American Music MUS 1309
Fall, 2026

Professor: Nicolas Hurt, MM
Email: nicolas.hurt@sulross.edu
Class Meetings: MWF 11:00AM -11:50AM, MAB 302
Office Hours: MWF 12:00PM - 1:00PM, FAB 202 or by appointment

Course Description
This course develops student understanding of American Music through a survey of major musical figures, works, and movements in American history. This course will familiarize students with musical styles, pieces, composers, and instruments as they developed through each major historical period. The core curriculum category into which this course falls is Creative Arts.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO). All courses aligned with specific degree programs should use the Student Learning Outcomes of that program that are reported to SACSCOC. The Academic Assessment Program Coordinators can provide the SLOs for each degree plan.

Marketable Skills. All courses aligned with specific degree programs should use the Marketable Skills of that program that are reported to THECB. The Academic Assessment Program Coordinators can provide the Marketable Skills for each degree plan. They also are located at srinfo.sulross.edu/hb2504/.

Personal Responsibility: to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making SLO: Students will develop principles of personal responsibility for living in a diverse world; to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

Social Responsibility: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities SLO: Students will develop principles of social responsibility for living in a diverse world, to include the ability

Marketable Skills:
The music student graduating with a BM in music (instrumental or vocal performance; instrumental or vocal education; or music business) should have the following Marketable Skills:

1. Ability to collaborate and network with others to achieve a shared goal, utilizing problem solving, flexibility and improvisation, and consideration of others' thoughts and creative processes.*
2. Proficiency in public speaking and writing about music, especially in teaching basic musical concepts to all ages and incorporating technology for presentation and production.*
3. Ability to prepare and perform a program of age-appropriate, relevant, and diverse repertoire, as an individual or part of an ensemble, to an audience, advocating for the arts through engaging with and serving the community.

4. Experience using problem solving skills and abstract thinking to analyze compositions and examine their aesthetic through musical and extra-musical concepts, such as historical context and text setting.
5. Ability to create and disseminate basic marketing and public relations materials, as well as resumes, websites, and digital portfolios.

Marketable Skills specifically addressed by this course indicated with *

Required Materials

- Blackboard access and internet access (these services provided on campus)
- Textbook with companion website
- Spotify account (free)
- All work should be typed, either using a word processing program, or better still, a cloud based web application such as Blackboard, Google Docs, Office 365, etc.

Textbook options

See Blackboard for Textbook.

Class Attendance and Participation

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Therefore, students should attend all classes. Attendance includes being punctual for class and ready to engage with the professor and the day's material. The instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term. In accordance with the instructor's policy, the instructor has the right to penalize students who are out of compliance with the class attendance policy.

Instructor Policy

Four (4) unexcused absences equals the loss of a letter grade. If you made an A but have four (4) unexcused absences, you will receive a B for the course - if you made an A but have twelve (12) unexcused absences you will receive a D for the Course. Four classes in which the student is late equals one unexcused absence. If you are late to class four (4) times, you will receive an unexcused absence for the fourth day entering late.

Authorized/Excused Absences Statement

An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized/excused absence. While every effort will be made by departments to minimize missed class time of students by careful scheduling of authorized University activities, when a student has to miss a class due to an authorized University activity, it will be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor of the class in advance. The department responsible for the authorized University activity will also notify instructors through the Student Life Office by providing an excused absence list to the office.

Instructors will give students participating in an authorized University activity the opportunity to make up class work, including tests, within a reasonable time and at the convenience of the instructor. Should an instructor have an attendance policy that allows for the dropping of a student after a certain number of absences, authorized/excuses absences will not be counted towards that number of absences. Any student dropped for excessive absences will receive either an "F" or a "FX" depending upon the faculty member's discretion

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted unless accompanied by a written excuse such as a doctor's note, military orders, or official University excuse. Unless an emergency, these should be discussed with the instructor before the due date passes.

Use of Laptops / Tablets / Phones in Class

I am aware that some students use their laptops, tablets or even phones to take notes in class. Unfortunately it is impossible for me to see every student's laptop / tablet / phone screen and make sure that they are in fact writing notes and not working on another course, looking up things on the internet, or using social media. In my experience teaching I have found that students who write their notes in a notebook do better and are more engaged in class. Therefore I do not allow the use of laptops / tablets / phones in my class. This class is 50 minutes long, there are 1440 minutes in a day, use these 50 minutes to fully engage in the material - you'll have plenty of time to use your screens after class.

Student Responsibilities Statement

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Handbook and the Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog and for abiding by the University rules and regulations. Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws.

ADA Statement

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director or Ronnie Harris, LPC, Counselor, at 432-837-8203 or email mschwartze@sulross.edu or ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

Grading Procedures

Your final grade will be determined by the following formula:
1. Participation in Class Discussion – 10%
2. Quizzes – 30%
3. Social Responsibility Assignments – 20%
4. Concert attendance and Reports – 20%
5. Final Presentation – 20%

Grading Scale
A=90-100 B=80-89 C=70-79 D=60-69 F=below 60

The instructor will provide detailed information and due dates for assignments, concert reports, and the final video presentation on a separate handout.

Professional Communication Policy

- All communication with me should be done through email, Blackboard or Office hours.
- You are expected to check your email and Blackboard on a regular basis.

SRSU Library Services
The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LobolD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

Major Assignments and corresponding due dates	
Social / Personal Responsibility Assignment 1	**9.16**
Concert Report 1	**10.12**
Social / Personal Responsibility Assignment 2	**11.30**
Concert Report 2	**5.2**

Fall Semester 2026
Course Outline (Subject to Change)

Week 1

MON	8.24	Introduction / Syllabus
WED	8.26	How to listen
FRI	8.28	Chapter 1 - Sacred Music in the European Colonies

Week 2

MON	8.31	Chapter 1 - Sacred Music in the European Colonies cont.
WED	9.2	Chapter 2 - Secular Music in the Colonies and Early Republic
FRI	9.4	Chapter 4 - African American Music Before the Civil War

Week 3

MON	9.7	LABOR DAY
WED	9.9	Chapter 5 - Cultivating Musical Tastes in Antebellum America
FRI	9.11	QUIZ 1 Review Day (Part 1 - pre Civil War)

Week 4

MON	9.14	QUIZ 1 (Part 1 - pre Civil War)
WED	9.16	Support the Local Music Scene - Social / Personal Responsibility exercise 1
FRI	9.18	Chapter 7 - American Indian Music, Folk Songs, Spirituals, and their Collectors

Week 5

MON	9.21	Chapter 7 - American Indian Music, Folk Songs, Spirituals, and their Collectors cont.
WED	9.23	Chapter 8 - Band Music, Gospel Hymns, Popular Songs after the Civil War
FRI	9.25	Chapter 9 - Classical Music Comes of Age

Week 6

MON	9.28	Chapter 10 - Popular Music, Theater, and Dance at the Turn of the Century
WED	9.30	QUIZ 2 Review Day (Part 2 Civil War - WW1)
FRI	10.2	QUIZ 2 (Part 2 Civil War - WW1)

Week 7

MON	10.5	Chapter 11 - The Rise of Blues and Gospel Music
WED	10.7	Chapter 11 - The Rise of Blues and Gospel Music cont.
FRI	10.9	Chapter 12 - Jazz in the Modern Era

Week 8

MON	10.12	Chapter 12 - Jazz in the Modern Era cont. / Concert Report 1 Due
WED	10.14	Chapter 13 - Country and Folk Music in the Modern Era
FRI	10.16	Chapter 13 - Country and Folk Music in the Modern Era cont.

Week 9

MON	10.19	Chapter 14 - Popular Songs on Stage and Screen
WED	10.21	Chapter 16 - Modernist Music during and After the Great Depression
FRI	10.23	NO CLASS / VIDEO SHOOT

Week 10

MON	10.26	Easy Class - Serenade, I Miss You
WED	10.28	QUIZ 3 (WW1 - WW2)
FRI	10.30	Chapter 17 - Classical Music in the Postwar Era

Week 11

MON	11.2	Chapter 18 - Jazz, Musical Theater, and Film Music in the Postwar Era
WED	11.4	Chapter 19 - Country and Folk Music in the Postwar Era
FRI	11.6	Chapter 19 - Country and Folk Music in the Postwar Era cont.

Week 12

MON	11.9	Chapter 20 - Popular Music in the Early Postwar Era
WED	11.11	Chapter 20 - Popular Music in the Early Postwar Era cont.
FRI	11.13	Chapter 21 - Popular Music in the Late Postwar Era

Week 13

MON	11.16	DIANA FLORES GUEST CLASS
WED	11.18	QUIZ 4 Review Day
FRI	11.20	QUIZ 4 - (Post WW2)

Week 14

MON	11.23	THANKSGIVING
WED	11.25	THANKSGIVING
FRI	11.27	THANKSGIVING

Week 15

MON	11.30	Support the Local Music Scene - Social / Personal Responsibility exercise 2
WED	12.2	Presentations (Concert report 2 Due)

FINAL EXAM: Presentations
TBD

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