

BELLEVUE COLLEGE  
SOCIAL SCIENCE DIVISION  
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL & ETHNIC STUDIES

**CES 210: Ethnic Experiences in Art & Music**  
**HIP-HOP THEORY & CULTURE**

**Syllabus**

*"Beyond the walls of intelligence*

*life is defined..."*

-Nas

**Instructor:** Dr. Daudi Abe

**Quarter:** Fall 2014

**Phone:** (425) 564-2331

**Office:** D-110

**Email:** [Daudi.Abe@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:Daudi.Abe@bellevuecollege.edu)

**Course Description:** Hip-hop culture, and rap music in particular, has emerged as the signature medium for transformative expression in the aftermath of the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Today hip-hop culture is firmly entrenched within the larger global community. Music, entertainment, fashion, politics, and education are just some of the areas that have become increasingly influenced by hip-hop culture.

This course endeavors to identify and critically examine the theoretical foundations of hip-hop culture and rap music. Through a rigorous interrogation of the evolution within this genre, students will develop a clear understanding of the conceptual fundamentals of hip-hop philosophy and the community from which it originated. Further consideration will be given to the implications that the background, music, style, and influence of the hip-hop generation have upon a multicultural nation and world.

**Course Objective:** Since the 1970s, rap music has grown into a steady and undeniable voice of protest, change and celebration for diverse groups of young people. What gives this art form added significance, however, is that it was created, authored, and today is still dominated primarily by young African

American males, who have perennially maintained a status as one of the most disenfranchised groups in the short history of the United States. Rap music and hip-hop culture have provided a platform of expression with mass appeal that has given a voice to a segment of society often left silent. This course will employ the transformative nature of hip-hop culture as a lens for teaching and learning about how important issues such as racism, oppression, and poverty affect people's lives. The use of this particular lens in approaching these problems will attempt to promote further development of critical analysis and thinking skills within the student, which is the primary goal of this course.

**Student Outcomes:** The United States is highly unique in the incredible amount of racial, ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity it possesses. Thus, it is imperative that its citizens possess the willingness and ability to relate to and understand individuals with different backgrounds. The inclusive nature and broad appeal of hip-hop culture make it an ideal conceptual tool to explore the dynamics of oppression within society at large. A successful student in this course will:

1. Increase skill development in critical thinking, reading, and writing.
2. Further your knowledge base of social issues and ideas within an increased frame of reference.
3. Develop the ability to sort and decode messages of transformation and oppression.
4. Become familiar with the role and contributions of hip-hop culture to humanity.
5. Understand your potential position as a difference maker in the world.

**Please respect the course, other students, and yourself by silencing your all phones during class.**

**Course Reading Packet will be available on course website.**

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

- Class Discussion and Participation-----100 points
- Reflection Papers-----350 points
- Film Response Series-----400 points
- Midterm Exam-----125 points
- Final Exam-----125 points

## Description of Assignments

**1. Class Discussion and Participation:** All students are expected to attend class regularly. Although it is understood that perfect attendance is not realistic for every student, chronic tardiness and absence will have an adverse affect on a student's ability to remain informed and connected to the inner workings of the course. During class sessions, it is the student's responsibility to keep a critical eye and ear tuned to the materials presented and topics discussed. As not every student is comfortable offering comments and opinions in a large group setting, there will be sufficient opportunity for students to engage in dialogue and discussion in small and mini-group situations.

Students also are expected to remain current with course materials on the course calendar. Reading preparedness on the part of students contributes to richer understanding of lectures and deeper class discussions. Student interactions with assigned materials should help to develop a sense of the major themes and concepts contained within.

**2. Reflection Papers:** Throughout the quarter various videos and readings will be presented to the class. Videos will include documentaries and movies that capture and express the spirit of the culture. Students will prepare critical responses to these portions of the curriculum that will generally range anywhere from 2-4 pages. **Quotes and/or references from course readings attached to each assignment are required in order to receive full credit on all reflection papers, except for Reflection Paper #1.**

**3. Film Response Series:** Throughout the quarter, a series of hip-hop related films will be shown in class. After viewing each movie write 3-5 pages linking course readings to your observations of the major cultural points and symbols in the film. Follow-up discussions in class will accompany each movie.

**4. Midterm Exam:** The mid-term exam will come from course materials. An in-class review will be held before the exam.

**5. Final Exam:** The final exam will be in essay format and require a blue book.

**All assignments must be typed, double spaced, spell checked, stapled, and submitted in a timely manner. Late assignments will receive half credit unless prior arrangements are made. Once the mid-term examination has passed, there will be no make up tests given.**

All headings on written assignments must include the following:

Student's Full Name

Course Title and Number

Date Submitted

**A short, concise, and meaningful title**

**NOTE:** There may be language within this course that some people could find objectionable. Be that as it may, the issues discussed within these materials are important enough to the culture of the course to warrant this exercise of my discretion.

**Plagiarism:** Use of another person's words or ideas as your own without proper citation is plagiarism. It is a serious offense in any educational setting and can result in expulsion. Suspected cases of plagiarism are reviewed by the Dean of the Social Science Division as well as Conduct and Standards Committee, which deals with academic/student misconduct.

## **WEEKLY SCHEDULE:**

### WEEK 1:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 1

Assignment: Reflection Paper #1: Music Autobiography

### WEEK 2:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 2

Assignment: Reflection Paper #2: The Beginnings of Hip-Hop

WEEK 3:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 3

Assignment: Film Response Series Part 1

WEEK 4:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 4

Assignment: Reflection Paper #3: Destroy All Lines

WEEK 5:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 5

Assignment: Film Response Series Part 2

WEEK 6:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 6

Assignment: Reflection Paper #4: The Crack Epidemic

- **MID-TERM EXAM**

WEEK 7:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 7

Assignment: Film Response Series Part 3

WEEK 8:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 8

Assignment: Reflection Paper #5: The West Coast

WEEK 9:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 9

Assignment: Film Response Series Part 4

WEEK 10:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 10

Assignment: Reflection Paper #6: Gender, Sexuality & Hip-Hop

WEEK 11:

Reading: Course Reading Packet Section 11

Assignment: Reflection Paper #7: Seattle Hip-Hop

## **HUM 125: Hip-Hop Theory and Culture Grade Sheet**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Qtr/Year Spring 2014

- |    |                            |                  |
|----|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Attendance & Participation | _____ 100 points |
| 2. | Reflection Papers          | _____ 350 points |
| 3. | Film Response Series       | _____ 400 points |
| 4. | Mid-Term Exam              | _____ 125 points |
| 5. | Final Exam                 | _____ 125 points |

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_ 1100 points

**FINAL GRADE** \_\_\_\_\_

## **PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE DIVISION**

Revised Summer 2007

### **Cheating, Stealing and Plagiarizing\***

Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Dean of Student Services.

### **Incomplete**

If a student fails to complete all the required work for a course, an instructor may assign the grade of Incomplete ("I"). The student must complete the coursework by the end of the next quarter, or receive the assigned letter grade (usually an "F").

### **F Grade**

Students who fail a course will receive a letter grade of "F."

### **Final Examination Schedule**

The Social Science Division will adhere to the final examination schedule as stated in the BC Schedule. Final examinations will be held at the end of each quarter at fixed times. Instructors will not give examinations in advance of the regular schedule. A student who is absent from any examination held at any time during the quarter may forfeit the right to make up the examination. If, for illness or some other circumstance beyond the student's control, the student is unable to be present at any scheduled examination and has contacted the instructor on a timely basis, the student may be permitted to take such examination at a time designated by the instructor.

### **Withdrawal From Class**

College policy states that students must formally withdraw from a class by the end of the seventh week of the quarter (Registration Office, B125). If a student has not withdrawn by that date, an appropriate letter grade will be assigned for the course.

### **Hardship Withdrawal**

Instructors may assign the grade of "HW" (hardship withdrawal) at their discretion in the event that a student cannot complete the coursework due to extreme and exceptional circumstances. Students may also contact the Enrollment Services office BEFORE grades are assigned in cases of hardship.

### **Students Who Require Disability Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities who have accommodation needs are encouraged to meet with the Disability Support Services (DSS) office located in B132 (telephone 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110), to establish their eligibility for accommodation. The DSS office will provide each eligible student with an accommodation letter. Students who require accommodation in class should review the DSS accommodation letter with each instructor during the first week of the quarter.

Students with mobility challenges who may need assistance in case of an emergency situation or evacuation should register with Disability Support Services, and review those needs with the instructor as well.

### **Distribution of Grades**

Grades will not be posted in the Social Science Division or in faculty offices, and secretaries will not give out grades. Students should access their grades through the BC Web site.

### **Return of Papers and Tests**

Paper and/or Scantron score sheet returns will be arranged in the following ways ONLY: by mail, if student supplies the instructor with stamped, self-addressed envelope (with appropriate postage); or by



the instructor designating a time and place whereby the student may retrieve his/her papers. Unclaimed papers and/or Scantron score sheets must be kept by the instructor for a minimum of sixty (60) instructional days following the end of the quarter.

\*If you are accused of cheating, stealing exams and/or plagiarism, there is a Bellevue College Student Discipline and Appeals Procedure (the right to due process) which you may pursue. Contact the office of Division Chair (D110), the Dean of Student Services (B231A) or the Associated Student Body (C212) for information regarding the appeals process.