

**SOCI 4905**  
**Hip-Hop and the Post-Soul South**  
**Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00 – 2:25**

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**Office Phone: 678-3778**  
**Office Location: Clement 309D**  
**Office Hours: By Appointment**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course uses an interdisciplinary and intersectional lens to travel through time, sound, space, and embodiment to examine what the South has to say—demographically, economically, and culturally—through southern hip-hop. It contextualizes southern hip-hop within the larger genre of hip-hop as well as within scholarly hip-hop studies, highlighting how southern hip-hop both reflects larger cultural, social, and economic trends in the South as well as how it influences these trends.

**KEYWORDS**

race • place • space • gender • femininity • masculinity • sound • quareness/queerness/queering • performance • black feminism • hip hop • southern hip hop • region • culture • cities • rural • towns • visuality • post-soul • post-civil rights black communities • stratification • expressive culture • body

**COURSE MATERIALS**

Kiese Laymon, *Long Division*

Roni Sarig, *Third Coast*

Maco Faniel, *Hip-Hop in Houston*

Bettina Love, *Hip-Hop's Lil Sistas Speak*

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

*Personal Essay.* Hip hop narrates not only the individual lives of rappers, but also the broader milieu in which they/we live and come of age. As student once wrote that her southern identity is captured by the words, “Cash Money takin’ over for the 9-9 and the 2000s.” Write a **three-page** critical personal history in and through your relationship to hip-hop, and southern hip-hop in particular if applicable. What were the sights, sounds, and moments that defined your coming of age, and how does coming of age alongside this art shape who you are and how you think about the world? You will also revisit and re-write this essay at the end of the semester. **The personal essay is due January 29<sup>th</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup>. It is worth 20% of the final grade.**

*Album Review Essay.* Choose any southern hip-hop album ever and write a **three-page** critical review that takes into consideration course concepts and the context in which the album was created and released. What is the album’s relevance to and intervention in southern hip-hop and in hip-hop more generally? How does it use sight and sound to create the South? **The album review essay is due February 10<sup>th</sup>. It is worth 15% of the final grade.**

*Book + Film Review Essay.* Choose a book and film from the list in the appendix of the syllabus, read the two together, and write a three-page critical review. You will relate these texts to course concepts and evaluate their contribution to our understanding of the post-soul South, southern hip hop, and black American experiences. **The book + film review essay is due March 5<sup>th</sup>. It is worth 15% of the final grade.**

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*Assignment 3000.* In response to current Dirty South news events, course discussions, and/or course texts, create a project—a 20-photo photo essay, a 750-word blog post that incorporates multiple media, or a seven-minute documentary video project—that critically examines some aspect of the intersections of southern hip hop, southern spaces, regional identity, and/or race, class, gender, and sexuality. See [New South Negress](#), [Red Clay Scholar](#), [Southern Spaces](#), [New Black Man](#), [Pop South](#), and [Furious and Brave](#) for inspiration. **Assignment 3000 is due April 21<sup>st</sup>. A one-page proposal is due February 26<sup>th</sup>. Assignment 3000 is worth 25% of the final grade.**

*Final Examination.* The final examination is a comprehensive assessment of your understanding of course concepts that will ask you to critically apply your knowledge in several short answer and essay questions. **The final examination is May 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 AM. It is worth 25% of the final grade.**

**COURSE CALENDAR**

This is a suggested reading schedule so that you might pace yourself to keep up with the amount of material. However, I suggest you read ahead as much as possible to glean maximum benefit from the course discussion.

**Part I: When, Where, and Wherefore Is the Black South? Or, Time Travelin’**

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Major Text: *Long Division*

Listen To: Outkast and Big K.R.I.T.

Watch: *Idlewild*

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January 20<sup>th</sup>: Course Introductions

January 22<sup>nd</sup>: Grem, “Atlanta’s Dirty South and the Southernization of Hip-Hop America” and Robinson, “Finding the Black South”

January 27<sup>th</sup>: Reading Day; No Class.

January 29<sup>th</sup>: “One Sentence,” “Special Game,” & “Baize”; **Personal Essay due**

February 3<sup>rd</sup>: “Quarter Black” & “Yes, Indeedy”

February 5<sup>th</sup>: “Passing Tests”

February 10<sup>th</sup>: BRIDGE; **Album Review Essay due**

**Part II: Cities, Towns, and Rural Areas; Or, Space Travelin’**

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Major Text: *Third Coast*

Listen To: Crowd-sourced (across spaces and places)

Watch: *Hustle & Flow* and *ATL*

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Feb 12: Miami & Houston (Chapters 1 & 2)

Feb 17: Virginia (Chapter 6)

Feb 19: Atlanta (Chapters 5 & 7)

Feb 24: New Orleans (Chapter 4)

Feb 26: M.E.M.P.H.I.S. (Chapter 3); **One-page proposal for Assignment 3000 Due**

March 3: Country Boys (Chapter 8)

March 5: BRIDGE; **Book + Film Review Essay Due**

**\*\*\*TWERK/SPRING BREAK\*\*\***

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**Part III: Did You Hear That? Or, Sound Travelin’**

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Major Text: *Hip Hop in Houston*  
Listen To: Destiny’s Child & All Beyoncé Everything  
Watch: *Jason’s Lyric*

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March 17<sup>th</sup>: Chapters 1 & 2  
March 19<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 3  
March 24<sup>th</sup>: Chapter 4  
March 26<sup>th</sup>: Chapters 9 - 11 from *Third Coast*  
March 31<sup>st</sup>: BRIDGE; **Personal Essay Redux Due**  
April 2<sup>nd</sup>: Reading Day; No Class

**Part IV: Back to the (Southern Hip Hop) Future; Or, Body/Bodies Travelin’**

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Major Text: *Hip-Hop’s Lil’ Sistas Speak*  
Listen To: Crowd-sourced (southern women rappers)  
Watch: Bradley, “[The Magic Upper Room: Sonic Pleasure Politics in Southern Hip Hop](#)”

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April 7<sup>th</sup>: Chapters 1 & 2  
April 9<sup>th</sup>: Chapters 3 & 4  
April 14<sup>th</sup>: Chapters 5 & 6  
April 16<sup>th</sup>: Chapters 7 & 8  
April 21<sup>st</sup>: **Assignment 3000 Due**  
April 23<sup>rd</sup>: BRIDGE  
April 28<sup>th</sup>: Course Wrap-Up & Final Exam Review  
May 7<sup>th</sup>: Final Exam, 10:30 AM; bring a blue book

**Books/Readings**

Laymon, “How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America” (essay)  
Laymon, “Hip-Hop Stole My Southern Black Boy” (essay)  
Hatley, “Collected Likenesses” (short story)  
Robinson, *This Ain’t Chicago*  
Stack, *Call to Home*  
Ward, *The Men We Reaped*  
Ward, *Salvage the Bones*

**Films/Viewings**

*Hustle & Flow*  
*ATL*  
*Jason’s Lyric*  
*Idlewild*  
Beyoncé’s video for “No Angel”  
*When the Levees Broke*  
“Tremé”  
*Beasts of the Southern Wild*  
*Eve’s Bayou*