Music & Society (WRTG 3020-19)
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Overview
Meant for Upperclassmen, this course will help you hone your skills in critical thinking, argumentative writing, and oral presentation. Of course, you will also learn quite a bit about how music functions in society, as that will be our vehicle for instruction. The course will be conducted as an intensive workshop. Although there is no formal prerequisite, the course presumes that you already have some facility in writing. The course will occasionally address sentence-level writing problems such as grammar, but if your knowledge of grammar is scant, start reviewing. Instruction will focus mainly on strategies of inquiry, analysis and argument -- that is, on discovering (and then shaping) relationships among your ideas, so that your point becomes both clear and persuasive.

Core goals for the course:
1. To help you shape, and then eventually defend, your own ideas and opinions
2. To hone your analytical skills: your ability to judge, to make sense of things
3. To help you better understand music's impact on your life
4. To introduce you to the many functions of music
5. To point out the fundamentals of music – melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, etc.
6. To heighten your awareness of the sounds that surround you
7. To explore what music means to society – what emotions it evokes, what values it reflects, and so on.
8. To help you improve your interpersonal skills via oral presentations and interactions with classmates
9. To sharpen your oral presentation skills
10. To help you achieve a "graceful" writing style

Texts and materials
Please have duplicated drafts (typed, double-spaced, and stapled) ready when due. Drafts are required, but not graded. Please number and date all drafts. I will not accept late papers or papers that have not been reviewed.

Required text:
1. Music & Society Reader WRTG 3020-19 (packet of readings available at Campus Bookstore)

You will receive readings and other course materials in the form of handouts. Essential tools for writing are a good dictionary and thesaurus; I recommend Webster's Collegiate and Roget's, respectively.

Attendance
Regular attendance and active participation are crucial to this course. Students who miss class will be expected to ask classmates for the information missed. Excessive absences (i.e., more than three) will negatively affect your term grade at the rate of one-third grade per absence. Do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. Five absences will result in an F for the course. If, for reasons beyond your control, you cannot
meet these standards, you have the right to ask me for an IW – essentially, an incomplete. Students who miss two classes in the first two weeks will be administratively dropped. Two late arrivals/early departures count as one absence. If you are late, make sure I haven’t marked you absent.

Grading standards
These standards apply to papers as well as other written assignments. Grades for oral presentations are based on clarity, form, and delivery.

A Exceptional in form and content: responding to a topic or question that many find interesting, it offers an original point of view and follows a compelling narrative or line of reasoning. If need be, the paper responds to counterarguments thoughtfully, and it certainly analyzes evidence or one’s experience in an in-depth manner. The style is graceful and error-free.

B Clearly written, well-developed, interesting, showing above average thought and writing craft. The paper may have some minor difficulties regarding the narrative, argument or style, but no major flaws that compromise the point of view it presents or the readability of its prose. OR An essay that is far less ambitious than an "A" paper; this is an essay that may be well-written and organized, but whose narrative, reasoning, and argument may be nonetheless somewhat routine or self-evident.

C A mixture of strengths and weaknesses. The paper may be readable, reasonably well-organized, and support a point of view satisfactorily, but it will have some important unresolved problems concerning the quality of the claim, the line of reasoning, the narrative, the use of evidence, style, or grammar. The paper may fulfill the basic requirements of the assignment, but say little of genuine importance or significance.

D Seriously deficient in content, form, style, or mechanics. It may be disorganized, illogical, confusing, unfocused, or contain pervasive errors that impair readability.

F Incoherent, formless, or not turned in when due.

Participation grading standards (class discussion, oral and written critiques)

A Excellent critics are always prepared and know the strengths and weaknesses of the paper at hand. Moreover, they consistently suggest ways to make the author’s point clearer and more persuasive. These critics offer their insights freely and are noted as excellent critics by their classmates. Contrary to popular opinion, excellent critics do not dominate discussions.

B Above average critics differ from excellent critics mostly in their lack of consistency. They may also wait for me to call on them, instead of taking the initiative. They are noted as good critics by their classmates.

C Average critics are sometimes prepared, sometimes not. These critics may have some trouble discerning the paper’s strengths and weaknesses; thus, they may not be sure how to make it clearer, more interesting, or more persuasive. Average critics generally wait to be called on. Again, they are noted as average critics by their classmates.
Below average critics are generally not prepared and do not participate in class discussion.

**Approximate Calculation of Grades**
*Please note that there is no extra-credit

25% Answers to reading questions
10% Participation (in-class participation, comments on classmates’ drafts, timely submission of work)
5% Miscellaneous homework
10% Musical Taste in Adolescence paper
10% Functional Music paper*
10% Musical Genre paper*
15% Personal Essay on a musical theme
15% Persuasive Essay on a musical theme

*The oral presentation component of these papers is worth 10% of the overall grade.

**Plagiarism**
If you submit another person’s work as your own or fail to credit the ideas of others, you will receive an F in the course.

**Special Notes**
If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, let me know early in the semester so your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to bring documentation of your disability to the Disabilities Service Office in Willard 322 (phone 303.492.8671).

If you speak English as a second language, let me know before the third class period. Though it may not be necessary, the Program for Writing and Rhetoric offers a version of WRTG 3020 in the ESL format.