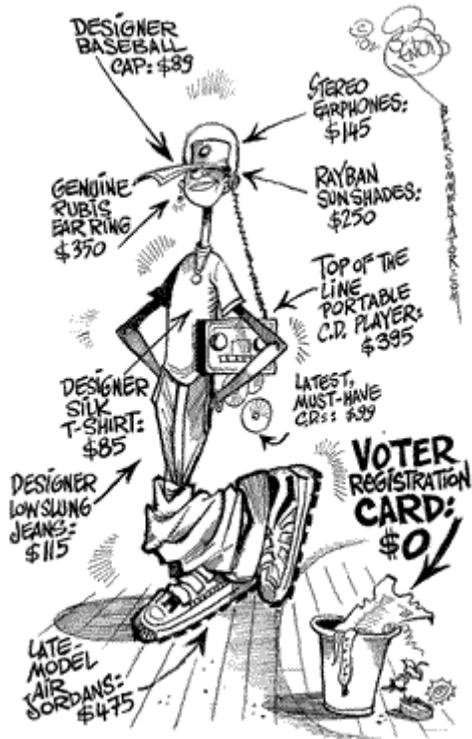


Around the Globe

Hip-Hop



Towards an examination



of the music, the culture, a generation, and a Movement



## CES 209

### Hip Hop around the Globe Fall 2012

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<b>Office</b>	Wilson 111	<b>Course Blog</b>	<a href="http://hiphoparoundtheglobe.wordpress.com">http://hiphoparoundtheglobe.wordpress.com</a>

“Hip Hop is America. Its only real crime is being so much so. It boils ‘mainstream standards and practices down to their essences, then turns up the flame. Violence, materialism, misogyny, homophobia, racialized agony, adolescent views of sex and sexuality . . . . These are the common, bankable, all-American obsessions. They’re the underbelly items that have always defined this country’s real, daily-life culture. What that means is the top-of-the-line hip-hop and its true artists (be they ‘mainstream’ or ‘underground’) soar on the same terms that America’s real artists – and everyday folk – have always soared: by being un-American, by flying in the face of the fucked up values and ideals that are wired and corroded in this country’s genetic code even as no-lip lip-service is given to notions of equality, justice, and fairness” (Ernest Hardy)

"Some emcees battle for glory/ But to kick a dope rhyme and wake up ya people's another story." (KRS-One)

“If our elders give up on Hip Hop then they've given up on us. If we give up on Hip Hop, then we've given up on ourselves” (Yvone Bynoe)

“We need a voice like our music – one that samples and layers many voices, injects its sensibilities into the old and flips into something new, provocative, and powerful. And one whose occasional hypocrisy, contradictions and triteness guarantee us at least a few trips to the terror-dome, forcing us to finally confront what we’d all rather hide from” (Joan Morgan)

### Course Overview

On Monday, January 16, 2006, Bill O’Reilly interviewed conservative author John McWhorter and Clarence Jones, a former speechwriter for Martin Luther King, Jr. Using the King Holiday as an opportunity to denounce “Black leaders,” O’Reilly stated that the two most pressing issues

facing the Black community, which in his estimation were being ignored by Black leaders, were out-of-wedlock births and rap (hip-hop) culture (O'Reilly, 2006). Beyond reflecting the nature of a contemporary racial discourse that erases racism, instead demonizing Black women and youth as source of problems, his comments, which were endorsed by both his guests, embody the very narrow vision of hip-hop and the ease with which American social ills are readily displaced onto Black bodies. His comments, while nothing new given his longstanding war on hip-hop as a threat to American children, seemed especially powerful in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and the ongoing myopic assault on hip-hop bodies, aesthetics, and cultures.

While cultural commentators and politicians lament the influences of hip-hop and the rapper NAS declares the death of hip-hop, the music and culture of hip-hop seem to be flourishing. The popularity of rap music is evident on the charts, on MTV (and BET), and on the radio; moreover, the visibility of rap icons within celebrity culture, along with the aesthetic, linguistic, and cultural influences of hip-hop globally further reveals the significant place of this cultural form, movement, ethos, and generation within the contemporary. Recognizing its popularity, we seek to explore the broader meaning of hip-hop, focusing on the contradictions that define hip-hop as: oppositional and mainstream; American and un-American; capitalistic and anti-capitalistic; global and local; liberatory and oppressive; artistic and commodifiable; black and anti-black; celebrated and demonized; challenging and reifying; a voice of the poor and a voice of the American/American materialism; dead and alive. As one moves beyond U.S. borders, the place of hip-hop is further evident, functioning as a cross-cultural/global language of both decolonization struggles and global capitalism. Here lies a key feature of hip-hop and a key theme for this course: the contradictions that define hip-hop: oppositional and mainstream; American and un-American; capitalistic and anti-capitalistic; global and local; liberatory and oppressive; artistic and commodifiable; black and anti-black; celebrated and demonized; challenging and reifying; a voice of the poor and a voice of the American/American materialism; dead and alive.

In 2012, Washington State University instituted a series of changes to its general education requirements. Included within these changes was the implementation of a Humanities requirement. This new requirement emphasizes the importance of humanistic endeavors and analysis, highlighting the importance of “interpretation, and reflection rather than the direct creative expression of the arts.” Challenging students to “engage...in the history of ideas” and ‘Big Questions,’” to reflect on “significant cultural traditions” and to “solve problems, conceptualize an issue, or convey a concept, formal or theoretical” Humanities course “engage centrally with questions of meaning and purpose, which serve as bridges of relevance between past, present and future.” Specifically, Humanities course must:

- Introduce students to basic theories of interpretation or theoretical models in the humanities.
- Introduce students to key texts, monuments, artifacts or episodes within humanistic traditions or disciplines.

- Help students develop the ability to construct their own artistic, literary, philosophical, religious, linguistic, or historical interpretations according to the standards of a humanistic discipline.

Accepting the challenge of critically engaging hip-hop culture not only in terms of lyrical context, but the larger narrative and ideological concepts embedded in both the musical, artistic and cultural productions, this class fulfills the core mission of the humanities. Emphasizing “Critical and Creative Thinking”, with its focus on the representations and narratives offered by a myriad of artists and critically analyzing the production and consumption of hip-hop, this course brings the humanities into the twenty-first century. In the UCORE handbook, HUM course are described as classes that “emphasize analysis, interpretation, and reflection rather than the direct creative expression of the arts.” Pushing students to reflect on and interpret the meaning within and beyond the song, this class represents the best of humanities in the twenty first century: cultural studies that is both part of a larger intellectual tradition and that is connected to the daily lives our students. Likewise, with its emphasis on “Information Literacy” and “Communication” this course offers the students the opportunity to develop research skills as well as media literacy.

This class, thus, accepts the task of reflecting on the racial, cultural, social, political, economic, and global influences of hip-hop; of understanding and navigating these contradictions. It challenges the mythologies that reduce hip-hop to rap; that reduce rap to gangsta music; that reduce gangsta music to black artists, and in doing so we will examine, discuss, and learn about hip-hop as a movement, as a generation, as a style, as a voice, as a language, and as a pulse, moving beyond the music, beyond the mainstream, beyond the dominant discourse, and most important beyond the lies, distortion, and demonization.

### **Required Readings**

- Andrea Clay, *The Hip-Hop Generation Fights Back: Youth, Activism and Post-Civil Rights Politics* (ISBN: 9780814717172; New York University Press 2012)
- Mark Anthony Neal and Murray Foreman, *That's the Joint: The Hip Hop Studies Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. (ISBN: 978-0415873260; Routledge 2012)
- Emery Petchaur, *Hip-Hop Culture in College Students' Lives: Elements, Embodiment, and Higher Edutainment* (ISBN: 9780415889711; Routledge 2012)
- Sujatha Fernandes, *Close to the Edge: In Search of the Global Hip Hop Generation* (ISBN: 9781844677412; Verso, 2012)

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Attendance**

You are expected to attend class every day, arrive on time, and participate in an informed and consistent manner. Lecture notes will not be available online so it is imperative that you attend class. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were away.

After two absences (excused and unexcused – in terms of absences resulting from university-sanctioned activities, please see me) each missed class will lead to a 5% deduction (per day) from your overall grade, up to 15%. **IN TOTAL, YOU WILL BE ALLOWED TO ACCUMULATE 5 ABSENCES (FIRST 2 FREE, WITH EACH ADDITIONAL 3 RESULTING IN A 5% DEDUCTION PER ABSENCE). YOUR 6<sup>TH</sup> ABSENCE WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC “F” FOR THE COURSE.** This may seem punitive but being present, being engaged, and otherwise contributing to the success of the class is in my mind the most important element of this class. Attendance usually will be taken at the beginning of class, so lateness will potentially lead to an absence for that day.

### **Participation (100 points)**

In order for this class to be productive you will need to come to class each and every day prepared to discuss the material. This requires more than simply doing the reading (**WHICH IS ESSENTIAL**), but arriving at class with a readiness to discuss the issues for that day.

Recognizing that silence is not always a result of a lack of interest or preparation, I envision participation along many lines. Participating in class not only consists of talking, but also includes **listening** (please do not talk while others are speaking), interacting with your peers, and contributing to our classroom energy (body language, being engaged – no newspapers, no playing “rock, paper scissors,” or cell phones).

There are three additional ways to enhance your participation grade and contribution to class:

- You can participate in online discussions, comment on the course blog or otherwise engage our learning community
- You can e-mail me comments or questions prior to class
- You can hand me a note at the beginning of class that asks specific questions (or relays comments) about readings, a previous lecture or film – I will do my best to incorporate into that day’s class
- You can also enhance participation grade by reading the daily newspapers in print or online and bringing the class’s attention to relevant articles/developments

### **Participation Portion of grades based on following:**

85-100 Points:	Active participant in class in all regards; enhances and invigorates the class; active and successful with student response device
70-84.99 Points:	Participates and contributes regularly; does not push class conversations in new directions but often contributes
55-69.99 Points:	Contributes on occasions but does so at basic level; engaged, but not

active

40-54.99 Points: Rarely contributes, but present; shows limited effort and interest in class

25-39.99 Points: Does not contribute, but physically present for most part; brings little energy and generally demonstrates little interest or effort within class

0-24.44 Points: Detracts from overall success of class because of disinterest, use of cell phone in class, sleeping during class, disengagement, negative attitude, rudeness, non or disruptive/destructive participation, etc.

### **Origin Story Assignment (100 points)**

Much of the reading argues that one of the greatest challenges to understanding hip-hop culture is attaining knowledge of its broader history and context. In other words, hip-hop should (must) not be understood as an example of an essential or pure manifestation of blackness, but rather a result of history (a confluence of cultures, social practices, political movements, etc.) and agents of history. In this regard, you are to create an “origins story(ies)” of hip-hop. An origin story is best described as “how a particular culture came into being.” It is the backstory, crucial to understanding the aesthetics and development of a cultural production. Fulfilling one of the principle goals of this class (LGI?), this assignment emphasizes history memory and narrative construction

However, your task is NOT develop an origin stor(ies) exclusively through written narrative, but rather through creation of a poster, scrap book, or another method of visual communication . You are to use images, pictures, artifacts, words, lyrics, your own artistic schools etc. that might serve the creation of an origin poster on hip-hop. Think globally and think beyond the immediate rise of hip-hop within the context of 1960s and 1970s New York as to divorce casual relationship within such an origin story.

In an order to successfully complete this assignment, students must conduct library research, examining the various histories offered by hip-hop historians. Likewise, students must consult the valuable online archives dedicated to hip-hop memory. We will spend:

<http://www.hiphoparchive.org/>

<http://dubois.fas.harvard.edu/hiphop-archive-harvard-university>

<http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/hiphop/>

### **Exams (500 points)**

There will be two exams for the class, which will include short answers, an essay question, and objective questions.

### **Online writings and discussions (150 Points)**

In order to advance our discussions, to push reflection and dialogue, and to otherwise foster engagement, this class will use our course blog space to expand upon course issues. Each person will need to participate in 3 conversations, providing a response to question (out of 35 points) and comments on classmates’ posts (out of 15 points). These will take place on the course blog

Every two weeks, I will post a different question. It will be your responsibility to respond to the question at hand and also respond to at least one peer comment. The key to success here is both

self-reflection and engagement with course materials. The questions will, thus, connect to course materials but also push you to think about your own experiences. Below you will see examples of types of questions you may find throughout the course:

1. Agree/Disagree (and why): The history of hip hop is a multiracial history
2. Why is hip-hop potentially the most lethal (and feared) source of political opposition? Is hip-hop the most viable instrument of the modern civil rights struggle?
3. Has the commercialization of hip-hop eliminated any possibility of its usefulness within a struggle for political power or social justice?
4. Agree/Disagree (and why): “Hip Hop is America. Its only real crime is being so much so. It boils ‘mainstream standards and practices down to their essences, then turns up the flame. Violence, materialism, misogyny, homophobia, racialized agony, adolescent views of sex and sexuality . . . . These are the common, bankable, all-American obsessions. They’re the underbelly items that have always defined this country’s real, daily-life culture. What that means is the top-of-the-line hip-hop and its true artists (be they ‘mainstream’ or ‘underground’) soar on the same terms that America’s real artists – and everyday folk – have always soared: by being un-America, by flying in the face of the fucked up values and ideals that are wired and corroded in this country’s genetic code even as no-lip lip-service is given to notions of equality, justice, and fairness” (Ernest Hardy)
5. Agree/Disagree (and why): “Hip hop has no morals, no conscience and ecological concern for the scavenged earth or the scavenged American minds wrecked in its pursuit of new markets” (Tate)

*Hip-Hop going global (150 points)*

Your final assignment for the class will consist of a 3-page paper due final’s week. This paper will ask you to pick an artist from outside the U.S. and write a paper on their artistry, their politics, and what it tells us about global hip-hop. This paper will need to engage and incorporate Close to the Edge. More details to follow

**Your grade will be derived from the following assignments and requirements:**

**Assignment and Examination Schedule\***

<b>Due Date**</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Grade Value</b>
<b>September 18</b>	<b>Origins Story</b>	<b>100 points</b>
<b>October 4</b>	<b>Exam #1</b>	<b>250 points</b>
<b>November 13</b>	<b>Exam #2</b>	<b>250 points</b>
	<b>Online Discussions</b>	<b>150 points</b>
<b>TBA</b>	<b>Global Paper</b>	<b>150 points</b>
<b>EVERY DAY</b>	<b>Participation/In-</b>	<b>100 points</b>

	<b>Class Assignments</b>	
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\*Please note, you are entitled to one late assignment (within reason – a week) because life/school happens. After using one “get out of on-time delivery assignment card,” late assignments will be penalized accordingly

\*\*I reserve the right to change due dates in your favor according to your needs and desires – Communicate

### **Grading Scale**

1000-930: A

929-900: A-

899-870: B+

869-830: B

829-800: B-

799-770: C+

769-730: C

729-700: C-

699-670: D+

669-600: D

590 and Below: F

## Course Outline

**8/21 Introduction**

### **History, Aesthetics, Politics and Practices (LGI)**

**8/23** Reading: Neal #2 & 4

**8/28** Reading: Neal, #5 & 6  
Film: *Hip-Hop Won't Stop*

**8/30** Reading: Neal #43

**9/4** Reading: Neal #32

**9/6** Reading: Neal #35 & #39

**9/11** Reading: Neal #33

**9/13** Reading: Neal #38

**9/18** Reading: Neal #29 & 30

### **Hip-Hop, Multiracial America, and the College Students (LG2)**

**9/20** Reading: Petchauer, #1 & 3

**9/25** Reading: Petchauer, #4

**9/27** Reading: Petchauer, #5

**10/2** Reading: Petchauer, #6 & 7

### **10/4 - EXAM**

### **Sexism, Homophobia and Hip-Hop (LG3)**

**10/9** Reading: Neal #22 & #25

**10/11** Reading: Neal #23 & #28

**10/16** Reading: Neal #26 & #27

#### **Youth and Hip Hop Activism (LG4)**

**10/18** Reading: Clay, #1

**10/23** Reading: Clay, #2

**10/25** Reading: Clay, #3

**10/30** Reading: Reading: Clay, #4  
Film: *Dead Prez: It's Bigger than Hip-Hop*

**11/1** Reading: Clay, #5

**11/6** Reading: Clay, #6 & 7

**11/8** Reading: Fernandes, Intro

#### **11/13 Exam**

**11/15** No Class

**11/20 & 11/22** No class

#### **The Global Turn: Hip-Hop around the globe (LG5)**

**11/27** Reading: Reading: Fernandes, Intro #1

**11/29** Reading: Fernandes, #2

**12/4** Reading: Reading: Fernandes, #3

**12/6** Reading: Reading: Fernandes, #4 & 5

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances and shifts in class needs. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made in your absence.

### Course Policies

1. To be successful in this class you must read prior to arrival to class; you need to be prepared each and every day
2. The following are unwelcome and unacceptable within this class
  - a. Sleeping, daydreaming or otherwise tuning out during class
  - b. Habitual tardiness. If you are late, you **MUST SIT IN THE FIRST ROW AND SPEAK WITH ME AT THE CONCLUSION OF CLASS**
  - c. Packing up your notebook and other materials prior to the end of class
  - d. Reading the newspaper, another book, or otherwise focusing on something other than class
  - e. Chatting to classmates
  - f. Getting up during class because you feel thirsty or hungry.
  - g. Leaving class early
2. Turn cell phones off upon arrival to class – Please note that if I see your cell phone/other handheld device (not if it rings) whether because you've decided to text message, check scores, show a friend a picture or listen to messages, you will be marked absence for the day
3. Computer usage within class is strictly forbidden except in specific circumstances (disability accommodation) and with permission from instructor

### Course Expectations

Despite the size of the class, it is my hope that this class is a lively educational space defined by interaction, discussions, and critical thinking. It is important to produce a classroom that is open, respectful, and trusting. Following the above rules will contribute to a productive educational environment; of equal importance will be the respect shown for the class, its members, and the ideas discussed therein. As such, it is crucial that we adhere to certain guidelines.

1. Be respectful of others, in terms of engaging and listening to lectures, peer comments, and other course materials.
2. Reflect on social location and work to understand alternative arguments, analysis, and narratives, as well as anger.
3. Acknowledge that racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, and other institutionalized forms of oppression exist.
4. Acknowledge that one mechanism of institutionalized racism, classism, sexist, heterosexism, etc. is that we are **all systematically taught misinformation** about

- our own group and about members of other groups. This is true for members of privileged and oppressed groups.
5. **Read in an engaged way**, recognizing the ideology and politics imbedded in every text. Make notes in the margins – **“dialogue” with the text**, using exclamation points, questions or issue complete statements, questions or critiques. Ask yourself: what is significant in this piece, what elicits anger/sadness/laughter, but go beyond emotional responses to be prepared to make specific statements about the reading!
  6. **Be aware of your own subject position, ideologies, privileges and prejudices.** Recognize your own relationship to institutions of power and structures of domination. This can help you make specific connections to the reading, class discussions and other forms of feedback. Rather than proclaiming, “This article sucks,” or “You are wrong,” you can get more specific about the basis and origins of your reaction. For example, rather than engaging in a discussion about homosexuality with statements of disgust and contempt, it might be better to state: “From my position as a white male, who was raised with the teachings of the Bible, I find homosexuality a bit troubling, especially in the context of the arguments made by \_\_\_\_\_ on page \_\_\_\_.”
  7. Agree to **combat actively the myths and stereotypes** about your own “group” and other groups so that we can break down the walls that prohibit group cooperation and group gain. Read and listen with recognition of other people’s subject position and ideologies. **LISTEN TO OTHERS!**
  8. Reflect on our **choice of language in and outside of class**, striving to rid our vocabulary of racist, sexist, homophobic words, phrases. Recognize that your choice of words reflect your own ideological position and may bother others (think about how others may react to your words – not just content, but the way we chose to express those thoughts)
  9. **Create a safe atmosphere for open discussion.** If members of the class may wish to make comments that they do not want repeated outside the classroom, they can preface their remarks with a request that the class agree not to repeat the remarks. Also, think about your language (including body language), posture, etc. contributes to safe/empowering or disempowering/unsafe learning environment.
  10. **Take Risks:** I want this class to be a space where everyone should feel comfortable enough to disagree with each other. This needs to be safe space so reflect on the ways you engage others with your own pronouncements and how you react (with words, body language) to their statements – react privilege and positionality
  11. **Read and dialogue in a politically engaged way.** Racial Dynamics, for our purposes here, reflects **power**, and relationship to systems/sources of power. Power dynamics are contextual (situational) and relational. You may have power in some spaces and lack it in others, all depending on social location. Ask yourself these questions while reading and discussing within the classroom space: Is the analysis leaving anyone relevant out? For what reasons? Where is this analysis coming from? Whose knowledge base is being explored or forwarded?
  12. **Speak with evidence** and “facts” on your side. Despite the popular pronouncements that there are no wrong answers, there are incomplete,

- problematic, superficial, surfaced, and unsubstantiated answers. Reflect on your own answers and the basis of your conclusions
13. **Go beyond an either/or dichotomy. Incorporate a both/and approach** rather than an “either/or.”
  14. **Recognize the knowledge base of your peers.** Its ok – recommended and great, in fact – to respond to a counterpoint with “hey, I’ve never thought of it that way,” or “well, you do make a good point – I’ll have to think about that for a while.” Discussion in this class isn’t about proving, embarrassing, showing off, winning, losing, convincing, holding one’s argument to the bitter end – its about dialogue, debate and self-reflections.

### **Cheating**

**DON'T DO IT!** What constitutes cheating: Turning in any work that is not yours and yours completely, which includes using a “cheat sheet,” copying the answers from a peer, copying and pasting from a website, copying a friend's work, etc. If someone else said it, wrote it, thought it, etc. give them credit – **DON'T STEAL THE INTELLECTUAL WORK OF OTHERS.** Your failure to follow these basic instructions, to respect the classroom, to take the easy route, to be in the business of pretending to learn, think, analyze, and otherwise be a student, is not acceptable in any regard. What this means is that if you cheat, you will receive a “0” for that assignment and you will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. Any decision to violate the sanctity and purpose of the classroom leaves me with little choice in this regard. If you are unfamiliar with WSU policy regarding cheating and confused as to what constitutes cheating (plagiarism), please consult the Standards for Student Conduct found here: <http://conduct.wsu.edu/default.asp?PageID=109>

### **Students with Disabilities**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in these classes, please visit the [Access Center](#). All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the Access Center (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

### **Emergency Notification System:<sup>1</sup>**

WSU has made an **emergency notification system** available for faculty, students and staff. Please register at myWSU with emergency contact information (cell, email, text, etc). You may have been prompted to complete emergency contact information when registering for classes on ROnet. Please refer to the University emergency management website <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> as well WSU ALERT <http://alert.wsu.edu> for information on WSU’s communication resources WSU will use to provide warning and notification for emergencies. The entire WSU safety plan can be found at <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>.

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<sup>1</sup> From T & L 589 syllabus of Dr. Paula Groves Price

## Primary Learning Outcomes

### LEARNING OUTCOMES, CLASS SESSIONS, AND COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

At the end of this course, students should be able to:		Course topics (& dates) that advance these learning goals:	This objective will be assessed primarily by
LG1	09?	8/24-9/28 (topics: history of hip-hop, economic changes, art in response to injustice; corporate turn; aesthetics)	Origin Story paper; Exam; online discussions; class participation; and in-class writing
LG2	To understand the relationship between youth and hip-hop culture; using existing theories and arguments regarding the relationship between hip-hop, youth culture, and race, students will situate their own identities within these broader theories. To understand the place of the white rapper as one of hip-hop's big questions	9/30-10/7 (whiteness; underground; artist privilege; racial boundaries; youth culture)	Exam; online discussions; class participation; and in-class writing
LG3	Through examining questions surrounding gender, homophobia, and identity, this course will "introduce students to key texts, monuments, artifacts or episodes" within the history of hip-hop. To understand debates around gender and sexuality as fundamental to the big question debates of hip-hop	9/10/12-10/19 (misogyny; homophobia; feminism)	Exam; online discussions; class participation; and in-class writing
LG4	To comprehend the ways in which hip-hop has been served as a space of resistance and organizing. To understand how social movements and change agents have used hip-hop as source of identity formation, political engagement, and social transformation. In entering into these debates, students will "develop the	10/21-11/04 (politics; social change; culture wars; criminalization; agency; voice; humanity)	Exam; online discussions; class participation; and in-class writing

	ability to construct their own artistic, literary, philosophical, religious, linguistic, or historical interpretations” surrounding hip-hop		
LG5	To understand presence and influences of hip-hop culture outside the United States, <b>“acquainting students with the significant”</b> tradition of hip-hop in places like Cuba, Palestine, South Africa, and throughout the world	9/22-11/16 (globalization; decolonization; hip-hop activism)	Online discussions; class participation; in-class writing and final paper