Production and A&R in the Music Industry
(a/k/a Talent Assessment)
MPAMB-UE 1223-001; 2 points
Wednesdays, 3:30-5:35 PM; Room 303, 35 W 4th Street
Spring 2019

PLEASE NOTE: This syllabus may be revised during the term. Revisions will be posted on NYU Classes with an announcement of the posting.

INSTRUCTORS
Phil Galdston (phil.galdston@nyu.edu) Ruby Marchand (ruby.marchand@nyu.edu)
Office hours: By appointment and via phone

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on the skills necessary to engage in assessment of talent, risk, and innovation in the contemporary music business. Students will be exposed to the detailed thought, decision-making, and innovative processes of high-level music business professionals, who will visit and work with them in the classroom.

Students will concentrate on the review, discussion, and evaluation of songs and recordings generated by high-level NYU songwriters, performers, producers, etc., who submit their work. As part of our process, students will invite a select number of these music creators to showcase during at least three of our classes. Our industry guests, who represent a broad spectrum of how critical listening skills and keen talent assessment translate into highly successful and long-term creative careers in music, will share the arc of their careers, their current responsibilities, and the lessons they have learned from their extensive experience. They will participate in and comment on the submitted material, the decision as to who will showcase, the showcases themselves, and the class’s decision-making process.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will:
• develop an understanding of knowledgeable and critical listening and talent assessment through specific exercises and projects that will sharpen their ears and provide them with a concise vocabulary for assessment purposes;
• apply this knowledge to the recorded materials and performances of participating artists and songwriters;
• assess which, if any, music creators they would sign to a potential music business entity (label, publisher, management, etc.) and why;
• in addition to course readings, written assignments, and an active role in class discussion, students will prepare written feedback for all participating music creators.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS
Beyond the course requirements, students are expected to:
• participate in class discussion, offering strong, but respectfully-stated, constructive opinions;
• work in collaborative groups;
• expand their musical horizons by listening without prejudice and in detail;
• proofread all written assignments for language, grammar, and punctuation, observing warnings (red and green quiggly lines beneath questionable sections) from Word;
• prepare one question to be asked of each guest.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND EQUIPMENT
• High-quality audio equipment, whether personal or public.
• All readings, websites, and listening will be announced in class and via NYU Classes.
  - Guralnick, Peter, *Sam Phillips: The Man Who Invented Rock’n’Roll*. (excerpts)
  - Hammond, John, *John Hammond on Record*. (excerpts)
  - Holzman, Jac, and Daws, Gavan, *Follow the Music: The Life and High Times of Elektra Records in the Great Years of American Pop Culture*. (excerpts)
  - Smith, Joe, *Off the Record*. (excerpts @ http://www.loc.gov/rr/record/joesmith/)

ASSIGNMENTS / CLASS DISCUSSIONS:
NOTE: Assignments will be posted on and should be submitted via NYU Classes.

A1 - Due February 6:
  ASSIGNMENT: Knowledgeable Listening. Listen to Marvin Gaye’s recording of *What’s Going On* (Gaye/Cleveland/Benson) and fill out the supplied Rubric.
  DISCUSSION: Super Bowl Pre-Game and Half-Time Show. Please watch these events.

A2 - Due February 13: 3
  ASSIGNMENT: Multi-Recording Comparison. Listen to three cover versions of *What’s Going On* and fill out the supplied Rubrics.
  DISCUSSION: GRAMMY® Awards Telecast. Please watch this program.

A3 - Due February 27: Student Submission Assessment PART I (individual assignment)

A4 - Due March 27: An essay focused on innovation, utilizing *Follow the Music*

A5 – Due April 4: Diversity of Talent / Diversity of Talent Assessment

A6 - Due April 17: Student Submission Assessment PART II, feedback to artists (group project)

A7 - Due May 8: Final Project/group talent assessments (in-class presentation)

A8 - Due May 10: Final Project/group talent assessments (paper).

FORMAT OF ASSIGNMENTS (Please do not vary from the following.)
1- All papers should be in Word format, double-spaced.
2- Label your document with your last name, the title of the assignment (or an abbreviation of it), and the date of your submission.
3- At the top of the first page of each assignment you submit, list your name, last name first, your e-mail address, and the date of submission.
4- Place your last name at the top of every page of a multi-page assignment;
5- Insert page numbers on all pages;
6- Do NOT write your SSN or student ID number anywhere on your paper.
7- Place song titles in quotes, album titles in *bold italics*;
8- Credit the writers of any song referenced by placing the names of the writer(s) in parentheses i.e. (Lennon-McCartney). Only one such credit per song is necessary;
9- All papers must be submitted via NYU Classes.
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE
Please refrain at all times from texting, use of social media, and all computer activities not related to class activities. Listening closely to the work of the artists is crucial to helping them and to helping you to learn more about music-making and talent assessment. Once again, opinions—even strong opinions—are not only welcome, they’re essential. As long as they are offered in a constructive, polite way, all of us can benefit from a free exchange of them.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS
It is students’ responsibility to check email for announcements and Classes for posted assignments.

ATTENDANCE
Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and stay until the end of the class. One unexcused absence is permitted; all others will require a doctor’s note or other satisfactory explanation. Unexcused absences beyond the one permitted will affect grades. Whenever possible, advance notice is desirable. Regardless of the reason for an absence students will be responsible for any missed work.

REVIEW OF SUBMITTED MATERIAL: All students are required to listen to and read the submitted music, lyrics, bios, and statements of goals posted on the password-protected TALENT ASSESSMENT Channel @ stream.nyu. Detailed review of this material is crucial to participation in this course.

To access stream.nyu
1- visit stream.nyu and sign in using your NET ID (NOTE: you are registering your NET ID, so that stream recognizes it when we register you as a Member). 
2- when you have signed in, please send us an email confirming you have done so;
3- include in that email your NET ID (not your password!);
4- we will then register you as a Member of the TALENT ASSESSMENT channel and notify you of same. You will then be able to stream all the material submitted.

GUESTS:
February 27: Susan Dodes, publisher, manager, and professor; SHOWCASE 1
March 13: Riggs Morales, VP of A&R and Artist Development, Atlantic Records; SHOWCASE 2
March 27: Monika Tashman, attorney
April 3: Justin Kalifowitz, CEO, Downtown Music Publishing
April 10: John Doelp, VP A&R, Columbia Records
April 17: John Doelp, VP A&R, Columbia Records; SHOWCASE 3
April 24: Cyndi Goretski, & Michael Hill, Film Music Supervisor
May 8: Final Presentations

GRADES
Grades are based on class participation, good-faith effort to review all submitted materials, written assignments, and growth of communication skills. Class participation is evaluated by the quality of questions for faculty, guests, and student artists, as well as comments made during the showcase/assessment process.

- 25% Class participation
- 50% Written assignments
  - 0% Knowledgeable Listening (individual assignment)
  - 10% Multi-Recording Analysis (individual assignment)
  - 10% Initial Comments re: artist submissions (individual assignment)
  - 20% Follow the Music paper (individual assignment)
  - 10% Submission Feedback (group assignment)
- 25% Final project (group assignment)
STEINHARDT GRADING SCALE (NOTE: There is no A+ or D-)
A     93-100
A-    90-92
B+    87-89
B     83-86
B-    80-82
C+    77-79
C     73-76
C-    70-72
D+    65-69
D     60-64
F     Below 60
IP    Incomplete/Passing
IF    Incomplete/Failing
N     No Grade

Evaluation Rubric
A=Excellent
The written assignments are comprehensive, detailed, and insightful. They creatively incorporate, or
challenge, concepts from listening, discussions, lectures, and readings. Work demonstrates
understanding of the underlying concepts discussed in class. The assignments demonstrate proficiency
in the techniques discussed in class and its underlying aesthetics. Contributions to classroom discussions
are frequent and insightful.

B=Good
Work demonstrates understanding of the underlying concepts discussed in class. Written assignments
are complete and demonstrate proficiency in grasping the concepts discussed in class. Classroom
participation is consistent.

C=Average
This work is adequate, but superficial. Assignments show some superficial understanding of what has
been discussed in class. Written assignments fail to demonstrate knowledge of the concepts discussed in
class. Classroom participation is inarticulate.

D= Unsatisfactory
This work is incomplete, and evidences little understanding of the discussions and breakthroughs
explained in class. Assignments demonstrate inattention to detail, misunderstand course material and
overlook significant concepts. Classroom participation is spotty, unprepared and off topic.

F=Failed
This grade indicates a failure to participate and/or incomplete assignments
**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the NYU Steinhardt Statement on Academic Integrity. A copy is available at [http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity).

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities ([http://www.nyu.edu/csd/](http://www.nyu.edu/csd/), 719 Broadway, 2nd Floor, 212-998-4980) and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor.

**NYU WRITING CENTER**
411 Lafayette, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10003  
Telephone: 212 998-8866 Email: writingcenter@nyu.edu  
Hours: Monday to Thursday, 10 am to 8 pm; Friday, 11 am to 4 pm

The Writing Center is a place where any NYU student can get help with his or her writing. The Writing Center is a part of NYU's Expository Writing Program in the College of Arts and Science. It is a place where one-on-one teaching and learning occur, as students work closely with EWP faculty at every stage of the writing process and on any piece of writing except for exams.