

**SAMPLE SYLLABUS**  
(NOT INTENDED FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THIS CLASS)

**DRAKE UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC**  
**MUS 119/HONR 178: MUSIC AND POLITICS**

Instructor: Dr. Eric Saylor (FAC 233) Office Phone 271-1989 ([Eric.Saylor@drake.edu](mailto:Eric.Saylor@drake.edu))  
Office hours: MTWR 1-2, or by appointment

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Stowe, David. *Swing Changes: Big Band Jazz in New Deal America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.

Saylor, Eric, ed. *Music and Politics Coursepack*; available at Copycat Photocopy Center (1203 25<sup>th</sup> St.)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Assuming you complete all requirements and assignments, you should be able to:

- Identify major intersections of musical and political thought
- Understand and apply (in writing) broad musical concepts in melody, harmony, rhythm, and texture, among others
- Describe different ways in which politics can manifest in music

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

You will be assigned frequent readings and will be expected to write a short paper (i.e., 2-3 pages, double-spaced) covering each of them. These should not be synopses (though you may have a sentence or two summarizing the reading), but should instead engage with the ideas or arguments laid out by the author. These will be graded as √+ (interesting and well-supported opinions, insights, or queries about the reading; grammatically coherent prose; 5 points), √ (demonstrates basic understanding of and engagement with major issues in the reading; some errors in grammar or syntax; 4 points), √- (limited or wildly erroneous engagement with material; significant problems with textual coherence; 3 points), and 0 (did not turn in; 0 points). These papers will be worth 40% of your grade (140 possible points), so don't blow them off. Late papers will not be accepted.

**MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS**

Both the midterm and final exams will be worth 20% (70 points) of your grade, or 40% total (140 points). These will be take-home tests organized as a series of essays on a selection of topics. You may (and will be expected to) use the assigned readings and notes from class to complete these exams. Most of the questions you will be given have no definitive answer. Your grade will be based in large part on how well you support and defend your own conclusions, and your ability to demonstrate your engagement with the question in prose; please see the general criteria for the daily papers outlined in "Writing Assignments" above for guidance in how I will grade the questions. I am more interested in your ability to engage intelligently with the questions than I am in the actual subjective conclusions at which you arrive, assuming that you correctly apply the ideas from your readings, class discussions, and other sources while doing so. You will have

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approximately one week to complete each exam. You are expected to cite all sources and to work independently of your colleagues; plagiarized exams, be they from your classmates or other sources, will receive zeroes.

**COURSE PROJECT**

You may choose one of the following options:

**TERM PAPER OPTION:** By the end of the fourth week of class, you must choose a topic not covered during class time (though it may lie within a larger area of study that we address, such as “Music and Race”) and prepare a research-oriented paper of approximately 10 pages on that subject. This should not simply be a book report or biographical survey; you should attempt to apply the ideas, methodologies, and practices seen in your class readings and discussions to your own paper. For instance, while an overview of Eminem’s career would not be suitable, a paper examining how Eminem’s race has affected the marketing of his music, or a paper examining whether the misogynist sentiments often found in his lyrics represent his own opinions or those of one of his “characters” would be. You may work individually or in pairs; those pursuing group projects will receive one grade for the group as a whole (but will only have to submit one paper). You may incorporate audio-visual elements into your paper; any musical examples should be burned onto an accompanying CD and clearly labeled.

**JOURNAL OPTION:** Beginning the first week of class, you will keep a journal (print or electronic) recording your observations of how music and politics interact over the course of the semester, accompanied by critical commentary and/or responses in the style of your daily paper responses. Your observations may come from materials you read in newspapers, magazines, journals, books, concerts, websites and blogs, radio, TV, movies, personal experiences, or any other fora where music and politics may interact. All published materials (including online publications) will need to be cited and dated, with copies or links provided; records of your engagement with unpublished materials (e.g., conversations, songs heard on the radio) will need to be dated. Grades will be based on the quantity of material, regularity of entries, and quality of writing (i.e., level of clarity and engagement with the topic at hand).

The course project will be worth 20% of your final grade (70 points). If you choose the Term Paper Option, failure to provide me with a topic by the end of the fourth week will result in a 5% drop in the final grade for each consecutive week that I am not given a topic. The grades for these papers will be based on a variety of criteria; the following list should provide a sense of how my expectations correlate to grades (please note that this is a *general* guide, not an absolute set of benchmarks):

**A:** Presents interesting and well-supported opinions, insights, observations, and/or queries of all material; grammatically coherent, clear, and consistently accurate prose; demonstrates exceptional creative engagement with or expression of the material

**B:** Demonstrates clear and detailed understanding of the assignment’s major issues with some acknowledgement of secondary points; generally clear writing with some errors in grammar or syntax; a few examples of significant, individual creative expression

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**C:** Basic (if limited) engagement with major issues with little or no engagement of secondary material; consistently displays grammatical or syntactical errors; demonstrates basic creative competence in terms of understanding or expressing the subject

**D:** cursory or erroneous engagement with material; significant problems with textual coherence; unclear whether or not the writer understands the subject

**F:** Does not fulfill requirements laid out in the assignment; textually incoherent; consistently erroneous assertions; writer does not appear to understand the subject at all

### **GRADING**

Final grades are determined from the percentage of points you accumulate from the 350 points possible over the course of the class. The letter grade breakdown is by ten percentage points each, so A=315-350 points, B=280-314 points, C=245-279 points, D=210-244 points, and F=209 points or below.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend and arrive on time for every class, to complete all assignments before coming to class, and to bring all necessary books and readings. While attendance and class participation are not formally factored into your final grade, they can affect my final decision if you end the term with a borderline grade. In order to minimize distractions and interruptions, please turn off all cell phones, pagers, text messaging devices, Blackberries, and any other electronic communications equipment by the beginning of class. Laptop computers are to be used for taking notes only; do not check, write, or send e-mail or surf the web during class.

### **ONLINE LISTENING EXAMPLES**

A variety of listening examples (MP3s), organized by subject, will be posted on the Blackboard page for this class, located at <http://bb.drake.edu> via the "Course Documents" link. For the record and for copyright purposes, these examples are all intended for your personal use only. You may download them onto your hard drive or iPod, or burn them to a CD, but they are NOT to be redistributed through any electronic or mechanical medium. These excerpts are intended for the educational purposes of this class, with the expectation that you will delete them from your hard drive after the end of the term.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty, according to the College of Arts and Sciences' definition listed in the Drake University Student Handbook (<http://www.drake.edu/dos/handbook/academic.php>) involves "any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others." This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism ("misrepresenting another's ideas, phrases, discourse, or works as one's own") and cheating ("the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations"). Penalties for violating academic honesty standards range from failing grades on the assignment or exam to expulsion from the university. If you are unsure whether or not certain practices violate the principles of academic integrity, please ask me for clarification. For more, please refer to the *Academic Dishonesty: Cheating and Plagiarism* entry contained in the Drake Student Handbook.

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Lecture-Exam-Paper Schedule; Reading and Listening Assignments

<u>Week/Date</u>	<u>Readings</u>
1 8/25-27	<u>Censorship</u> : W: Plato, Aristotle, Bloom
2 9/3	<u>Censorship</u> : W: Nuzum, Ch. 11; Winfield and Davidson, Ch. 3
3 9/8-10	<u>Censorship</u> : M: Goldstein, Ch. 5; W: Nuzum, Ch. 2; Gore; Walser, Ch. 5
4 9/15-17	<u>Music and Nation</u> : M: Stradling and Hughes, Ch. 1; W: Vaughan Williams, excerpts from <i>National Music</i> ; Saylor, Intro and Ch. 1; <b>project proposals due</b>
5 9/22-24	<u>Music and Nation</u> : M: Werth; W: Tertz
6 9/29-10/1	<u>Music and Nation</u> : M: McBurney, "Surviving Stalin;" Treitler ("Chaos Instead of Music"); W: Levi, Ch. 1 & 4
7 10/6-8	<u>Music and Nation</u> : M: Ross, "Death Fugue;" <u>Music and Race</u> : W: Margolick excerpts
8 10/13-15	<u>Music and Race</u> : M: Stowe, Intro and Ch. 1; <b>midterm exam assigned</b> ; W: Garrett, "Chinatown, my Chinatown"
9 10/22	<u>Music and Race</u> : M: Stowe, Ch. 2; <b>midterm exam due</b>
10 10/27-29	<u>Music and Religion</u> : M: Wagner, "The Jews in Music;" W: Nasr, "Islam and Music"
11 11/3-5	<u>Music and Religion</u> : M: Beaujon, Chs. 2, 7, 10; <u>Music and Political Expression</u> : W: <i>Klinghoffer</i> readings
12 11/10-12	<u>Music and Political Expression</u> : M: Greenway, Ch. 1; W: Street, "Rock, Pop, and Politics"
13 11/17-21	<u>Music and Gender</u> : M: Walser, Ch. 4; W: Thomas, "Was G. F. Handel Gay?"
14 11/24	<u>Music and Gender</u> : M: Scholz, Ch. 10
15 12/1-3	<u>Music and Patronage</u> : M: Winfield and Davidson, Ch. 4; W: Stowe, Ch. 3
16 12/8-10	<u>Music and Patronage</u> : M: Babbitt, "Who Cares if You Listen?" <b>final exam assigned</b> ; W: Polin, "Why Minimalism Now?"
17 12/15	FINAL EXAM PERIOD, 12-1:50 pm; <b>final exam due</b>

**THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE!**

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**MUSIC AND POLITICS (MUS 119/HONR 178)**

Sample coursepack contents

1. Taruskin, Richard, and Piero Weiss, eds. "Plato's Musical Idealism" and "Aristotle on the Purposes of Music." In *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, 2d ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson Schirmer, 2007.
2. Bloom, Allan. *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987.
3. Nuzum, Eric. *Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America*. New York: Perennial, 2001.
4. Davidson, Sandra. "Two Perspectives on Ice-T." In *Bleep! Censoring Rock and Rap Music*, edited by Betty Winfield and Sandra Davidson, 21-34. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999.
5. Goldstein, Robert Justin. *Political Censorship of the Arts and Press in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989.
6. Gore, Tipper. *Raising PG Kids in an X-Rated World*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987.
7. Walser, Robert. *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1993.
8. Hughes, Meirion, and Robert Stradling. *The English Musical Renaissance, 1840-1940: Constructing a National Music*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001.
9. Vaughan Williams, Ralph. Excerpts from *National Music and Other Essays*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987; Clarendon Press, 1996.
10. Saylor, Eric. "The Significance of Nation in the Music of Ralph Vaughan Williams." Ph.D. dissertation. University of Michigan, 2003.
11. Werth, Alexander. *Musical Uproar in Moscow*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973.
12. Tertz, Abram. *On Socialist Realism*. Translated by George Dennis. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960.
13. McBurney, Gerard. "Surviving Stalin." *Index on Censorship* 6 (1998): 52-61.

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14. Anonymous [*Pravda*]. "Chaos Instead of Music." In *Source Readings in Music History*, edited by Oliver Strunk, rev. ed., edited by Leo Treitler. Vol. 7: *The Twentieth Century*, edited by Robert Morgan, 127-29. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1998.
15. Levi, Erik. *Music in the Third Reich*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994.
16. Ross, Alex. *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2007.
17. Margolick, David. *Strange Fruit: The Biography of a Song*. New York: The Ecco Press, 2001.
18. Garrett, Charles. "Chinatown, Whose Chinatown? Defining America's Borders With Musical Orientalism." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 57, no. 1 (Spring 2004): 119-73.
19. Wagner, Richard. "Jews in Music." In *Wagner on Music and Drama*, selected by Albert Goldman and Evert Sprinchorn, 51-59. Translated by H. Ashton Ellis. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1964.
20. Nasr, Sayyed Hossein. "Islam and Music: The Legal and Spiritual Dimensions." In *Enchanting Powers: Music in the World's Religions*, ed. Lawrence Sullivan. Religions of the World Series. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.
21. Beaujon, Andrew. *Body Piercing Saved My Life: Inside the Phenomenon of Christian Rock*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006.
22. Tommasini, Anthony, Richard Taruskin, Martin Kettle, and others. Articles and letters on John Adams's *The Death of Klinghoffer*.
23. Greenway, John. *American Folksongs of Protest*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1953.
24. Street, John. "Rock, Pop, and Politics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, edited by Simon Frith, Will Straw, and John Street, 243-55. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
25. Thomas, Gary. "Was George Frideric Handel Gay? On Closet Questions and Cultural Politics." In *Queering the Pitch*, edited by Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary Thomas. New York: Routledge, 1994.
26. Scholz, Piotr. *Eunuchs and Castrati: A Cultural History*. Translated by John Broadwin and Shelly Finch. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2001.

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27. Slayden, David. "The Politics of Aesthetic Response: Cultural Conservatism, the NEA, and Ice-T." In *Bleep! Censoring Rock and Rap Music*, edited by Betty Winfield and Sandra Davidson, 35-50. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999.
28. Babbitt, Milton. "Who Cares if You Listen?" *High Fidelity* 8, no. 2 (February 1958): 38-40. In *Source Readings in Music History*, edited by Oliver Strunk, rev. ed., edited by Leo Treitler. Vol. 7: *The Twentieth Century*, edited by Robert Morgan. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1998.
29. Polin, Claire. "Why Minimalism Now?" In *Music and the Politics of Culture*, ed. Christopher Norris, 106-27. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1989.