



## **Hankuk University of Foreign Studies**

### **2025 Summer Session**

## **MUS 220 Music History of African-American**

### **Course Outline**

**Course Code: MUS 220**

**Instructor: TBA**

**Home Institution: TBA**

**Office Hours: TBA and by appointment**

**Email: TBA**

**Credit: 4**

**Class Hours:**

This course will have 60 class hours, including 32 lecture hours, professor 8 office hours, 8-hour TA discussion sessions, 4-hour review sessions, 8-hour extra classes.

#### **Course Description:**

This course offers a chronological and thematic exploration of African-American music and its profound impact on American—and global—musical culture. We begin with musical and cultural traditions in pre-slavery Africa, examining the instruments, dances, religious rituals, and social practices that survived the transatlantic crossing and took root in the Americas.

The course then traces the evolution of African-American music through key historical periods. We'll study the spirituals and field hollers of slavery, and explore how music served as a means of endurance and expression during the era of Jim Crow. We'll examine the emergence of late-19th and early-20th century genres such as ragtime, minstrelsy, blues, and early jazz—often referred to as “America’s classical music.”

Special attention will be paid to the role of media—recordings, film, and radio—in shaping the economic realities of Black musicians and expanding the reach of gospel music. The course concludes with an in-depth look at contemporary styles, including soul, Motown, go-go, disco, rap, and hip-hop.



In the second half of the semester, we will turn to the enduring influence of African aesthetics in shaping new musical forms. We'll investigate how African cultural roots continue to shape American identity and sound, highlighting the global resonance and legacy of African-American music.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

#### **Explain the Evolution of 21st-Century American Music**

Articulate how contemporary American music has emerged from a complex history of cultural exchange, particularly focusing on the dynamic interaction between African and European musical traditions in the United States. Students will be able to trace the continuity and transformation of musical forms, rhythms, and aesthetics that have persisted and evolved over centuries.

#### **Develop a Comprehensive Understanding of African-American Music**

Construct both a factual and conceptual framework to understand the historical development of African-American music. This includes tracing its roots from pre-15th-century Africa, recognizing the cultural practices that survived the transatlantic slave trade, and examining how these traditions adapted and flourished in new social, political, and geographic contexts.

#### **Relate Musical Trends to Broader Historical and Technological Contexts**

Identify and connect key developments in musical performance, production, and composition with broader historical moments, including slavery, emancipation, the civil rights movement, and the digital age. Students will examine how technological innovations—such as sound recording, radio, and streaming—have impacted the dissemination and commercialization of African-American music.

#### **Analyze Musical Works in Context**

Conduct critical analyses of individual works or genres of African-American music, situating them within their appropriate social, historical, and aesthetic contexts. This includes exploring themes such as identity, resistance, spirituality, and cultural memory as they are expressed through musical forms.

#### **Discuss the Interdisciplinary Forces Shaping American Music**

Demonstrate an understanding of how American music has been shaped by intersecting forces including social change, political struggle, geographic migration, economic systems, technological progress, and cultural exchange. Students will also explore how music functions as both a product and a driver of historical and societal transformation.

#### **Compose an Analytical Essay on African-American Music**

Write a well-researched and critically engaged analytical essay that focuses on a significant work, collection of works, or stylistic trend within African-American music. The essay should demonstrate an understanding of the selected topic's musical characteristics, historical



significance, and cultural impact, and may consider aspects such as composition, performance, lyrical content, and audience reception.

**Required Course Materials:**

McGraw-Hill “OnAfrican American Music”

<https://lti.c4ecompanion.com/course/view.php?id=548>

**Homework:**

- 20% weekly quizzes based on textbook readings, asynchronous lectures, and listening assignments.
- 30% Writing Assignments: Students will produce a minimum of three short essays based on an issue or theme that arises during the semester.
- 20% Cumulative final exam that will include listening identification demonstrating students’ familiarity with audio material.
- 30% Well-researched and critically engaged analytical essay on a topic based on student interest.

**Grading & Evaluation**

Attendance and participation:	10%
Homework:	30%
Midterm:	30%
Final:	30%

**Grading System (1 ~ 100)**

A+ : 96 - 100	A : 91 - 95
B+ : 86 - 90	B : 81 - 85
C+ : 76 - 80	C : 71 - 75
D+ : 66 - 70	D : 60 - 65
F : 0 - 59	
Pa : Pass	Fa : Fail



**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1: INTRODUCTION:**

African Music and Culture pre 1619-slavery and emancipation.

1. General characteristics of West and Central African Music
2. African Religious and Ritualistic Practices in Music
3. General Characteristics of African-American Music
4. Retentions and Transformations, The Great Awakening
5. Music, Rhythm, and Dance; The Ring Shout, and the sound of Slavery
6. Plantation songs, Field Hollers, Work Songs
7. Emancipation: The Church and the Folk Spiritual
8. Congo Square
9. Origins of the Blues
10. Post-Slavery and Jim Crow

**Week 2:**

1. Fisk Jubilee Singers
2. Blues, Ragtime, and Brass Bands
3. New Orleans Jazz
4. Early Gospel
5. Minstrelsy and Orpheus McAdoo
6. Jazz moves up the Mississippi
7. Scott Joplin and Ragtime
8. Early 20th Century: Southern Blues
9. Muddy Waters, Big Bill Broonzy, Sun House, Howling Wolf
10. Harlem Renaissance, Cotton Club Paul Robeson

**Week 3:**

1. Rise of the Big Band
2. Swing
3. Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Fletcher Henderson
4. The Women of Blues and Big Band: Bessie Smith, “Ma” Rainey, Billie Holiday, Mary Lou Williams, Ella Fitzgerald
5. The two World Wars: James Reese Europe; Paul Robeson
6. Civil Rights and Freedom Songs
7. New Gospel: Mavis Staples, Mahalia Jackson, Thomas L. Dorsey  
“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”
8. The Media: Race Labels, Black Appeal Radio Stations



9. Rise of R and B: Jellyroll Morton, Nat King Cole, Doo Wop
10. Motown, Soul, Black response to British Invasion

#### **Week 4:**

1. Post WWII Jazz and Bee Bop: Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, The Ionious Monk
2. New Urban Genres: Funk, Go-Go, Disco
3. East Coast/West Coast hip-hop
4. New Millennium and Beyond
5. Black Music and Global Impact
6. Conclusions and Summary
7. Research Paper

#### **Student Responsibilities and Expectations**

The primary content for this course will be delivered through lectures, with additional support available in weekly discussion sessions held every Friday, led by a teaching assistant (TA). These sessions provide students the opportunity to engage in in-depth discussions of course concepts and problem-solving activities.

Students are expected to keep up with the pace of the course by attending all lectures and discussion sessions punctually, and by dedicating ample time to complete assigned homework and lab exercises. In the event of an unavoidable absence, students are responsible for obtaining lecture notes and reviewing the material before the next class. Active engagement, including asking questions and seeking help when needed, is encouraged to ensure a solid grasp of the material.

Students should arrive prepared, having reviewed prior material and ready to contribute thoughtfully to discussions. All electronic devices should be turned off, and unrelated materials set aside to minimize distractions. Professionalism and respect for peers and instructors are essential; late arrivals and early departures from class will not be permitted.