



UNIVERSIDADE LUSÍADA
LISBOA

Course Unit Program
Introduction to the Study of Popular Music

Academic Year 2026/2027

1. Organic Unit

Faculty of Architecture and Arts

2. Course

JAZZ AND MODERN MUSIC

3. Cycle

1st

4. Course Unit

Introduction to the Study of Popular Music (C6223)

5. Scientific Area

6. Curricular Year

2nd

7. Type of Curricular Unit / Semester

2nd Semester



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8. Class type and workload (work time)

Theoretical classes:

Practical classes:

Theoretical-Practical Classes 30,00

Tutorial Guidance:

9. ECTS Credits

3,00

10. Scientific Area Coordinator

11. Regent

Prof. Doutor MASSIMO CAVALLI

12. Assistants

13. Teaching Language

Portuguese

14. General Objectives

To introduce students to popular music studies and songwriting by connecting analysis, creation and performance. The course develops tools for understanding form, melody, harmony, rhythm, lyrics, arrangement and stage presence, encouraging an informed, critical and collaborative creative practice.

15. Specific Objectives

To analyse songs from different genres; identify formal structures, harmonic progressions and melodic processes; relate words and music; create song sketches; experiment with arrangements and performance strategies; develop critical listening, technical vocabulary and the ability to present and justify artistic choices.

16. Skills to be acquired

Students will acquire the ability to analyse and discuss popular music repertoire; use basic songwriting techniques; write lyrics, melody and harmony in relation to form; work collaboratively in ensemble contexts; prepare musical presentations; and reflect critically on creative processes, audiences, artistic identity and sustainability.

17. Teaching Methodology



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Theory-practice classes combining content presentation, guided listening, repertoire analysis, writing exercises, instrumental/vocal practice and group work. The course includes discussion, peer feedback, creative laboratories and progressive presentations, linking composition, arrangement and performance.

18. Course Unit Program

1. Introduction to popular music: concepts, genres, social functions, market, oral tradition, media and technology.
2. The song as an object of study: form, narrative, hook, motif, phrase, section, contrast and repetition.
3. Songwriting fundamentals: relationships between melody, harmony, rhythm, lyrics and prosody.
4. Melody: contour, range, repetition, variation, tension/release, target notes and memorable chorus writing.
5. Harmony: recurrent progressions, cycles, cadences, modality, bass lines, riffs, loops and stylistic identity.
6. Rhythm, groove and metre: patterns, syncopation, accent, text-music relationships and performance implications.
7. Lyrics and narrative: theme, point of view, imagery, rhyme, verbal metre, communicative clarity and the relationship between words and musical emotion.
8. Form and arrangement: verse, pre-chorus, chorus, bridge, intro, interlude, ending, dynamics, instrumentation and texture.
9. Popular music performance: individual preparation, group rehearsal, stage communication, presence, setlist, audience and dealing with the unexpected.
10. Technology and production: demos, simple recording, DAW, sonic references, mock-ups, digital sharing and process documentation.
11. Collaborative practices: co-writing, group roles, leadership, feedback, authorship ethics and copyright.
12. Final project: creation, presentation and critical reflection on an original song or a recomposition/arrangement of pre-existing material.

19. Assessment Methods

Continuous assessment will consider participation, practical exercises, written/oral analysis, creative assignments and the final presentation. Attendance, individual progress, musical quality, conceptual clarity, collaboration, revision skills and critical reflection on the creative process will be valued.

20. Didactic Resources

Piano/guitar/bass/drums or equivalent instruments; sound system; computer, projector and access to audio/video platforms; DAW or simple recorder; scores, lyrics, lead sheets, harmonic grids, bibliography, listening excerpts and materials shared through the course platform.

21. Sustainability Objectives



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To promote sustainable musical practices by reducing printing, using digital materials, creatively reusing resources, critically engaging with diverse repertoires, encouraging collaborative work and reflecting on the relationship between artistic creation, cultural circulation, social responsibility and environmental impact.

22. Keywords

Popular music
Songwriting
Song
Melody
Harmony
Lyrics
Form
Arrangement
Performance
Creativity



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23. Main Bibliography

Author(s): PERRICONE, Jack
Title: Great Songwriting Techniques
Edition: Year: 2018
Local: New York
Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN Code:

Author(s): Cashman, David, Garrido, Waldo
Title: Performing Popular Music: The Art of Creating Memorable and Successful Performances.
Edition: 1ª Year: 2020
Local: New York
Publisher: Routledge
ISBN Code: 9781138585065

Author(s): De Clercq, Trevor
Title: The Practice of Popular Music: Understanding Harmony, Rhythm, Melody, and Form in Commercial Songwriting
Edition: 1ª Year: 2025
Local: New York
Publisher: Routledge
ISBN Code: 9781032362892

24. Complementary Bibliography

Author(s): Tatit, Luiz
Title: O Cancionista: Composição de Canções no Brasil
Edition: 2ª Year: 2012
Local: São Paulo
Publisher: EDUSP
ISBN Code: 9788531402487

Author(s): WALL, Tim
Title: Studying Popular Music Culture-Studying the Media
Edition: 2ª Year: 2013
Local: London
Publisher: SAGE Publications Ltd



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Colaborador(es) / Colaborator(s)	-
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