Course Description
Since its emergence in the 1970s as a localized community formation in New York, hip hop has developed into a billion-dollar, transnational industry with a myriad of cultural legacies and commercial products. This course examines the historical, social, political and aesthetic roots of hip hop culture and music. We will look at its beginnings in urban black and Latino youth cultures, its aesthetic contributions to popular music and cultural expression, the vexed representations of women in hip hop, and its place in a larger global commercial exchange. In addition to analyzing hip hop music, the course will look at advertising, fashion, cinema, music video, and other forms of culture influenced by hip hop.

OBJECTIVES
- To demonstrate a firm grasp of the key developments in the history of hip hop culture.
- To understand hip hop music within the tradition of black music and expressive culture.
- To distinguish hip hop music from other forms of popular music.
- To identify the elements and aesthetics of hip hop culture and music.
- To analyze the growth of a cultural form from its inception in local communities to its incorporation into mainstream commercial culture.

Required Reading

Electronic Reserves on sakai.rutgers.edu [ER]

Assignments and Grading
Attendance/Participation: 10%
Quizzes (4 in total): 20%
Midterm Exam: 25%
Paper (3-4 pages): 20%
Final Exam: 25%

Requirements
Participation/In-class Activities: 10%
Attendance and participation are required throughout the semester. More than three unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. Also, a lack of participation in class discussions and activities will weigh heavily on your final grade.

Quizzes (4 in total): 20%
Students will be given quizzes throughout the course. You will not be able to make up quizzes, unless you have a documented emergency or serious illness. Quizzes will cover course readings as well as lectures. Questions will consist of analyzing music and images, providing definitions of key concepts, and constructing short essay responses.
Paper (3-4 pages): 20%
Students are required to write an analytical paper that critically engages with issues raised in the course. Paper should apply concepts and theories of the course to a specific component of the hip hop culture. Paper must demonstrate a depth and range that shows sufficient engagement with course materials. More details will be provided closer to due date.

Midterm Exam: 25%
The midterm exam will cover material through the first half of the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short response questions, and essays.

Final Exam: 25%
The final exam will cover material from the second half of the course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short response questions, and essays.

Course Policies
No cell phone viewable during class time. If I find you chatting, texting, or using your computer devices for anything other than note-taking, you will be counted as absent. If it is a recurring issue, then I will ask you to leave the class.

All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day late. All papers must be double-spaced, typeset with Times or Times New Roman 12pt font, and have page numbers and one-inch margins. Format of papers should adhere to the Modern Language Association Style Manual.

Plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated. Plagiarism includes copying classmates’ answers and improper citation of any text in the course or otherwise. Ignorance of university policy is not an excuse.

Current Academic Integrity Policy: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml
Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Honor Pledge: I pledge on my honor that I will adhere to all aspects of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy.

Course Schedule
1/19: Introduction/ Course Overview

SECTION I: EARLY FORMATIONS
1/24: Jeff Chang, Ch 1 Can’t Stop, Won’t Stop [ER]

1/26: Jeff Chang, Ch 2 Can’t Stop, Won’t Stop [ER]

1/31: Forman, “Hip Hop Ya Don’t Stop,” pp. 10-13 [TTJ]
George. “Hip-Hop’s Founding Fathers Speak the Truth,” pp. 50-60 [TTJ]
Clips: Wild Style

Clips: Style Wars

QUIZ 1

Clips: Breakin’

SECTION: THROUGH THE LENS OF SUBCULTURE THEORY
Dick Hebdige, “Subculture” [ER]


SECTION: THE GOLDEN ERA
2/16: Jeff Chang, Ch 12 Can’t Stop, Won’t Stop [ER]
Music: LL Cool J, Run DMC

2/21: NO CLASS
On Media Reserve: Krush Groove

2/23: NO CLASS
On Media Reserve: CD compilation of golden era songs
ASSIGNMENT: WATCHING AND LISTENING ASSIGNMENT TO PREPARE FOR QUIZ

George, “Sample This,” pp. 437-442 [TTJ]
Music: Eric B & Rakim, EPMD, Public Enemy

QUIZ 2

SECTION: THE POLITICS OF RAP
Music: Public Enemy, Jungle Brothers, KRS One

Kitwana, “The Challenge of Rap Music from Cultural Movement…,” pp. 391-402 [TTJ]

3/9: MID-TERM EXAM

3/12-3/20: SPRING BREAK

SECTION: GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN HIP HOP CULTURE I
Music: Roxanne Songs; Salt N Pepa

Music: Queen Latifah, MC Lyte
SECTION: THE RISE OF GANGSTA RAP
Clips: Colors
Music: NWA
QUIZ 3

3/30: Eithne Quinn, Ch 1. & Ch. 8 Nuthin but a “G” Thang [ER]
Clips: Boyz N the Hood
Music: Ice Cube, Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Tupac

SECTION: THE BUSINESS OF HIP HOP
4/4: S. Craig Watkins, Ch. 3 Hip Hop Matters [ER]

4/6: S. Craig Watkins, “Producing Ghetto Pictures.” [ER]
Clips: Do the Right Thing; Boyz N the Hood; Set it Off

Screening: Menace II Society
PAPER DUE


4/18: Christopher Holmes Smith, “I Don’t Like to Dream about Getting Paid’: Representations of Social Mobility and the Emergence of the Hip-Hop Mogul” [ER]
Clips: The Industry

SECTION: GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN HIP HOP CULTURE II
4/20: Shanara R. Reid-Brinkley, “The Essence of Res(ex)pectability” [ER]

Ayanah Moor, “Still” [ER]
QUIZ 4

4/27: Andreana Clay, “‘I used to be scared of the dick’: Queer Women of Color and Hip-Hop Masculinity,” [ER]
Tim’m West, “Keepin’ it Real: Disidentification and its Discontents” [ER]

SECTION: HIP HOP CULTURE, AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE
Clips: La Haine

5/2: LAST DAY OF CLASS/ EXAM PREP

Final Exam: Thursday, May 10: 12-3PM