
FAMILY NIGHT AT SISSETON WAHPETON COLLEGE

Music from the 1960s That Changed America

Written, Produced and Directed by: Professor Harvey DuMarce

HPS 141: 1960s: The Decade That Changed America

Date: October 21, 2026

Time: 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Location: Room 9, Sisseton Wahpeton College

Food: Prepared by the Rez Chef

An Evening of Music and History

The 1960s was one of the most transformative decades in American history. Music did more than entertain, it was a powerful voice for social change, civil rights, peace activism, cultural identity, and generational transformation. Songs of the era reflected the hopes, fears, conflicts, and dreams of millions of Americans during a decade marked by assassinations, political upheaval, social movements, and rapid cultural change.

During this Family Night event, we will explore ten influential songs, along with honorable mentions, that helped define and shape the 1960s. These songs touched on themes such as Civil Rights, freedom, equality, peace, the Vietnam War, cultural pride, and social justice. Together, they provide a unique window into a decade that continues to influence American society today. Whether you lived through the era or are discovering it for the first time, this program offers an eclectic journey into the music that changed America.

Top 10 Songs

"Blowin' in the Wind" - Bob Dylan

"Respect" - Aretha Franklin

"Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud" – James Brown

"A Change Is Gonna Come" - Sam Cooke

"Fortunate Son" - Creedence Clearwater Revival

"For What It's Worth" - Buffalo Springfield

"The Times They Are A Changin'" – Bob Dylan
"Eve of Destruction" – Barry McGuire
"Give Peace A Chance" – John Lennon
"White Rabbit" – Jefferson Airplane

Honorable Mentions

"Hey Jude – The Beatles
"Street Fighting Man" – the Rolling Stones
"Get Together" - The Youngbloods
"Ohio" – Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young
"What's Going On" – Marvin Gaye
"Hello Vietnam" - Johnny Wright
"Spirit in the Sky" – Norman Greenbaum
"Vietnam" – Jimmy Cliff
"The Revolution Will Not be Televised" – Gil Scott-Heron
"Ballad of Ira Hayes" – Johnny Cash

Why These Songs Matter

These songs captured the defining issues of the decade, from the Civil Rights Movement and anti-war activism to the rise of youth culture and demands for social justice. They gave voice to people seeking change and inspired audiences to rethink the meaning of freedom, equality, religion, citizenship, and community. More than half a century later, their messages continue to resonate because many of the challenges and aspirations they addressed remain relevant today.

