

Liberal Arts B (Contemporary Music Styles)

**MODULE HANDBOOK**

**Rick Overton**

Term: Fall Semester

Numbering HLA301

Credits 2

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This handbook provides information about the module and its operation. Please study it carefully.

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### 1. Introduction / welcome

This is the module on Contemporary Music Styles and represents an integral part to the development of popular music and culture. The student will not only gain an understanding and knowledge but will hopefully enjoy the subject matter as well. The module will cover a wide range of Contemporary Music Styles equipping the student with listening analysis, recent historical research, critical evaluation and discussion. The student will evaluate the work of others and receive critical evaluation during the term.

## **2.0. Module Description**

In coordination with various listening sources and materials presented by the module tutor, the student will gain a basic understanding of contemporary music styles and major artists that also links them to musical lineage. This is a one term syllabus that encompasses a wide range of genres and styles from around the world concentration on the past 40 years. All major innovators from various periods of time will be referenced in regard to their developments in rhythm, melody and harmony as well as their use of form. Recordings and archival film will be used to extend the knowledge of the periods, styles and forms as well as historical and cultural upheavals taking place at the same time. Where possible, other modules will be stressed such as Jazz History, Western Music History, Ethno-Musicology and Harmony. Students will also be tasked with researching artists and styles and presenting them with critical peer evaluation.

### **2.1 Overall Module aims:**

The overall aims of this module are to develop:

- the ability to engage with musical processes and materials through analysis and criticism.
- knowledge based skills that enable the student to explore critically a wide range of repertoire in cultural, historical and popular contexts.
- the ability to make informed and discriminating creative decisions and to communicate those decisions cogently to others.
- a sustainable skill set to prepare the student for the challenges of a musical career, including the demands of public leadership in professional contexts.

### **2.2 Subject Specific Module aims:**

- to build on students' understanding and knowledge of Contemporary Music Styles as is related to music, cultures and societies from across the globe.

### **2.3 Skills and abilities**

The module will assist you in developing intellectual skills namely:

- the ability to critically evaluate and appraise public presentations in professional contexts.
- the ability to research, review and evaluate current literature.
- the ability to discuss and debate in an informed manner using current and well-established literature.

### **2.4 Applied learning**

The module will assist the student in establishing a wide range of repertoire, in regards to time periods and styles, allowing them to build:

- a practical usage of musical terminology.
- informed opinions structured with opening arguments and conclusions.
- coherent written and oral presentations with appropriate conventions in writing and referencing.

## **3.0. Learning outcomes**

### **3.1. Learning outcomes – overall**

Successful completion of this module will allow the students to:

- marshal evidence in order to devise and sustain a cogent and coherent argument.
- communicate, both orally and in writing, with confidence and insight.
- manage time and prioritize tasks by working under strict deadlines.

### 3.2. Learning Outcomes - Specific

Successful completion of this module will allow students to:

- exhibit an informed and discriminating awareness of the conventions and symbolic meanings associated with a variety of musical repertoire and genre.
- reflect on the process of music making.
- demonstrate the relationship between historical, theoretical and critical study and musical practice.
- exhibit performance traditions, styles and interpretative strategies appropriate to a variety of repertoire.
- incorporate the traditions, historical context and current developments on your principal instrument of study.

## 4.0 The module team

The address for the Department within which your module is situated is:

Tokyo College of Music

1-9-1 Kamimeguro,  
Meguroku, Tokyo,

Staff involved in the organisation and delivery of this module are as follows:

*Rick Overton*

*Module Leader*

*mail*

### Module Leader

The Module tutor has the overall responsibility for organising, delivering and assessing a module. It is the Module Leader who you should see with any queries or problems related to a specific module, if the Course administrative officer cannot help.

*Nahoko Sakiya*

*Course  
administrator*

*ESC-office*

*nahoko\_sakiya@tokyo-ondai.ac.jp*

### Course administrator

The Course Assistant has responsibility for providing a full and responsive administrative service in support of the processes and procedures associated with student and course administration.

## 5.0 Indicative Syllabus

The syllabus for this module will introduce the students to:

- The sociological factors involved in the creation of contemporary styles from their beginnings.
- Contemporary music and its continual development across a wide spectrum of culture.
- The creative process that is unique to each style.
- The initial development of structure, instrumentation and groove.
- The economic factors inhibiting and expanding the development of each style.
- The performance methods required for each style and genre.

## 6.0. Delivery Information:

Week	Title	Synopsis
1	20th Century beginnings: Recordings, Sheet Music, Popular song, Blues and All That Jazz	How contemporary music evolved through technological advances and cultural fusions
2	Piano Sheet music, Phonographs, Edison rolls, community bands, variety shows, club and community dances,	How people used to hear contemporary music and the role that it served in society
3	Record sales, Tin Pan Alley, The Strength of Radio	Media forms expand the growth of new musical styles and dispersion across society
4	Community music shows, musical reviews, travelling variety shows, The Weekly Radio Hour	The importance of contemporary music as a companion and societal interaction.
5	Latin dance, big band sounds, Rhythm and Blues, Country Western “Hurray for Hollywood” Calypso sounds	Movies expand contemporary music and make artists household names, not only in their own countries but across the globe
6	Movie musicals of the 50’s, Rock and Roll in suits and societal change and Mambo! Ska fusion.	Rock and Roll stuns traditional society with a large demographic shift.
7	Contemporary Music Artist Presentation Popular singers, dance music, Television comes to town, TV commercials	Student presentations of Contemporary Music Artist including artist lineage and importance to music style Television, the new media, influences a world
8	Everything’s Bossa Nova! The 60’s revolution, Rock, Pop, R&B, Motown and society, The British Explosion	A cafe style from Brazil captivates the world in movies and fashion. Meanwhile, societal angst leads to more than upheavals in social structures.
9	Folk Rock from Dylan and Baez to Asian youth in the 80’s, Reggae beginnings Underground scenes	Folk Rock roots to Asian youth protests. Societal undercurrents show injustices
10	That 70’s era. Social commentary, dance, Disco, Rap, Street dancing to Hip Hop Reggae is poetry	Changes in society affect a world through dance. Underground currents in Rap,& Street dancing lead up to Hip Hop. Reggae sows the seeds to discontent and injustice.
11	Rock becomes Heavy. R&B influences in popular music across the globe.	Heavy Metal creates an under culture scene. Meanwhile, R&B cements the world’s groove
12	Latin dance explosion—what makes it move? 80’s Pop—social change, Music in Hollywood reflect the mood of society.	Salsa dance becomes hot, hot, hot! Mixes and Crossover artists Buster Poindexter Club music—moving to the groove
13	Hip-Hop, R&B, Techno, World Music, it’s a brave new world! Bollywood! Contemporary Asian Music Styles	Contemporary music has multiple styles to choose from, hits demographics with psychographics. Bollywood starts to influence pop stars.
14	Presentation of Contemporary Music from Around the World	Students choose either their own country’s contemporary music scene or a country in Asia
15	Contemporary Music Final. Style Identification	Identify styles from sound samples of previously unheard recordings

## 7.0 Independent study – Preparation for lecture

Students are expected to read the weekly assignments from provided by the module tutor. Note: Some materials may be internet based articles. Two individual research presentations are required along with a final exam that identifies styles. Students are expected to keep a weekly radio log of stations and pieces that they listen to and identify the styles.

## 8.0 Assessment and practical tasks:

### **Assignment:**

Final exam=20%; 2 Presentations(20% each)=40%; Radio Lob=20%; Class Participation=20%

<b>Module Grading Bands</b>		
A+	90% +	Excellent demonstration of scholarly application/critical understanding of subject area Well structured assignments that address specific criteria of the module Critical understanding/application is evident through systematic and relevant coverage of content Accurate and consistent use of recognized referencing system Wide range of appropriate sources.
A	80-89%	Very good demonstration of scholarly application/critical understanding of subject area Well structured assignments that address specific criteria of the module Critical understanding/application is generally evident through systematic and relevant coverage of content Predominantly consistent and generally accurate use of recognized referencing system Good range of appropriate sources.
B	70-79%	Good demonstration of scholarly application/critical understanding of subject area Fairly well structured assignments that address specific criteria of the module Some critical understanding/application is evident through and relevant coverage of content Predominantly consistent and generally accurate use of recognized referencing system A range of appropriate sources.

C	60-69%	Adequate demonstration of scholarly application/critical understanding of subject area Adequately structured assignments that address specific criteria of the module Largely descriptive with some critical understanding/application is evident through coverage of content Attempts to use of recognized referencing system but may have occasional systematic errors A limited selection of appropriate sources.
F Fail	40-59%	Limited demonstration of scholarly application/critical understanding of subject area Poorly structured assignments that do not completely address specific criteria of the module Poor communication that is not relevant to the coverage of content Use of recognized referencing system is systematically inaccurate throughout An insufficient range of appropriate sources.
F Fail	10-39%	Poor demonstration of scholarly application/critical understanding of subject area Poorly structured assignments that do not address specific criteria of the module Coverage of content is inadequate or incomplete Recognized referencing system is not used Sources are lacking, absent
F Fail	0-9%	Very poorly structured assignment that fails to address any of the learning outcomes or specific criteria for the module

## 9.0 Further Reading Sources

*Dowd, C: The Jazz, Rock & Latin Sourcebook 100 Grooves for Drums & Bass.* Alfred Publishing, 1996

Downbeat magazine

<http://www.downbeat.com>

Billboard magazine

<http://www.billboard.com>

Digital Music News

<https://www.digitalmusicnews.com>

Rolling Stone magazine

<https://www.rollingstone.com>