

African & African American Studies 4451

Rhetoric of Hip Hop

Fall 2012

Instructor: Mr. Derrick Lanois
Email: dlanois@memphis.edu
Skype Office Hours: TR 9 am - 11 am
Username: dl_phd

Course Description

The Rhetoric of Hip Hop is broken up into two distinct ideas—rhetoric and Hip Hop. Rhetoric is defined for our use as the art of influencing the thought and conduct of an audience, the ability to use language effectively, the undue use of exaggeration or display/bombast, and the art of making persuasive oratory. Hip Hop is the second distinct idea covered in this class and it is both a cultural phenomenon as well as a generation. Originally Hip hop included four elements—DJing, MCing, breakdancing, and graffiti each with its own rules, regulations, and customs. As the cultural and generation came into their own other things were added such as clothing, liquor, hair styles, shoes, jewelry, cars, and a host of other material artifacts. The Hip Hop generation according to Bakari Kitwana runs between the years of 1965-1984. This class examines the intersection between rhetoric and Hip Hop.

Learning Objectives

1. The students will learn the original elements of Hip Hop.
2. The students will learn the factors that gave birth to Hip Hop.
3. The students will synthesize theories to analyze Hip Hop as a political movement, generation, performance, rhetoric, and the body as a text.
4. The student will outline the major movements, figures, ideals, and scholarship on Hip Hop. The Student will understand the critiques and drawbacks of Hip Hop Culture and generation.
5. The students will establish connections between disciplines and pursue knowledge through a variety of sources.
6. The students will analyze print and non-print materials, make comparisons of particulars, draw and support conclusions.

Required Text

That's the Joint: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader, 2nd Edition, Edited by Murray Forman & Mark Anthony Neal

Check It While I Wreck It: Black Womanhood, Hip-Hop Culture, and the Public Sphere
by Gwendolyn Pough

Highly Suggested Reading

Thug Life: Race, Gender, and the Meaning of Hip-Hop by Michael Jeffries

Grading Assignment	Percentage
Exams	25%
Quizzes	20%
Participation	30%
Textual Analysis	25%

Grades Final Grades will use the +/- system

A+	100-98	A	97-92	A-	91-90
B+	89-86	B	85-83	B-	82-80
C+	79-76	C	75-73	C-	72-70
D+	69-65	D	64-60		
F	Below 60				

Requirements:

- **Exams (2):**
The exam questions may be True/False, Multiple Choice, Matching, Short ID and/or Essay.
- **Quizzes**
The class will have weekly quizzes over the previous week's readings, lectures, and discussions on the lecture/readings. The format for the quizzes is— True/False, Multiple Choice, Matching, and/or Short ID.
- **Participation**
Each student is expected to contribute to the dialogue/discourse/discussion of the class. The student accomplishes this by responding to the readings by critiquing the readings, analyzing the readings, and/or synthesizing the readings. What is not expected is for the student to summarize the readings, tell how the readings made

the student feel, tell the fact that the student did not know about a particular idea(s), or discuss only one or two of the assignments. The student will make a separate comment on that week's lecture if applicable. Requirement for the post are as follows:

1. Write at least one paragraph responding to the readings and no more than three paragraphs. A paragraph is at least 5 sentences and no more than 10 sentences.
2. Respond to at least two other classmates' post critiquing, analyzing, and/or adding to their argument. Do not attack the person but her/his thoughts on the readings. The response shall be at least one paragraph for each person.
3. Respond to the lecture and post your thoughts, ideas, knowledge, etc on the topic and/or respond to someone else's post on the lecture. This should be at least one paragraph.
4. Each of the post should be grammatically sound, spell checked, and academic.
5. The readings' post will be due on Wednesdays by 11:59 pm. Responses' post will be due on Fridays by 11:59 pm. Lectures' post will be due by Fridays at midnight. The first readings and post will be the exception and I will give you until Saturday to post and Sunday to respond. The first two weeks of school will be the exception to give every one time to read and post. All posts and assignments for the first two weeks will be Friday September 7, 2012 by 11:59 pm.

Any given week you may have at the most four posts to make—the readings, responding to two classmates, and the lecture. These class discussions and posts are worth 30% of your grade and show the importance I believe these are to your education on Hip Hop. Please put in the appropriate amount of time and due diligence for the posts. It is necessary and important for you to read the assigned readings prior to posting to fully participate and contribute to class. Each post will be given a letter grade based on you following the directions and aims for each post. The post for that week will be added together and divided to get your week's participation grade. For instance, readings B+, response 1 A-, response 2 B-, lecture C+. $89+91+82+79=341 / 4=85.25$ which is a B for the week.

- **Textual Analysis:**

The student must get permission in advance before they start on the assignment. The student will analyze Hip Hop as it intersects rhetoric by making use of a social science/humanities theory. The rhetoric of Hip Hop encompasses lyrics, clothing, graffiti, breakdancing, dj-ing, mc-ing, political movements, gender analysis, the body, and other aspects of Hip Hop. Narrow down your topic and couple it to a theory like Black masculinity, Feminism, Blues Matrix, cipher, etc and then analyze primary sources to make an argument about Hip Hop rhetoric.

Primary sources include movies, tv shows, lyrics, magazines, speeches, newspapers, clothing, etc. The analysis will be a 10-15 page paper that is word processed, double-space, Times New Roman, 12 font with standard margins. Every paper should have citations and put all block quotes (lyrics or speech) at the end of the paper in a section entitled Appendix-Text. Within the body of the analysis, only quote the small portion of the lyrics, speeches, or text that is needed to prove your point or elucidate it. The citation formats that must be used for all papers are Turabian or Chicago Manual Style and the use of footnotes. You will have a cover page that includes your name, title, date, and the class and the second page should start on the very first line and begin your paper. Your name, date, and no other information should be included in the headers and footers. All papers need have page numbers without any accompanying headers or footers. Please ask any questions or concerns about this format to the professor in a timely manner. All assignments that do not follow this format will receive an automatic F.

- **Academic Honesty** is fundamental to the principles and activities of a university. You are responsible for knowing the university's policy on academic honesty. Ignorance is NOT a defense for any charge of dishonesty. Please familiarize yourself with the university's policy on academic honesty.

<http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/dishonesty/definitions.htm>

- **INCOMPLETE GRADES**
An Incomplete grade is assigned when extenuating circumstances, such as illness, the death of a family member, or a family emergency, prevent a student from completing assignments and other course requirements by the end of the semester. An incomplete grade must be changed by the deadline specified on the college calendar or will be automatically changed to an "F." The removal of an "I" grade does not guarantee a passing grade.
- **My professor often said, "The law of common courtesy has not yet been repealed." I hope that we will engage in many debates over the semester. I expect that we will all treat each other and each other's ideas with respect.**

Schedule

Date	Topics & Activities	Readings Due	Lecture	Assignments Due
8/25	Introductions & What is Hip Hop	Part I	4 elements of Hip Hop	Intro post & Post 1
9/01	Introductions & What is Hip Hop	Part I	4 elements of Hip Hop	Intro post, Post 1, & Quiz 1
9/08	Hip Hop Politics	Part V & Chapters 29, 30, and 34	Hip Hop as a political statement & movement	Quiz 2 Post 2
9/15	Hip Hop Politics	Chapters 31-33	Hip Hop as a Political statement & movement	Quiz 3 Post 3
9/22	Authentic Blackness & Hip Hop	Part II & Chapters 9, 11, 13, & 14	How Black and Hip are you?	Quiz 4 Post 4
09/29	Ethnicity, Internationalism, & Hip Hop	Chapters 7, 8, 10, 12, & 14	Authenticity (RE)Imagine and Remixed	Quiz 5 Post 5
10/06	Rep Your City & Hood	Part III & Chapters 16, 17, 18, & 19	The Place for Southern Rap	Quiz 6 Post 6
10/13	Exam		No lecture	October 19
10/13-16	Fall Break			Last Day to receive a W for a Withdrawal Exam I 10/19/2012
10/20	Nommo: The power to create	Part VI & Chapters 35 & 38	Words have power to create and destroy	Quiz 7 Post 7
10/27	Technology and Sampling	Chapters 36, 37, & 39	No lecture	Quiz 8 Post 8

11/03	Wonda Why They Call You a Bitch	Part IV & Chapters 22 & 26-28	Gender Politics of Hip Hop Overview	Quiz 9 Post 9
11/10	Strictly for my Niggaz	Chapters 23-25 Umdrive readings	The New Jim Crow	Quiz 10 Post 10
11/17	African American Women, Blues, & Hip Hop	Pough 3-102	Blues Legacies	Quiz 11 Post 11
11/24	African American Women, Blues, & Hip Hop	Pough 103-222	Black Feminism & Womanism on Hip Hop	Quiz 12 Post 12
12/01	Exam II			December 5 Last Day of Classes— Wednesday— 12/05
12/12	The textual analysis is due in the dropbox by midnight on the 12 th .			Textual Analysis

Deviations from the syllabus may occur by adding, subtracting, or adjusting the schedule, the readings, and/or assignments

Rubric for Textual Analysis

Thesis: **20%**
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

It is a clear, concise, developed and viable thesis statement that outlines the theory, analysis, and argument for the paper. It is located at the end of the introduction.

Comments _____

Content: **30%**
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Facts and ideas developed to prove the thesis

Comments _____

Logic & Argument: **20%**
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Do the facts, ideas, and/or proof offer a clear and logical argument? Do you prove your argument?

Comments _____

Organization & Structure: **20%**
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Is the paper organized logically—introduction, body, and conclusion? Does the paper follow the structure dictated by the thesis?

Comments _____

Technical Writing Quality: **10%**
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Turabian/Chicago Manual Style, spelling, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary

Comments _____

