

# Do you hear the people sing? Revolution and the modern musical

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Deadline: 31st May 2024

## Basic module details

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### Month of introduction/change

October

### Year of introduction/change

2024

### Requested module code

IP327

### Module title

Do you hear the people sing? Revolution and the modern musical

### Module duration

10 weeks

### Department for SITS

Liberal Arts

### Rationale for introduction, revision or discontinuation

The study of revolution has played a key role in the Warwick Liberal Arts curriculum offer since the department was established. The topic is well suited to transdisciplinary, problem-based exploration and facilitates the intersection of many ideas and concepts from students' backgrounds and interests and their wider studies in LA and at Warwick. Stemming from this, there has been clear feedback from students that they want additional opportunities to learn about revolution. This module responds to that need by creating an honours-level environment where key aspects of revolutionary thought can be examined. The modern stage musical has been selected as the lens through which to do this because of the increasing global reach of that art form and its established place as a vehicle for discussing difficult and divisive issues in an accessible format. Offering students, both from Liberal Arts and the wider undergraduate community, the chance to think about how and why revolutions are the subjects of several of the most profitable and well-known global examples of this art form creates a unique transdisciplinary environment to consider how revolution is discussed in the modern world. Additionally, this module connects with music and the performing arts, two areas that are not currently represented across Liberal Arts tuition, and ones students have commented regularly that they have an interest in exploring.

### Module leader

William Rupp (1073773)

### Level

6

### Level for SITS

3

### Credit value

15

### Module delivery

Face to face

### Study locations

Location	Primary
University of Warwick Main Campus, Coventry	Yes

## Module description

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### Introductory description

As an art form, the musical is a global phenomenon. London theatres alone grossed over £800 million in box office sales in 2022, with a significant percentage of that derived from stage musicals. Developing out of traditions such as opera buffa and vaudeville in the 18th and 19th centuries, the musical became a major art form in the United States and the United Kingdom by the mid-20th century before spreading more widely. Despite this success and impact, the musical is often considered an inferior form of expression, especially when compared to opera. This negative comparison is unwarranted; the audience reach and artistic flexibility of the musical allows this art form to have significant social, political, and cultural impact.

Revolution -- its theory, practice, and applications -- is a topic that has a long relationship with the musical, including being the core theme of two of the ten top grossing musicals of all time: *Les Misérables* (1980) and *Hamilton* (2015). The former has been running, in multiple cities, continuously since its debut with a 35 year run in London, and the latter has gained a global reputation and ignited debates about formerly sacrosanct subjects. This module seeks to understand why and how revolutions have achieved such enduring success through the stage musical and what we can learn about revolution and representation. Students will be challenged to go beyond slick staging and catchy melodies to consider how both subversive and conservative stage musical representations of revolution are. Themes including inclusion/exclusion, voice, appropriation, and nostalgia will be considered. Significant space will be opened for students to identify themes and topics relevant to them and to co-create this module's problem-based learning seminars.

### Principal module aims

This module extends and expands the Liberal Arts curriculum to include theatre, musicology, and further theoretical exploration of revolutions and revolutionary movements. It aims to provide students with a uniquely transdisciplinary approach to this exploration, giving a considered theoretical structure designed to empower students to be co-creators in this space. Ultimately, students will be asked to combine all relevant elements presented in this module to create a robust vision of how they conceive of the links between the art of the musical and revolution.

### Learning outcomes

- Identify and discuss the key characteristics of musicals and how these relate to the study of revolutions.
- Interpret and unpack musicals to determine how and why revolutionary movements are portrayed in specific manners.
- Draw connections between different revolutionary movements, their presentations via musicals, and their relationship to real-world events and perspectives.
- Appraise the impact of musicals on the perception of revolutions.
- Design and produce an indicative artefact that expands the musical form to revolutions beyond the examples offered in the module.

### Outline syllabus for publication

This is an indicative syllabus, the details of which may change year on year:

Unit 1: *Masters of the House*: Situating revolution within the art of the musical.

Unit 2: *Filling the Darkness with Order and Light*: *Les Misérables* (1980) and the rise of a global revolution(?), including a film screening.

Unit 3: *A Story of Those Who Always Loved You*: *Opera buffa*, *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786), and the dangers of dissent.

Unit 4: *The Never-ending Road to Calvary*: *Hamilton* (2015) and revolutionary revision, including a film screening.

Unit 5: *Somewhere Beyond the Barricades -- Urinetown* (2001), satiric responses and the limits of revolution, plus film screening.

Unit 6: *Like a Child Who is Lost in a Wood?*: Making sense of art and revolution.

Unit 7: *A World You Long to See*: Presentation pitches.

### Supplementary detail on syllabus and teaching strategies to inform the approval (not for publication)

This module will be taught in a problem-based learning format, with students working together to devise specific and evidence-informed responses to week themes and topics. A key element of this will be three screenings of recorded versions of the focus musicals. These will be scheduled in addition to the normal seminar time and will give students the chance to view the works in a manner as close to their original form of production as possible.

**Should this module have a reading list?**

Yes

**Talis Aspire link**<https://rl.talis.com/3/warwick/lists/9F878E33-FB22-F6AA-6CF3-9EBF1764F812.html?lang=en&login=1>**Indicative reading list**

As the specific musicals examined may change from year to year, this list is indicative only:

Arendt, H. (1963), On Revolution

Edney, K.A. (2009), A New Brechtian Musical? An Analysis of Urinetown

Hollman, M., G. Kotis (2001), Urinetown

Hunter, M. (1999), The Culture of Opera Buffa in Mozart's Vienna: A Poetics of Entertainment

Magee, J. (2018), Miranda's Les Miz

McMillin, H.S. (2006), The Musical as Drama

Miranda, L.-M. (2015), Hamilton

Mozart, W.A., P. Beaumarchais (1786), The Marriage of Figaro

Polzonetti, P. (2003), Opera Buffa and the American Revolution

Richards, B.F. (1999), Musical Theatre: A Form of Political Expression

Schonberg, C.-M., H. Kretzmer, A. Boubil, J.-M. Natel (1980), Les Miserables

Stephens, B., K. Grossman (2015), Les Miserables and Its Afterlives: Between Page, Stage, and Screen

**Departmental web link**

to be added

**Module costs**

Description	Category	Funded by	Cost to student
Optional performance visit, to be arranged based on ticket availability.	Field trips, placements and study abroad	Student	£50.00

**Module delivery****Minimum student number**

5

**Maximum student number**

20

**Estimated student number**

15

**Teaching split**

Department	Percentage
Liberal Arts	100%

**Skills, competencies, and attributes****Subject specific skills**

Ability to generate relevant multidisciplinary problems through individual and small group research.

Individual and group research skills through multidisciplinary examinations of specific case studies.

Oral and written communication.

Digital literacy.

Professional communication.

Working with others.

Problem solving.

Information technology.

Research across various disciplines and using a variety of methods.

Peer review.

### **Transferable skills**

Through this module, you will develop different skills that are sought by employers which will support your professional development. We have highlighted this to enable you to identify and reflect on the skills you have acquired and apply them throughout your professional journey including during the recruitment process whether this is in a CV/application form or at an interview.

Critical and independent thinking — developed through: Weekly tasks, readings, and homework; encounters with and employment of complex theories and Problem-Based Learning activities and in-class discussion.

Written communication – developed through: Research Essay; musical pitch; and weekly collaborative interactive task; with ongoing weekly formative feedback.

Oral communication – developed through: musical pitch where students propose a musical about a revolution (or, a revolutionary musical); and weekly seminar tasks and presentations.

Research and evaluation – developed through: Weekly problems and tasks that require the students to research and evaluate issues concerning identified topics; and the final research paper involves the formulation of their own research question and conducting their own in-depth reviews and analysis of theories, archival materials, case studies, or interpretations of expressive works (mainly, but not limited to, stage musicals).

Time and self-management — developed through: Weekly group work and problems; weekly seminar preparation; musical pitch; and writing of research paper.

### **Includes research element**

Yes

### **Research element description**

Students will be asked to prepare readings and other materials for weekly problem-based learning seminars. Because of the student-led nature of these seminars, identifying and engaging with a range of their source material, in addition to that suggested each week, is critical to the collective advancement of thinking and ideas. Independent research also forms a critical part of the assessments for the module.

### **Interdisciplinary**

Yes

### **Interdisciplinary description**

This module draws upon a range of disciplinary methodologies and offers the participants the opportunity to identify specific areas of focus meaningful to them and their backgrounds. This module is open to students from any department, and the rich mix of backgrounds will enhance the overall range and experience of discussions and debates.

### **International**

Yes

### **International description**

This module builds in an international perspective to understanding revolution through the musical art form and actively creates space whereby students can engage with revolutionary movements and music from around the world.

## **Learning hours breakdown**

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### **Lecture**

Required: 0 x 0 hours    Optional: 0 x 0 hours

**Seminar**

Required: 10 × 2 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Tutorial**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Project Supervision**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Demonstration**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Practical class**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Supervised practical class**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Fieldwork**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**External visit**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Work based learning**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Online learning (scheduled sessions)**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Online learning (independent)**

Required: 0 × 0 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Other activity**

Required: 3 × 3 hours    Optional: 0 × 0 hours

**Details of other activity**

Timetabled screenings of the three musicals that serve as case studies (Les Miserables, Hamilton, Urinetown).

**Placement**

0 hours

**Private study**

40 hours

**Details of private study and independent learning**

Approximately three hours per week (on average) will be dedicated to readings, tasks between seminars, group work, and preparation.

**Assessment**

81 hours

**Total study hours for module**

150 hours

## Assessment

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**Reassessment model**

Individual

**Assessment components**

Title	Type	Length	Weight	Final chronological	Eligible for self-certification
The next big thing -- revolutionary musical design portfolio	Portfolio assignment	3000 words	50%	Yes	Yes (extension)
<b>Student</b>	50				

<b>preparation and completion time (hours)</b>	
<b>Description</b>	Students will create a portfolio outlining their proposal for a new stage musical based on a revolution. They will combine themes drawn from across the artistic and theoretical discussions in their problem-based learning seminars, their module readings, and their independent learning. Creative responses will be encouraged, but a clear template will be provided to signpost basic structuring, essential components, and indicative word counts. This work will be built on their pitch presentations. including the summative and formative feedback received.

**Reassessment component is the same**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Final chronological</b>	<b>Eligible for self-certification</b>
Revolutionary musical pitch presentation	Presentation - Individual	10 minutes	35%	No	Yes (extension)

**Student preparation and completion time (hours)**

25

**Description** Students will work individually to produce a pitch for a new stage musical that focuses on a revolution. They will need to identify the revolution they wish to examine, research it, decide on what musical forms best amplify it, and then present their ideas to the wider group. Formative feedback will be provided by peers, in advance of the presentation, and reflection on this engagement will be part of the pitch. This acts as a way for students to sense-check and receive feedback on the idea that will develop into their portfolio assignment.

**Reassessment component is the same**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Final chronological</b>	<b>Eligible for self-certification</b>
Case study quizzes	Other		15%	No	Yes (extension)

**Student preparation and completion time (hours)**

6

**Description** Three Moodle-based quizzes, each linked to a specific musical used as a case study, will help students embed learning and promote engagement. Quizzes will be multiple choice, with five to eight questions based on the readings and screenings used in each case study.

**Reassessment component is the same**

**Must the student pass all parts of the assessment to pass the module?**

No

**Methods for providing feedback on assessment**

General feedback for written assignments will be provided via Tabula. Detailed feedback appointments available for all students upon request. Group feedback will be provided via Tabula.

**Assessment learning outcomes**

	<b>The next big thing -- revolutionary musical design portfolio (50%)</b>	<b>Revolutionary musical pitch presentation (35%)</b>	<b>Case study quizzes (15%)</b>
<b>Identify and discuss the key characteristics of musicals and how these relate to the study of revolutions.</b>	X	X	X
<b>Interpret and unpack musicals to determine how and why revolutionary movements are portrayed in specific manners.</b>	X	X	X
<b>Draw connections between different revolutionary movements, their presentations via musicals, and their relationship to real-world events and perspectives.</b>	X	X	X

	The next big thing -- revolutionary musical design portfolio (50%)	Revolutionary musical pitch presentation (35%)	Case study quizzes (15%)
Appraise the impact of musicals on the perception of revolutions.	X	X	
Design and produce an indicative artefact that expands the musical form to revolutions beyond the examples offered in the module.	X	X	

## Availability

### Availability of module

Course	Route	Year of study	Type of availability
Undergraduate Liberal Arts (UVCA-LA99)		3	Optional
Undergraduate Liberal Arts with Intercalated Year (UVCA-LA98)		3	Optional

Has pre-requisite modules?

No

Has post-requisite modules?

No

Has anti-requisite modules?

No

Any additional resource requirements

Needs to be timetabled in a room with good AV projection equipment, moveable desks, and a visualiser. For the screening sessions, these will need to be timetabled in a room with high-quality sound and projection.