

University Offers Taylor Swift's Songwriting Course

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Curriculum /kəˈrɪkjələm/ (noun) subjects that are included in a course or taught by a school, college, etc.
Example: The professor presented the curriculum to her class yesterday.
2. Talented /ˈtələntɪd/ (adjective) having a natural skill or ability
Example: He has proven to be a very talented musician.
3. Intelligent /ɪnˈtelɪdʒənt/ (adjective) smart or clever
Example: I think he is as intelligent as Einstein.
4. Introduce /ˌɪntrəˈduːs/ (verb) to bring something to someone's attention for the first time
Example: I started going to that restaurant from the time that my friend introduced it to me.
5. Alongside əˌlɔːŋˈsaɪd/ (preposition) with or next to
Example: Angelina Jolie starred alongside Brad Pitt in the 2005 film "Mr. and Mrs Smith".
6. Connect kəˈnɛkt/ (verb) to have or provide an association, link, relationship, etc.
Example: Police were unable to connect her to the crime.



The University of Texas at Austin has started offering a course on Taylor Swift's songwriting. "The Taylor Swift Songbook," as the course is called, is being taught to first-year students in the university's Liberal Arts Honors program starting in fall 2022. According to the university's website, students in the course get to discuss Swift's songs alongside writers such as William Shakespeare and John Keats.

"I think it's important to connect the curriculum to the present," said Dr. Elizabeth Scala, who is teaching the course. Scala explained that in her songs, Swift uses some of the same topics and ideas that can be found in traditional poetry. "Swift is an intelligent and talented songwriter, and her writing skills are what made me focus on her," Scala told the Austin American-Statesman. Scala said she became interested in Swift's music because of her daughter, who introduced her to it after the 2021 release of Swift's album Red (Taylor's Version).

Those interested in the course who aren't able to take it can still look at Scala's Instagram page @swiftieprof, where she is sharing news about the course and questions for fans. Scala's class, however, is not the first course on Swift offered at a university. In spring 2022, New York University's Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music also had a class on the 32-year-old pop star, with the focus on her life and career as a musician.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on "The Taylor Swift Songbook" course?
2. How has your taste in music changed as you've gotten older?
3. Are there any genres of music that you particularly dislike? Why?
4. Do you use Spotify or any other music streaming services?
5. If you could meet any musician, dead or alive, who would you choose?