



Taylor Swift & Art

Photo credit: Kevin Winter (Getty Images Entertainment) - Eras Tour

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IDH2952: 26106
Honors (un)Common Arts

Taylor Swift & Art

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Peer instructor: Alexandra Dill

Wednesdays, 5:10-6:00

Dear listeners,

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

...Ready for it? In this class, students will fearlessly jump then fall into 13 gorgeous weeks of discussing Taylor Swift's discography, with a focus on her evergreen songwriting, and draw parallels between Swift's enchanting lyrics and fine art such as paintings, pottery, photographs, and more. Each week, students will be expected to keep their eyes open and examine closely in order to listen, discuss, reflect, argue, and write on themes such as heartbreak, coming of age, societal norms, and relationships. Students will collaborate with their peers to annotate lyrics, analyze themes, and participate in class discussions all too well. Students will participate in thematic assignments which include identifying inspirational artwork in Gainesville, creating their own artwork, and collaborating on a final class project. As we go through the course, we encourage you to think critically about the texts and the topics we encounter and to push your creativity. Achievement of the learning outcomes will be assessed through engagement in class discussions, artwork, an analytical blog post, and the final class project.

If you are struggling with this course, with your other courses, or with life outside of the university, we (Melina and Tate) invite you to talk to us 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, Tate, nor Alex 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

- identify and explain the themes in select songs from Taylor Swift’s musical catalog, including but not limited to, heartbreak, rage, coming of age, societal norms, and relationships
- discuss and analyze their perspectives in small-group and whole class settings and in writing
- create artwork that reflect the themes and draw connections between different forms of art

Homework and Class Discussions

The class will cover 6 themes. Each theme spans two weeks. For the first class of a specific theme, you will listen to a required Spotify playlist of 13 songs (about 45 minutes to 1 hour) and annotate at least 3 songs on Perusall and respond to at least 4 peer comments by Tuesday night.

Attendance and participation are required for class on Wednesdays, since this is a discussion-based class, wherein we will discuss the playlist and your annotations.

During this class, you will be assigned the art portion, where you need to go out into the world and find artwork that meets the criteria given and reflect the theme. This will require visiting the local museums and looking at public art with a delicate eye.

You will submit a post with the art that you found and a short explanation with connections to the playlist, song, or sparklets. On the second week of a specific theme, you will be working on an artwork that reflects that module’s theme, a specific song, or sparklets from various songs. By the end of class, you should submit your finished piece with an accompanying artist statement. You are encouraged to start your piece before class.

To encourage critical thinking about the themes in the playlists and how they connect with the world, we will be pushing you to ask deep questions, reflect on your experiences, give constructive feedback, and disagree because of your interpretations or experiences. A simple, “I agree! Your response is great” won’t be enough. We also ask for respectful and thoughtful discussions as they will lead to better understandings of the music and of each other.

Online Discussion Posts and Replies

You will have 2 online discussions posts throughout the semester with responses to your peers: an introduction and a blog. For the blog, choose one or two themes and analyze them for your audience (i.e. you classmates). Make it fun, creative, and easy to read, with out-of-the-box writing styles.

Final Illustrated Lyrics book

We will be working on creating an illustrated book that contains two art pieces from each student, the corresponding lyrics, and artist statements explaining the connection between the art and the songs/themes. The final book will be submitted to UF's ImageTextT journal.

Required Materials

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

Make-Up Policy

If you miss or do not complete an online discussion or assignment, Melina, Tate, or Alex 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.

If you need to miss class, please email Melina or Tate and be prepared to post your discussion responses for the week on the discussion page.

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.

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.

Materials and Supplies Fees

None

TSA

SCHEDULE

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|---|-----------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Introductions | 8 | Coming-of-age & Self-reflection |
| 2 | Heartbreak & Yearning | 9 | Photography |
| 3 | Painting | 10 | Spring Break |
| 4 | Rage & Revenge | 11 | Societal Norms & Fame |
| 5 | Pottery | 12 | Artist's Choice |
| 6 | Storytelling | 13 | Relationships |
| 7 | Fanfiction | 14 | Illustrated Lyrics Book |
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Evaluation of Grades

- Introduction posts and replies (10 points)
- Annotate lyrics on Perusall (6 x 10 points each = 60 points)
- In-class discussions (5 x 10 points each = 50 points)
- Find art inspiration (5 x 10 points each = 50 points)
- In-class art activity (5 x 20 points each = 100 points)
- Analysis blog and replies (60 points)
- Final Illustrated Book with 2 art pieces (70 points)

University of Florida policies

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. See the UF Conduct Code website for more information. 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. Links can be found on Canvas.

Campus Resources

Links to health and wellness, campus connections, academic resources, and complaints can be found on Canvas.

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.

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.

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