

THE ROOTS OF LATINE HIP HOP
ONLINE COURSE
SPRING 2026

COURSE INFORMATION:

Instructor: Roberto Santos, MFA

Contact Information: rasantos3@utep.edu

Course: CHIC 3345 | CRN: 25053

Date Range: March 23, 2026 to May 11, 2026

Virtual Office Hours: Mondays | 11:50 AM - 12:50 PM via email for quick response

TEXTS & MATERIALS:

Mandatory Texts:

Source and reference materials such as articles, podcast episodes, book excerpts, and YouTube videos will be provided to students by the instructor.

Optional Texts:

- *Hip Hoptionary* by Alonzo Wesbrook (get this if you want to learn some classic Hip Hop terminology and vocabulary)
- *The Gospel of Hip Hop* by KRS ONE (get this book if you really want to deep dive into Hip Hop culture)

CONTENT OVERVIEW:

This course explores the rich origins of Hip Hop, tracing its roots from Africa through the enslavement and forced relocation of Africans, to its birth in the Bronx amid the challenging socio-economic landscape of the 1970s—shaped and informed by both Black and Latine communities. We'll examine how musical and cultural traditions transformed through adversity, leading to Hip Hop's emergence as a culture centered around four core elements: breaking, graffiti, deejaying, and rapping.

With a focus on the significant origins and contributions of Latine practitioners, we will delve into each aspect of Hip Hop culture, highlighting its role as a powerful form of expression and social commentary—born from resistance and fueled by creativity. By examining pivotal figures and historical contexts, this course offers a comprehensive understanding of Hip Hop as a resilient, innovative cultural movement, as well as the roots of Latine individuals and movements that have shaped its evolution.

GRADING:

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = 0-59

ASSIGNMENTS & ASSIGNMENT VALUES:

Discussions: 5 points each (30 points total)

Quizzes: 2 points each (10 points total)

Song Critique: 20 points

Profile: 25 points

Final Exam: 15 points

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

(Discussions and quizzes are due on the last day of each module in BB)

Discussions:

In the spirit of Hip Hop, our class discussions serve as the cypher of our course, a space for sharing, self-expression, and showcasing intellect. A cypher is where opinions are voiced, knowledge is shared, and where we actively listen to and consider our peers' perspectives, fostering a community of exchange. With a total of 6 discussions aligned with our weekly topics, these sessions are designed to spark insightful conversations and deeper reflection on the course material. To emphasize the value of interaction and engagement, discussions are the most heavily weighted component of the class, encouraging robust participation with both peers and the content itself.

Quizzes:

The course incorporates five quizzes, placed to test your comprehension of the curriculum. These quizzes vary in format, including multiple-choice questions, short answers, or a blend of both. This approach ensures a thorough assessment of your knowledge of the course's key themes, historical insights, and the pivotal roles within Hip Hop culture.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

(Major assignments are due on posted due dates in BB and may overlap with subsequent modules)

Song Critique:

Analyze a rap song of your choice by a Latine artist, delving into its core message and the visual imagery it evokes. Examine the song's musical elements—such as rhythm, mood, form, and style—and evaluate how these aspects enhance the song's meaning. In your analysis, also consider how the artist incorporates Latine culture, identity, or experience into the lyrics, sound, or overall message. This could include the use of Spanglish, references to cultural traditions, regional sounds, or themes connected to migration, resistance, or community pride.

Profile:

Create a one to five minute video presentation profiling a significant Latine figure in Hip Hop culture who participated or influenced any of Hip Hop's elements. In your video, outline their pivotal contributions and discuss their impact within both the Hip Hop community and the broader cultural landscape. Highlight the ways in which this individual has shaped or influenced Hip Hop, detailing their artistic achievements, innovative approaches, and the lasting legacy they've left on the genre. This presentation should not only celebrate their work but also delve into how they've used their platform to influence and inspire within the Hip Hop culture and beyond.

Final Exam:*Option 1:*

Discuss a specific Latine movement or cultural influence and examine how it has shaped the evolution of Hip Hop or paved the way for Latine individuals to enter and contribute to Hip Hop culture. Consider movements such as the Chicano civil rights movement, the Nuyorican experience, or any other Latine cultural phenomenon, and explore how it influenced aspects of Hip Hop like breakdancing, graffiti, deejaying, or rapping. Be sure to include sources to support your perspectives and opinions.

Option 2:

Attend a live Hip Hop show with Latine artists—or watch a recorded live performance on YouTube—and analyze how Latine culture is represented in the performance. Focus on elements such as language use, musical influences, visual aesthetics, clothing, stage presence, and crowd interaction. Consider how the performer embraces or expresses their Latine identity—whether through cultural references, storytelling, heritage pride, or political messaging. If applicable, discuss how the performer's style connects to broader Latine movements, traditions, or historical struggles. Your analysis should highlight how Latine culture

shows up in the performance and what that representation communicates to the audience.

NETIQUETTE POLICY:

It's essential to establish a set of guidelines to ensure that our interactions remain respectful, supportive, and conducive to a positive learning experience for everyone. Our Netiquette Policy outlines the expectations for behavior in all online communications related to our course, including discussion forums, emails, video conferences, and any other digital platforms we may use.

1. Respect and Courtesy

- **Treat others as you would like to be treated.** Always communicate with your peers and instructors with respect and kindness. Derogatory, offensive, or disrespectful comments are strictly prohibited.
- **Be mindful of tone and context.** Without face-to-face cues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Aim for a polite and clear tone, avoiding sarcasm unless you're sure it will be understood.

2. Communication Clarity

- **Use clear and concise language.** Avoid slang, text speak, and overly complex vocabulary to ensure your messages are easily understood.
- **Proofread your contributions.** Take a moment to review your messages for spelling and grammatical errors, which can distract from your point.

3. Engagement and Participation

- **Stay on topic.** Keep discussions relevant to the course material or the topic at hand. This helps maintain focus and ensures valuable and productive conversations.
- **Contribute positively.** Share your knowledge, experiences, and questions to enrich our learning environment. Constructive feedback and debate are welcome, but always approach disagreements with respect and an open mind.

4. Privacy and Confidentiality

- **Respect privacy.** Do not share personal information about yourself or others without consent. Be cautious about what you disclose in a public or shared online space.
- **Be considerate of others' content.** Do not copy or use someone else's work without proper attribution or permission. Plagiarism and unauthorized sharing are unacceptable.

5. Digital Etiquette in Video Conferences

- **Be punctual.** Try to join video calls a few minutes early to address any technical issues.
- **Mute your microphone when not speaking.** This reduces background noise and distractions.
- **Use video responsibly.** Turn on your camera if required, but be mindful of your background and appearance to maintain a professional and distraction-free environment.

Consequences for Breaking Netiquette Policy:

Failure to adhere to this Netiquette Policy may result in warnings, removal from discussions, or other appropriate actions depending on the severity of the violation. Our goal is to create a supportive and engaging online learning community, and following these guidelines will help us achieve that.

By participating in this course, you agree to abide by this Netiquette Policy. Let's work together to ensure a respectful, productive, and enriching experience for everyone involved.

PLAGIARISM:

"Plagiarism" means the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors. Any student caught plagiarizing or cheating will be reported to the Academic Dean, will receive a zero on their assignment, and will lose credibility as a writer in the class. In order to avoid the temptation to plagiarize, students should start their assignments early.

USAGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all work submitted in this course must be your own and completed in accordance with the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures Chapter 1 Section 1.2.3. AI generated submissions that use ChatGPT, Claude, or other AI composition software *is prohibited*, will be treated as cheating, and reported to the Dean of Students.

STUDENT SUPPORT CENTER:

The Student Support Center (SSC) is dedicated to providing a quality advising experience. This website is a supplement to the advising services offered to

College of Health Sciences (CHS) students. It aims to provide students with the tools and resources needed to make the best academic decisions possible! The CHS Student Support Center staff is currently available to serve and assist you both in-person and remotely. The SSC is located in HSSN Room 200. Phone number: (915) 747-7234. Email: studentsupportcenter@utep.edu.

THE CENTER FOR ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES:

Should you need accommodations, The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) aspires to provide students with disabilities, accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. Visit their website at, <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/>.

CALENDAR:

Module 1: March 23 – April 1

Course Introduction, Syllabus, Calendar, and Initial Content

Module 2: April 2 – April 11

Hip Hop Origins: From Africa to the Bronx and Beyond

Module 3: April 12 – April 21

The Elements & Early Latine Contributions

Module 4: April 22 – May 1

The Elements: Pachuco, Cholo, and Gang Roots of Latine Hip-Hop

Module 5: May 2 – May 11

The Elements: Kid Frost in his Own Words & Final Project

PROMINENT LATINE CONTRIBUTORS TO HIP HOP CULTURE:

Be advised that there are many more Latine contributors than are compiled in this list. Do your research, and if you find more, please let me know who they are, so I can add to the list for future classes.

Kid Frost (artist)	N.O.R.E. (artist & podcaster)	Fabulous (artist)	Angie Martinez (radio)
Mellow Man Ace (artist)	Cypress Hill (rap group)	Chino XL (artist)	Joe Conzo, Jr (photographer)
Hurricane G (artist)	Vico C (artist)	The Beatnutz (rap group)	MC Ruby Dee (artist)

Big Pun (artist)	AZ (artist)	Cardi B (artist)	Tony Touch (deejay)
Fat Joe (artist)	Baby Bash (artist)	Snow Tha Product (artist)	Dj Doo Wop (deejay)
Cipha Sounds (deejay)	Bobbito Garcia (deejay)	Lil Rob (artist)	Immortal Technique (artist)
Danny Hastings (photographer & multimedia)	Dave East (artist)	Lil Pump (artist)	Jim Jones (artist)
Tres Delincuentes (rap group)	Control Machete (rap group from Mexico)	Bocafloja (artist from Mexico)	Akwid (rap group)
Krystall Poppin (artist)	Lápiz Conciente (artist)	Ice Spice (artist)	Mr. Cartoon (artist)
Estevan Oriol (photographer & videographer)	Crazy Legs (breaker)	Mr. Capone-E (artist)	2MEX (artist)
Berner (artist & entrepreneur)	Coyote (artist)	That Mexican OT (artist)	Cartel de Santa (rap group)
Canserbero (artist)	April Walker (clothing designer & brand owner)	Lee Quiñones (graffiti artist)	