

## Liverpool John Moores University

Title: APPROACHES FOR STUDYING POPULAR MUSIC  
Status: Definitive  
Code: **4009POP** (110904)  
Version Start Date: 01-08-2011

Owning School/Faculty: Liverpool School of Art & Design  
Teaching School/Faculty: Liverpool School of Art & Design

Team	Leader
Simone Kruger	Y

**Academic Level:** FHEQ4  
**Credit Value:** 12.00  
**Total Delivered Hours:** 33.00  
**Total Learning Hours:** 120  
**Private Study:** 87

### Delivery Options

Course typically offered: Semester 1

Component	Contact Hours
Lecture	11.000
Seminar	22.000

**Grading Basis:** 40 %

### Assessment Details

Category	Short Description	Description	Weighting (%)	Exam Duration
Test	AS1	class-test	40.0	
Essay	AS2	Assignment 1,500 words	60.0	

### Aims

*To introduce students to various approaches to understand the social, cultural and political role played by popular music in society.*

*To provide an early 'diagnostic' assessment point in the BA Popular Music Studies programme, enabling tutors to spot students who may need additional and extra support.*

## Learning Outcomes

After completing the module the student should be able to:

- 1 Explain 'standard' and newer approaches used for analysing popular music as text;
- 2 Describe approaches to examine the workings of music and cultural industries;
- 3 Illustrate approaches to study and understand the fans and audiences of popular music;
- 4 apply and use specific approaches to the study of political, social and cultural aspects surrounding popular music;
- 5 Communicate effectively in writing, showing evidence of reading.

## Learning Outcomes of Assessments

The assessment item list is assessed via the learning outcomes listed:

CLASS TEST	1	2	3	5
ESSAY	4	5		

## Outline Syllabus

*1. Introduction to the module. What is meaning? How is meaning constructed in and through popular music?*

*Block I: Studying popular music as text*

*2. Content analysis*

*3. Semiotics*

*4. Genre study*

*Block II: Studying music production*

*5. The workings of the music industry*

*6. Globalisation: death of indie?*

*7. The impact of technology: death of institutions?*

*Block III: Studying audiences of popular music*

*8. The media effects model: music, crime and violence*

*9. Uses and gratifications: music and taste*

*10. Encoding/ decoding: music and meaning*

## Learning Activities

The module will be delivered by a combination of lectures and seminars. Lectures will provide students with the underpinning theoretical knowledge and understanding about subject-specific issues and academic skills. Seminars will enable students to apply theoretical knowledge that involves problem-solving through tutor-led discussion and debate. Students will be actively encouraged to develop skills and knowledge progressively, and seminars will facilitate gradual development of key academic skills, including communication and interpersonal skills. Students' learning will be supported through using the Virtual Learning Environment Blackboard, which serves as a resource bank for module materials, and as a platform for student-

student and student-tutor online interaction (with its inbuilt communication tools, including email and discussion board). Students will also engage in self-directed study to acquire knowledge and skills independently and autonomously, whilst taking own responsibility for the quantity and quality of their learning.

## References

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Borthwick, S. and Moy, R.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	2004
<b>Title</b>	Popular Music Genres
<b>Subtitle</b>	An Introduction
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Burton, G.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	2005
<b>Title</b>	Media and Society
<b>Subtitle</b>	Critical Perspectives
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	Berkshire: Open University Press.
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Cloonan, M.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	2005
<b>Title</b>	'What is Popular Music Studies? Some Observations'
<b>Subtitle</b>	
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	in British Journal of Music Education 22(1), pp.77-93.
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Fiske, J.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	1989
<b>Title</b>	Understanding Popular Culture
<b>Subtitle</b>	
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	London.
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Horner, B. and Swiss, T.

<b>Publishing Year</b>	1999
<b>Title</b>	Key Terms in Popular Music and Culture.
<b>Subtitle</b>	
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	Oxford: Blackwell. [part. Kassabian 'Popular', pp.112-23]
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Middleton, R.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	1990
<b>Title</b>	Studying Popular Music
<b>Subtitle</b>	
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	Buckingham. [part. pp. 37-60]
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Negus, K.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	1996
<b>Title</b>	Popular Music in Theory
<b>Subtitle</b>	An Introduction
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	Cambridge: Polity Press
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Shuker, R.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	2001
<b>Title</b>	Understanding Popular Music
<b>Subtitle</b>	
<b>Edition</b>	2nd
<b>Publisher</b>	London: Routledge
<b>ISBN</b>	

<b>Course Material</b>	Book
<b>Author</b>	Stokes, J.
<b>Publishing Year</b>	2003
<b>Title</b>	How to do Media and Cultural Studies
<b>Subtitle</b>	
<b>Edition</b>	
<b>Publisher</b>	London: Sage
<b>ISBN</b>	

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## Notes

This module provides a solid foundation to the popular music studies degree by

introducing students to various approaches to understand the social, cultural and political role played by popular music in society. Students will be familiarized with theories and methods from popular music, cultural and media studies that help to analyse popular music as text, and to explore the institutions and audiences involved in the production, propagation and consumption of popular music. Most of the approaches introduced here are methods of analysis and theories of representation, central to which is an understanding of popular music as a reflector and constructor of social and cultural meaning.