



## HISTORY AND CULTURE

SPRING 2012  
WEB DUBOIS PREP

**Walimu:** Baba Kiari

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**Course Web-Site:** <http://mrmundel.wikispaces.com/HipHop>

**Class Time:** M-F 11:10 - 12:20

### **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 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. The course will use college-level texts in order to prepare students for their next academic steps.

**Texts:** *Readings will come from a variety of sources including...*

Chang, Jeff. Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005.

Forman, Murray and Mark Anthony Neal, eds. That's the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies Reader. New York: Routledge, 2004.

The Art Sanctuary of Philadelphia. Do the Knowledge: A Standards Based Hip-Hop Learning Guide.

### **Guiding Questions**

- How has Hip-Hop changed from its inception to present-day Hip-Hop?
- Is today's Hip-Hop better or worse than Hip-Hop from the past? How can we make a judgement like this?
- Is Hip-Hop a positive and negative force in today's society?
- Who is a member of Hip-Hop culture? Who is not?
- To what extent is the following statement valid: "Hip hop culture is just another name for black ghetto culture."
- Who profits from Hip-Hop culture? Who is marginalized?
- What is the future of Hip-Hop?
- To what extent is the following statement valid: "Hip hop is a cultural form that was originally created by African Americans and was once owned and controlled by them. More recently, however, the culture has been hijacked by white music executives who have transformed its message into a glorification of violence, crime, drug abuse, and misogyny. As a result, the white establishment in the music industry has perpetuated false and negative stereotypes of black people. This has proved damaging not only to the African American community, but the nation as a whole."

## GRADING

### Weekly Participation 20%

- Participation will be posted daily in the back of the room on a 4-point scale.
- Much of what we do in class is interactive and depends upon your regular attendance and enthusiastic participation. Your being absent not only diminishes your learning, but it keeps the class from benefiting from your experiences and ideas. Arriving late, leaving early, and being absent will hurt your participation grade.

### Quizzes 10%

- Quizzes will be based upon 1-2 weeks of class/homework.
- There will be 8 quizzes in all. Therefore each represents 1.25% of your grade.

### Weekly Verse 10%

- In your journal you will be required to write 16 bars.
- 16 lines of music is the common length of time for a verse. Rap music developed this time structure through time measurement in jazz and blues.<sup>1</sup>

### Weekly Reading and Response 20%

- Every week there will be one article that students will be required to read and write a page (hand-written) personal response in their journals.

### Weekly Calling 30%

### Album Paper 10%

### Assignment X 10%

**Verse and Reading Responses** will be graded on the following scale:

- ✓+ Student has fully completed the assignment on time and has shown effort and attention to organization, legibility, and mastering the topic. *(equivalent to 100%)*
- ✓ Student has fully completed the assignment and has shown effort and attention to organization and legibility. *(equivalent to an 85%)*
- ✓- Student has not fully completed the assignment and/or the assignment is not legible or well-organized. *(equivalent to a 60%, but anything is better than a 0)*

**LATE POLICIES:** If work is turned in the day after it is due, the highest attainable score is a check. If work is turned in two days after it is due, the highest attainable score is a check- minus.

*WHAT'S MY GRADE?*

Students will have the opportunity to see their grade online at all times using provided log-in information by Baba K on [engrade.com](http://engrade.com). Most work will be graded and inputted on Fridays and Mondays.

## WEEKLY CALLING

Students will be in charge of weekly class goals in order to develop 'real-world' skills and interact with our subject-matter, Hip-Hop, personally and meaningfully.

**Podcast(ers) (3):** Every week the class will attempt to create a 10+ minute, online radio show in order to document what we have learned.

**Journalist:** An individual will be in charge of making a 10 minute presentation on a Hip-Hop current event and leading a small class discussion on the event. This individual will also be in charge of choosing the "Kick-off track" of that day.

**Documentary Producers (3):** If we are going to achieve our goal of creating a Hip-Hop documentary by the end of the school year, we will need to work on it consistently, week after week. The individuals with this job will be in charge of writing voice-over, filming, editing, and all other responsibilities that come with producing our documentary.

**Hip-Hop Ed:** Hip-Hop in education is a growing trend as many educators are beginning to realize that Hip-Hop is not only an interesting subject-matter but also an amazing tool that can be utilized in all classrooms, K-12. These individuals will be working with teachers, sitting in on other classrooms, and developing rhymes in order to help the learning in all of the Prep School.

**Mix-Tape (2):** The best and only way to learn about Hip-Hop fully is to be engaged consistently in the creation and actions of Hip-Hop itself. With all of our weekly verses, students will create, using either created beats or downloaded instrumentals, tracks with the end goal of a 10-track class mix-tape.

**Bombers:** Hip-Hop is not just about music. Graffiti is a large part of Hip-Hop culture. Using learned techniques, students will be asked to develop their own tag and art. In addition, students who show promise and interest will be assisted in bombing Detroit buildings with or without the assistance of Baba K.

*\*\*Students are not limited to the choices above. If students are inspired to interact with Hip-Hop through a different medium, they are encouraged to ask Baba K for project approval.*