MUS 1104 – Recording the Beatles George Washington University Fall 2019

Credits: 3 Prerequisites: none

Class Times: Tues/Thurs, 9:35-10:50

Classroom: B-120 Office:

Professor: Dr. Toby Mountain Email:

Office Hours: Tues. 11:00-1:30pm Phone:

# Welcome to “Recording the Beatles”

# The recorded output of the Beatles during the 1960s (1960-1970) represents a high water mark in the history of popular music. Their musical brilliance, in conjunction with ground-breaking advances in recording technology, has left us with a landmark catalogue of twelve studio albums and 22 singles. Fifty years later these recordings are still played, analyzed, and enjoyed by all generations.

# This lecture-based course will chronologically follow the maturation of the Beatles’ songwriting, arranging, and recording. Weekly listening assignments and readings will focus on a specific album or period. By analyzing each new recording innovation we will discover the broad influence the Beatles had on both popular music and audio production. Student progress will be assessed through a midterm, a final exam, four quizzes, class discussion, and a short paper.

# Reading

The required textbook for the course is “The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions” by Mark Lewisohn. All other reading material will be available as .pdfs on **Blackboard**. All weekly reading assignments will be posted in the **Class Schedule and Assignments** timeline of this syllabus as well as on **Blackboard**. More detailed information on all reading materials is available at the end of this syllabus in the **Bibliography**. Students are expected to spend 2.0 hours weekly on reading.

# Listening

There will be weekly listening assignments in .wav format (highest quality), available on Backboard. I strongly encourage you to listen to these assignments, not on Spotify with your iPhone, but on good quality loudspeakers, if possible. Students are expected to spend 1.5-2.0 hours weekly on listening.

# Quizzes

There will be four unannounced quizzes based on the reading and listening.

# Writing Assignment

# One short paper (~1,000 words) on a supplied topic will be due near the end of the semester on Thursday, November 14.

# Midterm / Final Exam

There will be a midterm and a final project – details to follow.

# Grading

Final grades will be calculated as follows: Final Exam 30%, Midterm Exam 25%, Quizzes 20%, Writing Assignment 15%, Class Participation 10%.

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**University policy on observance of religious holidays**In accordance with University policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. For details and policy, see: [students.gwu.edu/accommodations-religious-holidays.](https://students.gwu.edu/accommodations-religious-holidays)

**Academic integrity code**

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. For details and complete code, see: [studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity](http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity)

**Disability Support Services (DSS)**

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information see: [disabilitysupport.gwu.edu](https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/)

**Counseling and psychological services** 202-994-5300

GW’s Colonial Health Center offers counseling and psychological services, supporting mental health and personal development by collaborating directly with students to overcome challenges and difficulties that may interfere with academic, emotional, and personal success. For additional information see [healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services](http://healthcenter.gwu.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services).

**Safety and security**

In case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If your building is affected, follow the evacuation procedures and seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location. GW Alert is the university’s notification system that sends emergency text message and email alerts to the GW community. Students are requested to maintain current contact information by logging on to alert.gwu.edu. Download the GW Personal Alarm Locator (GW PAL), a mobile safety and security application that allows users to alert GWPD of a crime, report crime tips anonymously, provide a safety profile, and identify their location in real time. For more safety and security information and tips, visit safety.gwu.edu.

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#### Class Schedule and Assignments

# Week 01 Introduction

**Tues. Aug. 27**

**Introduction & Topics:** Summary of course by Professor Mountain. Student introductions. Weekly topics. Defined goals of the course.

**Thurs. Aug. 29**

**Reading:** Lewison., p. 6-15 (through McCartney Interview)

**Listening:** sampling ofBeatle recordings spanning a decade:“Love Me Do” • “Please Please Me” • “I’ll Follow the Sun” • “A Day in the Life” • “Abbey Road Medley” • “Get Back”

# Week 02 Early Beginnings – Liverpool /Recording

**Tues. Sept. 03**

**Reading:** Beatles Recording Guide01.pdf (between red arrows)

**Listening:** “Some Other Guy”<https://www.beatlesbible.com/2015/10/02/beatles-live-cavern-club-1962-recording-found-in-desk-drawer/>

**Thurs. Sept. 05**

**Reading:** Martin ch08

**Listening:** Decca Test Jan 1962 (5 songs)

**Week 03 First EMI Test Recordings 1962**

**Tues. Sept. 10**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 16-17, Martin ch07, p. 120-127 (to red arrow)

**Listening:** “EMI test June 1962: “Besame Mucho” “Love Me Do”

**Thurs. Sept. 12**

##### Reading: Martin ch07, p. 127-end, Emerick ch03

**Listening:** EMI Test Sept. 1962: “How Do You Do It” “Please Please Me” demo

**Week 04 Please Please Me / With the Beatles 1963**

**Tues. Sept. 17**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 25-34

**Listening:** 5 songs from album “Please Please Me”

**Thurs. Sept. 19**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 35-38

**Listening:** 3 songs from album “With the Beatles” & singles “I Want To Hold Your Hand” and “She Loves You”

**Week 05 Hard Day’s Night / Beatles for Sale 1964**

**Tues. Sept. 24**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 39-44

**Listening:** 5 songs from album “A Hard Day’s Night”

**Watching:** “Hard Day’s Night” in class

**Thurs. Sept. 26**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 48-53

**Listening:** 5 songs from album: Beatles for Sales

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**Week 06 Help! / Rubber Soul 1965**

**Tues. Oct. 01**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 54-62

**Listening:** 5 songs from album “Help!”

**Thurs. Oct. 03**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 63-69

**Listening:** 5 songs from album “Rubber Soul”

**Week 07 Revolver 1966**

**Tues. Oct. 08**

##### Reading: Emerick Prologue.pdf (p. 1-14), Emerick ch07

**Listening:** album: “Revolver” side A (#1-7)

**Thurs. Oct. 10**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 70-85

**Listening:** album: “Revolver”side B (#8-14)

**Week 08 Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band 1967**

**Tues. Oct. 15**

Reading: Martin ch11

**Listening:** album: Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band, side A (#1-7)

**Thurs. Oct. 17**

##### Reading: Lewison, p. 94-109, Emerick ch09.pdf

**Listening:** album: Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band, side B (#8-13)

**Week 09 Break / Midterm**

**Tues. Oct. 22 - No Class (Fall break)**

**Thurs. Oct. 24 MIDTERM**

##### Reading: no reading

**Listening:** no reading

**Week 10 Magical Mystery Tour 1967**

**Tues. Oct. 29**

**Reading:** Lewison, p. 122-130

**Listening:** album: Magical Mystery Tour

**Thurs. Oct. 31**

**Reading:** Emerick ch10, p. 193-200 (between arrows)

**Listening:** album: Magical Mystery Tour

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**Week 11 The White Album 1968**

**Tues. Nov. 05**

**Reading:** Lewison, p. 135, 163,
p. 137 (Tuesday 11 June - “Blackbird”, p. 153-154 (“While My Guitar..”)

**Listening:** 4 songs from album “The Beatles” D1

**Thurs. Nov. 07**

**Reading:** Emerick ch11 (p. 229-end)

**Listening:** 4 songs from album “The Beatles” D2

**Week 12 singles: Hey Jude / Lady Madonna / 1968**

**Tues. Nov. 12**

**Reading:** Lewison, p. 145-147

**Listening:** “Hey Jude”

##### Thurs. Nov. 14 - WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE

**Reading:** Lewison, p. 132-133

**Listening:** “Lady Madonna”

**Week 13 Abbey Road 1969**

**Tues. Nov. 19**

**Reading:** Lewison, p. 178-183

**Listening:** album: Abbey Road, all side A (#1-6)

##### Thurs. Nov. 21

**Reading:** Lewison, p. 184-192

**Listening:** album: Abbey Road, all side B (#7-17)

**Week 14 Abbey Road, cont. / Yellow Submarine 1969**

**Tues. Nov. 26**

**Reading:** Martin ch12.pdf (p. 226-230)

**Listening:** 4 songs from album “Yellow Submarine”

##### Thurs. Nov. 28 – No Class, Thanksgiving

**Week 15 Let it Be 1970**

**Tues. Dec. 03**

**Reading:** Lewison, p. 164-170

**Listening:** album “Let it Be”, side A (#1-7)

**Thurs. Dec. 05**

**Reading:** TBD

**Listening:** album “Let it Be”, side B (#8-12)

**Week 16 FINAL EXAM**

**Thurs.**

Bibliography

 “The Complete Beatles Recording Sessions” by Mark Lewisohn (Author), Paul McCartney (Introduction), Hamlyn Publishing Group, EMI, 1988,

**ISBN-13:** 978-0600635611

“Here, There and Everywhere: My Life Recording the Music of the Beatles” by Geoff Emerick, (2007), **ISBN-13**: 978-1592402694

“All You Need is Ears” by George Martin, St. Martin's Griffin, 1994

**ISBN-13**: 978-0312114824

“Recording the Beatles” Brian Kehew, Kevin Ryan, Curvebender Publishing; First Edition edition (2006), **ISBN-13**: 978-0978520007

“The Beatles: The Ultimate Recording Guide” by Allen J. Wiener, Checkmark Books, 1992, IS**BN-13**: 978-0816025114

“Tune In: The Beatles: all these Years” by Mark Lewisohn (Author), Three Rivers Press, 2016,

ISBN-13: 978-1101903292

Videos

 “A Hard Day’s Night” directed by Richard Lester. Available on DVD, Blu-ray, and Prime Video.

“Help!” directed by Richard Lester. Available on DVD, Blu-ray, and Prime Video.

“Magical Mystery Tour” Available on DVD, Blu-ray, and Prime Video.

“Yellow Submarine” Available on DVD, Blu-ray, and Prime Video.

“Eight Days A Week – The Touring Years” directed by Ron Howard. Available on DVD, Blu-ray, and Prime Video.