

Musical Storytelling with Taylor Swift and Other Iconic Female Artists

IDH2952: 30037 – Honors (un)common arts
Monday, 5:10-6:00 (Period 10) | Spring 2024
Location: Little 117

Contact information

Instructor Melina Jimenez, mpjimenez@ufl.edu

Student hours Fridays, 11:45am - 12:35pm, MAT 220B

Peer instructors Caroline Carter, carolinecarter@ufl.edu

Karina LaRubbio, klarubbio@ufl.edu

Welcome!

Welcome and thank you for signing up for this class! Please call us Melina, Caroline, and Karina.

Inspired by Taylor Swift's discography, this course will explore a new theme each week by drawing parallels between her lyrics and other works by notable female artists. Each week, students will look over lyrics and other materials to prepare for in-class discussions. We are not experts on music theory, and we encourage you to voice your opinions as we learn from each other. Achievement of the learning outcomes will be assessed through discussion board posts and responses, class discussions, and the group project.

If you are struggling with this course, with your other courses, or with life outside of the university, I (Melina) invite you to talk to me or someone that you trust. Whether this is your first, last, or somewhere in-between year at UF, college life can be challenging and sometimes overwhelming. Just talking about those feelings can help. If just talking with your family, your friends, or your instructors isn't enough, there is a list of campus resources on the last page of this syllabus to help you. We are happy to help you understand how these can be helpful for you.

You never owe Melina, Karina, or Caroline personal information about your mental or physical health. However, you are always welcome to talk to us about whatever you're going through. If you tell us that you're having trouble, we're not going to judge you or think less of you. If you need extra help or if you need to miss a class or need more time with an assignment, please ask. We will work with you to make sure you have the opportunity to engage with the material you may miss because of an illness or other life issues.

Course Goals

In this course, students will

- synthesize common themes expressed in Swift's body of work and other works by influential female artists
- discuss criteria for how popular music is evaluated and situated in current historical context
- develop greater sophistication in their artistic appreciation, critical thinking and discussion skills

Required Materials

Select songs and audio clips. Links to playlists and other materials will be provided on the course Canvas page.

Materials and Supplies Fees

None

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Evaluation of Grades

Assignments		Points
Annotate lyrics on Perusall	13 playlists	10 points each = 130
In-class Discussion	13 meetings	10 points each = 130
Introduction discussion posts and replies	1 post	10 points
Theme discussion posts and replies	1 post	50 points
Final Group Project	1 project	80 points
Total		400 points total

Attendance and Class Expectations

Since this is a discussion-based class, attendance and participation are required for class on Mondays. You will find guiding questions for the discussion each week in the form of a discussion page. Please refer to the discussion page before class. The in-class discussions consist of small group discussions for most of the class, with a full class discussion for the last 15 minutes or so. You are expected to contribute in your small group discussions, but we recognize that full class discussions are a bit more intimidating. Therefore, the participation grade will be based more on the small group discussions than the larger discussions. However, you are encouraged to participate fully in both. We also ask for respectful discussions, especially since we're asking you to share your experiences and disagreements. We believe thoughtful discussions will lead to better understandings of the texts and each other.

If you need to miss class, please email Melina (mpjimenez@ufl.edu) or message her on Canvas and be prepared to post your discussion responses for the week on the discussion page.

Out-of-class assignments

Each week, you will listen to a required playlist on Spotify or YouTube of about 6 to 8 songs. There will also be a collaborative playlist that students are encouraged to contribute to. In addition, students will annotate lyrics of 2 to 3 songs on Perusall by Sunday night. To encourage thinking deeply about the themes in the songs, we will be pushing you to make connections, ask deep questions, give constructive feedback, and perhaps disagree because of your interpretations or experiences. A simple "I agree! Your response is great" won't be enough.

Online Discussion Posts and Replies

You will have 2 online discussions posts: an introduction and an analysis of themes. For latter, you will be reviewing the themes discussed throughout the semester and focusing your analysis on one theme, how it appears in the chosen songs and how it appears outside the course materials. You will also propose new themes for the class to cover later in the semester. You will reply to your peers by Sunday.

Final Group Project

You will be working with a partner (or 2) to create a project of your choosing wherein you deep dive into a theme that we covered this semester. You should explore other content mediums (for example, books, poems, or videos) that demonstrate this theme. This could be presented in a video essay, comparison blog, or something else. Throughout the semester, as you interact with your peers, find someone who has strengths that complement your own. Your project will be posted on Canvas for your peers to see and comment on. If you and your partner both agree to post it outside of our class, that is highly encouraged! Your brilliance should be shared with the world.

Make-Up Policy

If you miss or do not complete an online discussion or assignment, Melina, Caroline, or Karina will send you a gentle reminder to make sure that you are doing ok. We prefer late engagement than no engagement at all. But timely engagement is the best! The final project has a stricter deadline because it will be our last assignment. As with everything else, if you are struggling with that assignment, please talk to us.

Grading Scale

Percentage	94 - 100	90 - 93	88 - 89	84 - 87	80 - 83	78 - 79	74 - 77	70 - 73	68 - 69	64 - 67	60 - 63	59 - 0
Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E

Honors Grading Requirement

A minimum grade of B is required to earn Academic points towards your Honors Completion Requirements. Once you have earned your final grade in this course, please upload the course information and final grade from your Unofficial Transcript into your Honors Canvas Cohort: Honors Completion module to earn Honors Completion credit. If you have questions about this, please consult the Honors Program information under Campus Resources.

University Student Honor Code

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code](#). If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructors in this class.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

Course Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. [Click here to read the In-Class Recording policy](#).

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Semester Schedule

Wk	Date	Weekly readings and topics for discussion
1	1.8-1.14	Mon: First Class Meeting: Introductions and Syllabus Discussion post 1: Intro discussion board on Canvas – Initial post due by Fri, replies by Sun
2	1.15-1.21	No class! Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. birthday and holiday
3	1.22-1.28	Playlist theme: Storytelling Discussion quote: “I’ll be 87 you’ll be 89, I’ll still look at you like the stars that shine in the sky”
4	1.29-2.4	Playlist theme: Infidelity Discussion quote: “Dare to sit and watch what will become and drink my husband’s wine”
5	2.5-2.11	Playlist theme: Rage (expressing anger) Discussion quote: “I hate that stupid old pickup truck you never let me drive”
6	2.12-2.18	Playlist theme: Revenge (anger + she’s going to do something about it) Discussion quote: “I’ve got a list of names and yours is in red underlined”
7	2.19-2.25	Playlist theme: Karma (anger + she won’t do anything about it, karma will) Discussion quote: “You had to kill me but it killed you just the same”
8	2.26-3.3	Playlist theme: Yearning Discussion quote: “I’m in a new hell everytime you double cross my mind”
9	3.4-3.10	Playlist theme: Limerence Discussion quote: “I bet you think about me”
10	3.11-3.17	Spring Break: no class
11	3.18-3.24	Playlist theme: Growing up/aging/passing of time Discussion quote: “How can a person know everything at 18 but nothing at 22?”
12	3.25-3.31	Playlist theme: Fame/public perception Discussion quote: “They tell you that you’re lucky but you’re so confused ‘cause you don’t feel pretty, you just feel used” Sat: March 30 at the Phillips Center - ON YOUR FEET! The Story of Emilio & Gloria Estefan Discussion post 2: Analysis of themes – Initial post due by Sun, March 31
13	4.1-4.7	Playlist theme: Girlbossing/reasons girlbossing is needed (double standards) Discussion quote: “I’m so sick of running as fast as I can wondering if I’d get there quicker if I was a man”
14	4.8-4.14	Playlist theme: Metaphor Discussion quote: “Losing him was blue like I’d never known, missing him was dark gray all alone”
15	4.15-4.21	Student-proposed theme: self-reflection Discussion quote: “She tells her side / Nothing to hide / Now the world will know”
16	4.22-4.28	Mon: Projects and last day of class
F	4.27-5.3	Final exams in your other classes No final exam in this class!

Note: This schedule is subject to change

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

Disability Resource Center (DRC): Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. Located at *Reid Hall*, (352) 392-8565, Email: DRC@ufsa.ufl.edu

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: The CWC provides short-term counseling, group, and couples' therapy as well as consultation, crisis services, outreach, referrals, self-care, and more. *Peabody Hall 4th floor or 3190 Radio Road*, 352-392-1575

UF Student Health Care Center: The SHCC provides a variety of health care services. Located at *2140 Stadium Rd*, (352) 392 - 1161

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at *1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608*

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.

University Police Department: 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies)

Campus Connections

GatorConnect: UF has over 900 student organizations that you can join

Academic Resources

UF Honors Program: Quick questions for an Honors advisor? Email advisor@honors.ufl.edu; Need an Honors advising appointment? Schedule via Microsoft Bookings: <https://bit.ly/ufhonorsadvising>; Located at *201 Walker Hall*, 352-392-1519

UF Computing Help Desk: The UF Computing Help Desk provides phone, email, and walk-in direct consulting including for E-learning (Canvas) technical support 352-392-4357 or e-mail to helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: The C3 team helps students gain career experience, write resumes, find clothing for interviews and more. *Reitz Union First floor*, 352- 392-1601

Library Support: The UF libraries provide various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. They love questions!

Academic Resources: Academic Resources provides free tutoring services for courses within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. They also offer supplementary instruction and general study strategy workshops. *Online*, 352-392-2010 or 352-392-6420

Writing Studio: The Writing Studio provides free one-on-one consultations with specific papers or writing generally. *302 Tigert Hall*, 352- 846-1138

Complaints

Student Complaints On-Campus