Description

Music was king in the 1960s, but movies were also distinctive and distinguished. This course features good-to-great 1960s movies that contained musical hits. Each movie had at least one song that reached the Billboard Top 5, and five of them had #1 songs. The movies encompass multiple genres including comedies, suspense-thrillers, westerns, and dramas. Some resist placement into a single category. The Academy of Motion Pictures nominated two of them for best film and two for best musical score.

Featured Movies (in chronological order)

King Creole* (1958). It’s not a 1960s film, but it is the highest-rated Elvis movie, has a film noir vibe, shows that Elvis Presley actually could act, and (of course) features Elvis songs such as Hard Headed Woman and King Creole.

Where the Boys Are (1960). Arguably the best film of the beach party genre, Where the Boys Are features 4 coeds in Ft. Lauderdale on spring break. The star-studded cast includes Paula Prentiss, Yvette Mimieux, Connie Francis, Dolores Hart, George Hamilton, and Frank Gorshin. In addition to songs sung by Francis, the movie features cool progressive jazz.

Goldfinger *(1964). The quintessential James Bond film is accompanied by an outstanding John Barry soundtrack. Shirley Bassey’s unique voice and interpretation brought the title song to #1 on the Billboard popular music chart.

A Hard Day’s Night (1964). Although there is a plot, it’s not really about the dialogue. The soundtrack comprises what Allmusic.com calls “the definitive Beatles album, the one every group throughout the ages has used as a blueprint.”

To Sir, With Love* (1967). A touching coming-of-age story that features Sidney Poitier at the height of his career. The title song and others feature English pop star Lulu, but there’s also a bonus: two songs by Wayne Fontana and The Mindbenders.

Easy Rider (1969). When Deep South meets motorcycling Hippies, cultures tragically clash. Dennis Hopper, Peter Fonda, and Jack Nicholson turn in memorable performances, and the soundtrack features rock and folk luminaries such as Steppenwolf, Roger McGuinn, The Byrds, and Jimi Hendrix.


* To allow time for a brief introduction and 10-15 minutes of discussion afterward, this movie will require an additional 10-20 minutes of class time beyond the usual 2 hours (which includes a 10-minute break).

VERY IMPORTANT
If you are unable to attend the first session of the class, or if you have decided to drop the class, please notify the facilitator either by e-mail ASAP so someone from the wait-list may take the class.

Thank you for your cooperation.