, סוציולוגיה של התרבות: מבוא כללי. רעננה: האוניברסיטה הפתוחה, 2011

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %
Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 20 %
Project work 60 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 20 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:

In light of the outbreak of Covid19 and the diverse reactions it has triggered in the popular music industry, the topic will be discussed in the seminar by listening to an updated playlist as well as reading texts published in recent months and weeks.