NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES  

AFR 1503 – THE HIP HOP WORLDVIEW

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to explore the sociological realities of the Hip-Hop community, from its most visible recognition in the 1970s, to its current form. Students will examine the historical, cultural, economic, and political dynamics out of which Hip-Hop culture emerged, and learn about how various social institutions have interpreted it in various ways. Furthermore, this course will take an inductive approach so that students can interpret, in their own ways, the dominant styles, patterns, themes, eras, and personalities that make up the Hip-Hop culture and community.

Additional Information:
This course will explore how and why Hip Hop has become a global phenomenon and, arguably, one of the most significant cultural movements in modern history. Hip Hop is currently the world’s most powerful multicultural and international youth movement, inspiring young women and men of diverse races, ethnicities, nationalities, and experiences to join and constantly reinvent the Hip Hop nation. While we will examine many themes within Hip Hop culture, our primary focus will be the race, gender, class, sexuality, and youth politics of Hip Hop. We will discuss Hip Hop as a form of cultural theory in performative action and will assess Hip Hop culture from a range of historical, social, political, cultural, aesthetic, and intellectual perspectives. We will contextualize Hip Hop in relationship to previous political and cultural movements within African American history, including but not limited to the abolitionist movement, the 19th Century Women’s movement, the development of blues and jazz music, the Harlem Renaissance, the Civil Rights Movement, the modern feminist movement, the Black Power Movement – including Black Nationalism and Black Cultural Nationalism – and the Black Lives Matter Movement. We will discuss many elements of Hip Hop culture including the foundational elements MC-ing, DJ-ing, Graffiti Art, and Breaking and Hip Hop dance as well as musicianship within Hip Hop, music videos, film, underground Hip Hop, and commercial Hip Hop. We will also, explore how these elements have influenced and transformed a range of other artistic and commercial media including poetry, film, music video, painting and graphic design, digital media publishing, advertising and all forms of popular music.

However, our concentration will be Hip Hop music and music videos, specifically the analysis of Hip Hop lyrics and the analysis of the politics of race, gender, culture and class representations in Hip Hop music and music videos. To that end, we will pay particular attention to language and image in Hip Hop culture, and will analyze Hip Hop in relationship to broader Black cultural, social, artistic and linguistic practices. We will pay particular attention to gender politics, including the cultural politics and social construction of Black masculinity and femininity in Hip Hop music and music videos. We will also, address the role of women as well as men in Hip Hop culture and examine Hip Hop’s most significant icons.

Through analyzing representations of Black women and men in Hip Hop Culture we will explore Hip Hop’s contradictions and identify ways that Hip Hop art and artists have simultaneously humanized and dehumanized, honored and objectified, silenced and given voice to young Black people of diverse genders, classes, sexualities, cultures and regions. In fact, the course will be devoted to examining Hip Hop’s many contradictions. We will discuss how an art form that was created by low income and working class youth in Black and Latino New York boroughs has become one of the most beloved and consumed musical genres for young middle-class white men. We will attempt to understand how Hip Hop has served as a vehicle that affirms Black identity and progressive politics while also perpetuating disparaging stereotypes about people of African descent. We will address how Hip Hop simultaneously exposes America’s class politics and the crisis of urban poverty while also celebrating conspicuous consumerism and materialism. We will critique how Hip Hop sometimes affirms Black men and Black masculinity while, in some cases, erasing, objectifying or negating Black women. We will also explore why so many Black women who are critical of some of Hip Hop’s gender politics remain avid supporters of and participants in Hip Hop culture. At its core, this course will be a celebration of Hip Hop culture, of its past, its political courage, and most of all, its potential.

COURSE CONTENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

- Students will explore key themes, questions, and ideas related to the history and politics of Hip Hop Culture.
- Students will learn to engage in complex media analyses of Black cultural production and performance while developing particular expertise in conducting analyses of Hip Hop Culture.
Students will learn to analyze how race, gender, class and sexual stereotypes are simultaneously perpetuated through and challenged by Black media practices in general and Hip Hop Culture in particular.

Students will learn to think, read, write, and speak critically about the concepts of race, gender, ethnicity and sexuality and to explore how these concepts relate to other social categories such as class, nation, age, etc.

Student mastery of these concepts will be assessed through class discussion, oral presentations, written assignments, original research assignments, and essay assignments.

GENERAL EDUCATION BASED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

- Students will develop critical thinking, reading, writing and speaking skills that can be transferred and applied to a range of disciplines and contexts.
- Students will learn to think, read, write, and speak critically about the concepts of race and ethnicity and to explore how these concepts relate to other social categories such as gender, class, nation, etc.
- Students will learn to think, read, write, and speak critically about the concepts of culture, politics, and representation.
- Students will build an intellectual community within the course based on mutual respect for and openness to diverse cultural backgrounds, personal experiences, intellectual perspectives, and communication styles.
- Student mastery of these concepts will be assessed through class discussion, oral presentations, written assignments, original research assignments, and essay assignments.

Texts


Additional Assignments will be available through the Citytech Online Library or distributed via blackboard.

GRADING GUIDELINES:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Writing Assignments &amp; Journals</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Analysis Essays</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnographic Final Research Essay &amp; Presentations (6-8 Pages)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT: Missing class, coming to class late, or being disrespectful during class will negatively impact your participation grade.

Students must arrive on time, in order to fully participate and receive full credit for participation. If lateness is unavoidable, the student is welcome to join the class, but he/she is expected not to disrupt the session already in progress.

Students must turn off cellular phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before class begins. Points will be deducted from the final average, if students consistently allow cell phones to ring in class and/or consistently leave class to answer calls.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policies:

(Please let me know about your needs, and I will work with you to make this class work for you.)

Qualified students with disabilities will be provided reasonable academic accommodations if determined eligible by the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). It is the student’s responsibility to initiate contact with the office and to follow the established procedures for having the accommodation notice sent to the instructor.
CLASS CONDUCT: NYCCT, like all academic institutions, encourages and thrives on the open exchange of ideas. At City Tech, we expect students to conduct their intellectual work with honesty and integrity. City Tech's academic integrity policy aims to deter academic dishonesty by students, and allow the college to process cases of academic dishonesty more effectively. This policy is effective as of August 27, 2008. Plagiarism is the presenting of someone else’s ideas without proper credit or attribution. These ideas could come from:

- Information obtained from books, journals or other printed sources
- The work of other students or of faculty
- Information from the Internet
- Software programs or other electronic material
- Designs produced by other students or faculty

Cheating is the unauthorized use or attempted use of material, information, notes, study aids, devices or communication during an academic exercise. Examples of cheating include:

- Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another to copy your work
- Unauthorized collaboration on a take-home assignment or examination
- Using notes during a closed-book examination
- Taking an examination for another student, or asking or allowing another student to take an examination for you
- Changing a graded exam and returning it for more credit
- Submitting substantial portions of the same paper to more than one course without consulting each instructor
- Preparing answers or writing notes in an exam booklet before an examination
- Allowing others to research and write assigned papers or do assigned projects, including the use of commercial term paper services
- Giving assistance to acts of academic misconduct/dishonesty
- Fabricating data
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices such as cell phones, text messaging, devices, palm pilots, computers or other technologies to retrieve or send information during an exam

What is academic integrity, and why is it important?
Academic Integrity is the idea of faculty and students engaging in the process of teaching and learning with a high level of respect for each other and great attention to the values of trust, honesty, and fairness. Academic integrity is important because it is a critical value upon which students will earn true respect and value from others, not only while at City Tech, but more importantly after they graduate and enter their chosen professional field.

In accordance with and in addition to the College’s policy on academic integrity, the following rules apply in class:

- Laptops, cell phones, ipads, ipods, calculators, and other electronic or communication devices must be turned off during all examinations.
- Talking during examinations is not permitted.
- Students will be allowed to leave the class only once during an examination.
- Only one student at a time is allowed to leave the class during an examination.