

# MUSI 2370: Make Rock

Spring 2017, TR 3:30–4:20, Maury 104

Ted Coffey, Professor  
coffey@virginia.edu  
Office: 204 OCH  
Office Hours: by appointment

Alex Christie, TA  
acc3xp@virginia.edu  
Office: 211 OCH  
Office Hours: R 1:00 to 3:00

Ben Robertson, TA  
blr5ed@virginia.edu  
Office: OCH 214  
Office Hours: T 1:00 to 3:00

## Course Overview

An introduction to rock from the 1950's to the present, comprised of musical, cultural and technological histories, and *especially* compositional projects. We will seek to appreciate key tracks by understanding the influences, points of view and poetic processes of their makers. Rather than proceeding chronologically, the course will be organized around musical and poetic foundations such as the backbeat, affection & disaffection, distortion, the solo, and lyric innovation. Creative assignments will involve making musical expressions of rock. Experience and membership in a band are welcome, though not required.

## Materials & Resources

This course requires no purchase of texts, recordings, software, or other materials -- however, you can expect to spend ca. \$50 on music and film. It is also possible you will develop a kind of fever that impels you to purchase instruments and other gear: we will occasionally discuss practical hardware and software acquisitions in class and (informally) outside of class. If you come to the class with experience and knowledge of such things, you are encouraged to share it.

Most readings are available as .pdf files in the Resources/Texts directory on the UVaCollab course site, and supplementary readings are available on reserve, as electronic resources accessed through the Music Library website, or elsewhere online.

We recommend that you subscribe to Spotify for the duration of the course. This will afford you an ad-free, relatively high fidelity listening experience. Almost all assigned music resources will be available there. Any that aren't will be available (for streaming) through the Music Library website, through Music Online: American Song and other sites, or in a few cases will be posted on Collab.

You will be asked to watch many films as homework. These are available for streaming and-or purchase at Netflix, Amazon, Google, YouTube, and in some cases on reserve in the Music Library.

You will need to record and mix tracks. If you already have your own means to do so, you are welcome to use them. If you don't, you can use a free / extremely inexpensive, cross-platform Digital Audio Workstation ['DAW'] application called Reaper, available here:

<http://www.cockos.com/reaper/>

Documentation: <http://www.cockos.com/reaper/userguide.php>

For live recording, you are welcome to sign out a portable recorder from the library. To reserve a rig follow the first link here:

<https://www.library.virginia.edu/services/reserve-equipment-computers/>

## Attendance, Participation & Grading

### Attendance

Timely class attendance is required. We will circulate an attendance sheet every class. Two late arrivals will be marked as an unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences will result in a lower grade ‘flag’ -- which means that if your final grade is borderline, it will tend to go down instead of up. Three unexcused absences means your final grade *will* go down. Four unexcused absences means the *highest* grade you can earn in the class is a B; five, a C; six, a D; seven, an F.

Notice of excused absences must be emailed to the professor and TA *before* the class meeting.

### Participation 10%

Participation in discussion (or, if you happen to be shy, otherwise *manifest engagement*), good citizenship per group projects and activities, ‘intangibles’. Participation grades are determined by the instructor and TA in conference -- *i.e.*, participation in *labs* is critically important.

### Term Projects 40%

Grades for creative assignments are based on: (1) timely completion of the assignment as specified; (2) application of / experimentation with techniques and aesthetic concepts covered in the course; (3) *care, craft, work* -- relative to your abilities; (4) compositional / musical *quality* per se.

### Quizzes 25%

There are four quizzes throughout the term, two covering technical material, and two ‘drop-the-needle’ quizzes covering the course’s listening and thematic course content keyed to listening. IID, multiple choice, and short answer.

### Final Project 25%

A culminating creative assignment, rubric following ‘Term Assignments’ [see above].

## Weekly Curriculum [may be subject, with fair warning, to modest changes]

key:

- means *assignments to prepare for that day*
- means *what we're doing in class* [may be subject to modest changes]
- ← means *project assigned*
- means *project due*

### week 01 :: intro.: what is make rock?

jan. 19

- welcome ; syllabus ; *questionnaire*

### week 02 :: necessary tech. pt. 1

jan. 24

- week 02 listening -- *Revolver*, *VU & Nico*, *Exile on Main St.*
- read Hodgson, *Understanding Records*, chapter 1, .pdf on Collab
- prof. intro. ; make rock's territory ; *apologia*

← make: a1 ['assignment no. 1'] :: *shake your moneymaker*

jan. 26

- read Reaper tutorials, online
- drum machine sequencing ; discussion of week 02 material

### week 03 :: it's *instinct* -- some preliminary poetics of rock

jan. 31

- week 03 listening -- *Revolver*, *VU & Nico*, *Exile on Main St.* -- yes: again!
- read Keith Richards, *Life* (2011) excerpt, .pdf on Collab
- watch *The Velvet Underground Under Review* (2006), stream available from Amazon
- lecture & discussion

feb. 2

- watch *Beatles: Composing the Beatles Songbook: Lennon And McCartney 1966–1970* (2008), stream available from Amazon
- discussion week 03 material
- OPTIONAL watch *Stones in Exile* (2010), stream available . . .

feb. 3

→ a1 submitted by 9:00 PM to Collab @ Assignments -- please read *submission protocol* on spec. carefully!

week 04 :: necessary tech. pt. 2

feb. 7

- week 04 listening
- read Bobby Owsinski, *The Mixing Engineer's Handbook*, chapters 1–4, .pdf on Collab
- watch Daniel Lanois, *Here Is What Is* (2007), excerpt:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEhIY-TELHI>
- watch The Neptunes: In The Studio:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pD0dIFKgLOc>
- lecture & discussion

feb. 9

- *behold* this amazing resource: <http://www.pensadosplace.tv/category/into-the-lair/>
- watch Daniel Lanois & Pharrell Williams: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihcPhJF3wyg>
- discussion week 04 material
- OPTIONAL read Bobby Owsinski, *The Mixing Engineer's Handbook*, chapters 5, 6 & 7, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL watch *Tom Dowd and the Language of Music* (2003), DVD 05016

← make: a2 :: *the cover*

week 05 :: it's the *sound* -- further preliminary poetics of rock

feb. 14

- week 05 listening
- read Albin Zak, *The Poetics of Rock*, chapter 2, .pdf on Collab
- lecture & discussion

feb. 16

- watch *Muscle Shoals* (2013), stream available from Amazon, Netflix, &c.
- read Jonathan Sterne, “Media or Instruments? Yes.” *Offscreen* 11:8–9 (Aug. / Sept. 2007).
- discussion week 05 material
- *quiz review*
- OPTIONAL watch *Sound City* (2013), stream available from Amazon, YouTube / Google, &c.

feb. 19

- QUIZ no. 1 [technical] -- online

week 06 :: subject position ; authenticity & artifice

feb. 21

- week 06 listening
- watch Richard Hell interview, pt. 11: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFilywTerpE>
- watch BBC Four's *David Bowie & the Story of Ziggy Stardust* (2012), stream available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S\\_hZ-Z\\_4ZVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_hZ-Z_4ZVg)
- lecture & discussion

feb. 23

- read Jack Hamilton, *Just Around Midnight*, chapter 1, .pdf on Collab
- read Simon Frith, "Towards an aesthetic of popular music" (1987), .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL watch *Strange Powers: Stephen Merritt* (2010), stream available from Amazon

week 07 :: distortion & feedback ; hendrix

feb. 28

- week 07 listening
- read Marc Ribot, "Earplugs," from *Arcana*, ed. John Zorn, .pdf on Collab
- watch *Fuzz: The Sound That Changed The World* (2007), stream available from Amazon
- lecture & discussion

mar. 2

- read Charles Shaar Murray, *Crosstown Traffic: Jimi Hendrix and Post-War Pop* (1989) excerpt, .pdf on Collab
- watch *Jimi Hendrix: Hear My Train A Comin'*, stream available from Netflix, &c.
- discussion of week 07 material

mar. 3

→ a2 submitted by 9:00 PM to Collab @ Assignments -- please read *submission protocol* on spec. carefully!

week 08 :: SPRING BREAK

mar. 7 SPRING BREAK!

mar. 9 SPRING BREAK!

week 09 :: led zeppelin++ ; stevie++

mar. 14

- week 09 listening
- read Steve Waksman, "Every Inch of My Love: Led Zeppelin and the Problem of Cock Rock," *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 8 (1996): pp. 5–20, .pdf on Collab

- watch *The Song Remains the Same*, Page bow solo: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoFZ1USIz14>
- lecture & discussion
- *quiz review*
- OPTIONAL watch *The Song Remains the Same* (1976), stream available from Amazon

← make: a3 :: *the build*

mar. 16

- read Mark Ribowsky, *Signed, Sealed and Delivered* (2010), excerpt, .pdf on Collab
- discussion of week 09 material
- OPTIONAL watch *Standing in the Shadows of Motown* (2002), stream available from Amazon
- QUIZ no. 2 [listening] -- in class

week 10 :: that which is smooth ; *EQ*

mar. 21

- week 10 listening
- watch *Classic Albums: Fleetwood Mac: Rumors* (1997) excerpts, stream available from YouTube
- lecture & discussion

mar. 23

- read Bobby Owsinski, *The Mixing Engineer's Handbook*, chapter 5, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL watch *Classic Albums: Steely Dan -- Aja* (2000), stream available from . . .

week 11 :: disaffection & nihilism & . . . *fun*

mar. 28

- week 11 listening
- read Robert Christgau on punk: <http://www.robertchristgau.com/xg/rock/punk-78.php>
- watch *The House of the Rising Punk* (1998), stream available on Amazon
- lecture & discussion
- OPTIONAL read Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979) excerpt, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL read David Laing, "Interpreting Punk Rock," *Marxism Today* (April, 1978): pp. 123–128, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL read Patti Smith *Just Kids* excerpts, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL watch *Sex Pistols: Never Mind the Bullocks* (2002), stream available on YouTube
- OPTIONAL watch *The Punk Singer* (2013), stream available from Netflix

mar. 30

- read Lester Bangs on The Clash, .pdf on Collab
- discussion of week 11 material

mar. 31

→ a3 submitted by 9:00 PM to Collab @ Assignments -- please read *submission protocol* on spec. carefully!

week 12 :: elvis++ ; new waves & stoners ; *modulations, delay & reverb*

apr. 4

- week 12 listening
- read Lester Bangs, “Where Were You When Elvis Died?”, .pdf on Collab
- read Nick Kent, “Horn-Rims From Hell: Elvis Costello,” .pdf on Collab
- lecture & discussion
- OPTIONAL read *Behind the Glass*, Tony Visconti, pp. 142–154, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL read Albin Zak, *The Poetics of Rock*, chapter 3 pp. 70–85, .pdf on Collab

← make: a4 :: *absolutely free*

apr. 6

- read John Harris, *Dark Side*, excerpts, .pdf on Collab
- watch *Classic Albums: Pink Floyd: Dark Side of the Moon*, stream available on YouTube
- discussion of week 12 material
- *quiz review*

apr. 7

- QUIZ no. 3 [cultural] -- online

week 13 :: how fancy is too fancy? ; ‘guilty pleasures’

apr. 11

- week 13 listening
- read Carl Wilson, *Let’s Talk About Love: A Journey to the End of Taste* (2007) excerpt, .pdf on Collab
- read Robert Christgau on *all possible* week 13 listening: <http://www.robertchristgau.com/cg.php>
- watch *Rush: Beyond the Lighted Stage* (2010), stream available from Netflix
- lecture & discussion
- OPTIONAL watch *We Jam Econo* (2005) excerpts, stream available from YouTube

apr. 13

- read Robert Walser, *Running With The Devil*, chapter 3, available via UVA ebrary

- read Christgau's response thereto: <http://www.robertchristgau.com/xg/bkrev/walser-cp.php>
- discussion of week 13 material

week 14 :: checking in with dylan ; kendrick lamar ; um, words . . .

apr. 18

- week 14 listening
- read / review Jack Hamilton, *Just Around Midnight*, chapter 1, .pdf on Collab
- read: Dylan MusiCares speech: <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/read-bob-dylans-complete-riveting-musicares-speech-20150209>
  - watch *No Direction Home: Bob Dylan* (2005), stream available from Amazon  
*note especially*: Newport 1965 (July) & Royal Albert Hall 1966 (May)
- lecture & discussion
- OPTIONAL watch *Dont Look Back* [sic] (1967), available . . .

apr. 20

- read Mooney, "Why I Dropped Everything And Started Teaching Kendrick Lamar's New Album":  
<https://bemoons.wordpress.com/2015/03/27/why-i-dropped-everything-and-started-teaching-kendrick-lamars-new-album/>
  - watch *Rapping, deconstructed* :: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWveXdj6oZU>
- discussion of week 14 material
- OPTIONAL read Tricia Rose, *Hip-Hop Wars* (2008) excerpts, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL read *Sonic Alchemy* excerpt: Public Enemy, pp. 267–277, .pdf on Collab
- OPTIONAL watch *Something from Nothing: The Art of Rap* (2012), stream available from Amazon, &c.

apr. 21

→ a4 submitted by 9:00 PM to Collab under Assignments: please read *submission protocol* carefully!

week 15 :: now what? beyoncé++

apr. 25

- week 15 listening
- lecture & discussion
- *quiz review*

← make: a5 :: *final track*

apr. 27

- QUIZ no. 4 [listening] -- in class

week 16 :: wrap!



may 2 – LAST DAY

may 11

→ a5 [final] submitted by 9:00 PM to Collab under Assignments: please read *submission protocol* carefully!

### Project Specifications:

a1 :: assignment no. 1 :: *shake your moneymaker*

Working in teams of 1, 2 or 3, create a rhythm track of 30 to 60 seconds in duration. The track should consist of both *drum machine* elements and *live-performed* elements.

You may use any software tools you like, and any percussion instruments you like -- found or legit. The project *can* be done using only Reaper. And you may use a web-based drum machine found here: [www.patternsketch.com](http://www.patternsketch.com) . [Visit this site using a current version of Firefox or Chrome.] You will also need *headphones* to ensure that when you record overdubs, the material you've previously recorded does not leak into your current recording.

As always when working with computer technology, back up your work early & often!

The track should consist of two, clearly contrasting sections. Each section consists of a beat / rhythm / feel. At least one of the two sections should include *variation* among its repetitions. This variation may arise naturally from the live-performance elements -- but the variation should be easily discernible.

We'll talk a little about pan in class. [You may preview / refer to the Owsinski reading if you like, as well.] Be a little deliberate and-or creative in your use of pan:

For example, solo each of the instruments in your drum machine track and export them in turn. Then you will have more control over their volume and pan -- and other effects! -- later on in the process.

Make sure that everyone in your group gets to do everything / understands every part of the process.

Regarding evaluation of this project, *it matters how good it sounds*. Don't settle for sloppiness -- try to get it right. Bring any technical or other questions you may have to me and-or your TA.

When you are satisfied with your mix, *Export* or *Render* it to an .aif or .wav file. Submit that file on Collab, in the Assignments folder, OBSERVING THE STRICT PROTOCOL described below. In the comments, provide a brief description of how you made it -- including the tools you used to make it -- and detail how everyone was involved.

Only one file submission per team is necessary. Again, the finished project should be 30 seconds to 60 seconds in duration. Thank you!

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#### Protocol for Naming Your Assignments:

NOTE: unless otherwise directed, you will submit assignments on Collab. There is a *strict protocol* for naming files. If I were submitting assignment 1, I would name it like this: ejc3q\_a3.aif -- that is, lowercase UVA computing ID, underscore, 'a' with assignment number appended, period, and file type suffix.

- - -

a2 :: assignment no. 2 :: *the cover*

Working in teams of 2 or 3, *cover* an existing track, 50 to 150 seconds in duration. To produce something within that time limit, you may abridge the structure of the song you're covering. If you must go under 50 or over 150 seconds, please apply to your TA and-or myself in person.

We would love to see projects made in Reaper. However, for this project, you may use any technologies you like -- instruments, hardware & software.

As always when working with computer technology, back up your work early & often!

Your cover should take an existing song to a new and unexpected place. If you like, look in the 'covers' playlist in Spotify for some inspirational, idea-spawning examples.

If you're working with others, make sure that everyone in your group gets to do everything / understands every part of the process.

Regarding evaluation of this project, *it matters how good it sounds*. Don't settle for sloppiness -- try to get it right. Bring any technical or other questions you may have to me and-or your TA.

When you are satisfied with your mix, *Export* or *Render* it to an .aif or .wav file. Submit that file OBSERVING THE STRICT PROTOCOL described below on Collab, in the Assignments folder. In the comments, provide a brief description of how you made it -- including the tools you used to make it -- and detail how everyone was involved.

Only one file submission per team is necessary.

Again, the finished project should be 50 seconds to 150 seconds in duration.

Thank you!

- - -

#### Protocol for Naming Your Assignments:

NOTE: unless otherwise directed, you will submit assignments on Collab. There is a *strict protocol* for naming files. If I were submitting assignment 2, and my file type were .aif, I would name it like this:

ejc3q\_a2.aif -- that is, lowercase UVA computing ID, underscore, 'a' with assignment number appended, period, and file type suffix.

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a3 :: assignment no. 3 :: *the build*

Working in teams of 2 or 3, create a track of 60 to 180 seconds in duration. The track may consist of *any* musical elements.

You may use any software tools you like, and any instruments you like -- found or legit. The project *can* be done using only Reaper. You will also need *headphones* to ensure that when you record overdubs, the material you've previously recorded does not leak into your current recording.

As always when working with computer technology, back up your work early & often!

The idea of this project is to *build energy and density* in the track as it progresses. For example, you might start off with one or two elements -- a basic time-keeping function, maybe a simple chord progression on one instrument -- and build from there -- to a *massive place*. After a couple bars, or couple times through the progression, something new *drops*. For example, you might introduce bass; and-or, the drums / percussion might get somewhat more intense. Continuing, you might add another chordal rhythm instrument / synthesizer --> layered voices --> big band brass --> the University Singers [good luck].

No matter how you realize the instrumentation details, use an *additive* process, adding elements as you go. Yet be sure to stop before you get to MUCK!

Mix as well as you can, referring to readings and our discussions of mixing.

You're welcome -- encouraged! -- to include lyrics and lead vocals drawn from your group.

Make sure that everyone in your group gets to do everything / understands every part of the process.

Evaluating this project, the bar for 'production value' is higher than it was for previous assignments. That is, *it matters how good it sounds*. Endeavor to get it right! Bring any technical or other questions you may have to me or your TA.

When you are satisfied with your mix, *Export* or *Render* it to an .aif or .wav file. Submit that file OBSERVING THE STRICT PROTOCOL described below on Collab, in the Assignments folder. In the comments, provide a brief description of how you made it -- including the tools you used to make it -- and detail how everyone was involved.

Only one file submission per team is necessary.

Again, the finished project should be 60 seconds to 180 seconds in duration.

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Protocol for Naming Your Assignments:

NOTE: unless otherwise directed, you will submit assignments on Collab. There is a *strict protocol* for naming files. If I were submitting assignment 3, I would name it like this: ejc3q\_a3.aif -- that is, lowercase UVA computing ID, underscore, 'a' with assignment number appended, period, and file type suffix.

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a4 :: assignment no. 4 :: *absolutely free*

Working in teams of 2 or 3, create a track of 60 to 180 seconds in duration. The track may consist of *any* musical elements.

You may use any software tools you like, and any instruments you like -- found or legit. The project *can* be done using only Reaper. You will also need *headphones* to ensure that when you record overdubs, the material you've previously recorded does not leak into your current recording.

As always when working with computer technology, back up your work early & often!

For this project, you may do anything you like -- as long it *rocks*.

Make sure that everyone in your group gets to do everything / understands every part of the process.

Evaluating this project, the bar for 'production value' is [even] higher than it was for previous assignments. That is, *it matters how good it sounds*. Endeavor to get it right! Bring any technical or other questions you may have to me or your TA.

When you are satisfied with your mix, *Export* or *Render* it to an .aif or .wav file. Submit that file OBSERVING THE STRICT PROTOCOL described below on Collab, in the Assignments folder. In the comments, provide a brief description of how you made it -- including the tools you used to make it -- and detail how everyone was involved.

Only one file submission per team is necessary.

Again, the finished project should be 60 seconds to 180 seconds in duration.

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Protocol for Naming Your Assignments:

NOTE: unless otherwise directed, you will submit assignments on Collab. There is a *strict protocol* for naming files. If I were submitting assignment 4, I would name it like this: ejc3q\_a4.aif -- that is, lowercase UVA computing ID, underscore, 'a' with assignment number appended, period, and file type suffix.

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a5 :: assignment no. 5 :: *absolutely free [final track]*

Working in teams of 2 or 3, create a track of 60 to 360 seconds in duration. The track may consist of *any* musical elements.

You may use any software tools you like, and any instruments you like -- found or legit. The project *can* be done using only Reaper. You will also need *headphones* to ensure that when you record overdubs, the material you've previously recorded does not leak into your current recording.

As always when working with computer technology, back up your work early & often!

For your final project, you may [again] do anything you like -- as long it *rocks*. Can we hear how Make Rock has made you rock better?

Make sure that everyone in your group gets to do everything / understands every part of the process.

Evaluating this project, the bar for 'production value' is [even] higher than it was for previous assignments. That is, *it matters how good it sounds*. Endeavor to get it right! Bring any technical or other questions you may have to me or your TA.

When you are satisfied with your mix, *Export* or *Render* it to an .aif or .wav file. Submit that file OBSERVING THE STRICT PROTOCOL described below on Collab, in the Assignments folder. In the comments, provide a brief description of how you made it -- including the tools you used to make it -- and detail how everyone was involved.

Only one file submission per team is necessary.

Again, the finished project should be 60 seconds to 360 seconds in duration.

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Protocol for Naming Your Assignments:

NOTE: unless otherwise directed, you will submit assignments on Collab. There is a *strict protocol* for naming files. If I were submitting assignment 5, I would name it like this: ejc3q\_a5.aif -- that is, lowercase UVA computing ID, underscore, 'a' with assignment number appended, period, and file type suffix.