

English Composition
THE DIGITAL AGE OF MUSIC
10-Week Syllabus

Required Texts

- *Itunes*. Rod C. Taylor, ed. Fountainhead Press, 2014.
- A rhetoric (including readings on rhetorical analysis, research, argument, etc.) of the instructor's choosing

Assignments

- **Short Assignments**
 - Each of the readings is accompanied by four different ways to respond to the text (Invent, Compose, Collaborate, and Explore). Students will be asked to produce a number of assignments in response to these prompts. Some will result in short essays, while others will result in multimedia projects and presentations.
- **Album Review**
 - For this assignment, you will write a critical review of a current album of your choosing. Your goal is to make a credible (i.e., defensible) case for your perspective on the album, providing concrete evidence for your claims throughout. You will also want to make it easy to understand and entertaining. You might also have a specific magazine, webzine, blog, etc. as a potential target for the submission of your review.
- **Rhetorical Analysis**
 - For this assignment, you will choose a text that presents an argument on a specific topic pertaining to music and the digital age ("text" here does not just mean a written work—it can be written, audio, or video). You will then write an essay in which you identify the major rhetorical strategies at work within it, assessing their effectiveness.
- **Expert Essay**
 - This assignment helps you begin to prepare for the research required of you as you continue in college, regardless of your major. You will analyze a minimum number of credible sources that embody the critical debate surrounding the topic you have chosen with the goal of placing them in dialogue with one another in order to demonstrate your expertise on the subject matter.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1:

Readings: Introduction: "The Digital Age for Music" (pp. 1-7); excerpt from *Ripped: How the Wired Generation Revolutionized Music* (pp. 9-15); "Major Assignment #2: Album Review" (pp. 217-218).

Assignments Due: Compose Exercise, (p.7); Collaborate Exercise (p. 8); Class Activity Based on Explore Exercise (p. 16).

Week 2:

Readings: "Paisley's Progress" (pp. 183-186); Music Review Samples (Fountainhead Press website);

Assignments Due: Album Selection for Album Review Assignment; Group Work Based on Collaborate Exercise (p. 187)

Week 3:

Readings: “Does Pop Music Sound Louder, Dumber, and More the Same?” (pp. 25-26); “Music is Worthless” (161-162).

Assignments Due: Draft of Album Review; Report Based on Compose Exercise (p. 27);

Week 4:

Readings: “Major Assignment #1: Rhetorical Analysis of a Musical Argument”; “Album Art” (pp. 165-166); “The New Rise of a Summer Hit: Tweet It Maybe” (pp. 21-23);

Assignments Due: Album Review Essay. Short Essay Based on Compose Exercise (167); Group Presentation Based on Collaborate Exercise (p. 24).

Week 5:

Readings: “MP3: The Meaning of Format” (pp. 131-134); “Shiny Shiny—A Future History of the CD Revival” (pp. 125-128).

Assignments Due: Rhetorical Analysis Draft Work; CD Creation Based on Collaborate Exercise (p. 129).

Week 6:

Readings: Major Assignment: Music Expert Essay (pp. 221-22); Excerpt from *This is Your Brain on Music*—“My Favorite Things: Why Do We Like the Music We Like?” (pp. 43-59).

Assignments Due: Rhetorical Analysis Essay; Group Activity Based on Collaborate Exercise (p. 60).

Week 7:

Readings: “Hip-Hop, Digital Media, and the Changing Face of Music Education” (pp. 153-159); Excerpt from *The Music Lesson*—“The First Measure: Groove” (pp. 137-150).

Assignments Due: Compose Exercise (p. 159).

Week 8:

Readings: “Gotye’s YouTube Orchestra Remix: The Sweetness of the Open Source Pop Star” (pp. 87-88).

Assignments Due: Expert Essay Outline Work; Compose Exercise (p. 89); Group Activity Based on Explore Exercise.

Week 9:

Readings: “Winners and Losers in Digital Recording” (pp. 101-108).

Assignments Due: Expert Essay Draft Work; Group Presentation Based on Collaborate Exercise (p. 109).

Week 10:

Assignments Due: Expert Essay