

Cultural History of the USA

Code: 106285
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2504212 English Studies	OB	2	1
2504380 English and Catalan Studies	OB	3	1
2504386 English and Spanish Studies	OB	3	1
2504393 English and French Studies	OB	3	1
2504394 English and Classics Studies	OB	3	1

Contact

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Use of Languages

Principal working language: english (eng)
Some groups entirely in English: Yes
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Teachers

Felicity Hand Cranhan
Clara Román Vanden Berghe

Prerequisites

1) "Història cultural dels Estats Units d'Amèrica" focuses on sociocultural and textual analysis and promotes student participation and reflection. In like manner, "Història cultural dels Estats Units d'Amèrica" also revolves around the historical events that have shaped the USA as we know it today. This being the case, students interested in this subject are strongly recommended to be familiar with the subject "Història Cultural de les Illes Britàniques" (English Studies). For parallel reasons, this subject is NOT recommended to US passport holders who have taken similar subjects in their country of origin.

2) Students who want to take part in this course need a C2 level of English within the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages", which in practical terms implies that they have to be able to: comprehend a wide variety of long and complex written and audiovisual materials and recognize their implicit meaning; express themselves with fluency and spontaneity; use English flexibly and efficiently for social and professional purposes; produce well-structured texts about complex topics, and demonstrate an appropriate command of the appropriate cohesive devices that are required in academic contexts.

Objectives and Contextualisation

- "Cultural History of the United States" provides an introduction to the most relevant issues and events in the History of the USA from its colonial origins to the present. Likewise, this subject emphasizes the cultural production that emerges from the intersection between the history of this nation and its society.

- This subject fosters the analysis, debate and interpretation of the cultural production of the USA, a production that is rooted in the main historical events that have shaped this nation as we know it today.
- The academic preparation that derives from this subject is essential for all remaining US literature subjects within the degree of English Studies, in the sense that the main aim of this subject is to provide students with a solid historical and sociocultural base from which to approach the literary texts of the USA that are studied at a later stage. In like manner, the academic preparation that derives from this subject also establishes a perspective that helps students understand the particularities of the culture and the institutions of the USA. "Cultural History of the United States," in fact, complements "19th Century US Literature," a subject that is taken in the second semester.
- On successfully completing "Cultural History of the United States," students will be able to: understand and explain the most relevant events that have occurred in the USA throughout its history; link the history of this nation to its cultural production; demonstrate a strong comprehension of historical texts from the periods examined; show clear evidence of understanding written texts and audiovisual materials that are related to the history and the culture of the United States of America; generate written analyses of the texts and audiovisual materials dealt with in class; relate historical periods to their literary manifestations (this skill will be developed jointly with the subject "19th century US literature"); and express an informed opinion about the texts and historical events studied throughout the course.

Competences

English Studies

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Apply the methodology of analysis and critical concepts to analysing the literature, culture and history of English-speaking countries.
- Students must have and understand knowledge of an area of study built on the basis of general secondary education, and while it relies on some advanced textbooks it also includes some aspects coming from the forefront of its field of study.
- Understand and produce written and spoken academic texts in English at advanced higher-proficient-user level (C2).
- Use current philological methodologies to interpret literary texts in English and their cultural and historical context.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources for the collection and organisation of information.
- Use written and spoken English for academic and professional purposes, related to the study of linguistics, the philosophy of language, history, English culture and literature.

Learning Outcomes

1. Actively participate in forums on the online learning platform.
2. Carry out bibliographic searches of secondary sources related to current culture and society in English and their textual representation, using digital technologies (catalogues and databases).
3. Demonstrate a full understanding of a wide range of literary, audio-visual and essayistic texts related to aspects of current culture and society in English, and recognise implicit meaning at a higher-proficient-user level (C2).
4. Demonstrate an understanding of compulsory texts on the cultural history of the British Isles and the United States.
5. Distinguish principal ideas from secondary ideas and synthesise literary, audiovisual and essayistic texts related to current culture and society in the English language, and their textual representation.
6. Express oneself in English, orally and in writing, in a formal register and using appropriate terminology in relation to the study of the cultural history of the British Isles and the United States.
7. Locate specialised and academic information and select this according to its relevance.
8. Produce written and oral academic discourse with a fluency and accuracy appropriate to a higher-proficient-user level (C2).
9. Weigh up the impact of any long- or short-term difficulty, harm or discrimination that could be caused to certain persons or groups by the actions or projects.

Content

- 1: Indigenous-Precolumbian North America. "Discovery" and Conquest.
- 2: Colonial North America: Virginia, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York.
- 3: The Road to Independence. Revolution and the War of Independence.
- 4: Confederation and the Constitution. The Louisiana Purchase. The War of 1812.
- 5: African Americans and Slavery.

- 6: Native Americans and the "Trail of Tears".

- 7: The West, "Manifest Destiny", and the Mexican War.
- 8: The Civil War and Reconstruction.

- 9: Urban America: Immigration and Industrialization. Native Americans and the Wounded Knee Massacre.
- 10: Imperialism and the Spanish-American War.
- 11: World War I. The Roaring 20s. Suffragism and the Women's Rights Movement. The Great Depression and the "New Deal".
- 12: World War II. Beginnings of the Cold War.
- 13: The 60s: the Black Civil Rights Movement; the Women's Liberation Movement; the Vietnam War.
- 14: From the Cold War to the War on Terror.

Methodology

The teaching methodology of this subject is based on:

- 1 ECTS credit = 25 hours of learning > 6 credits = 150 hours
- Directed activities (2cr., 50 hours)
- Supervised activities (1 cr., 25 hours)
- Autonomous activities (3 cr., 75 hours)

Classes combine theory and practice. It is essential that students study in advance the texts and the audiovisual materials selected by the professors, as the dynamics of the class revolve around the active participation of students in every session.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Debates in class and on Moodle	20	0.8	6, 1, 8
Lectures	30	1.2	5
Type: Supervised			
Assessment	5	0.2	4, 3, 5, 6, 2, 7, 8
Assessment in class and on Moodle	5	0.2	4, 3, 5, 6, 2, 7, 1, 8
Written assignments	15	0.6	4, 3, 5, 6, 2, 7, 8
Type: Autonomous			
Personal Study	15	0.6	5

Assessment

Assessment for this course is based on the following:

- Midterm exam (or exam 1) = 40%
- Final exam (or exam 2) = 45%
- Participation in discussions and debates (in class and on the forum) = 15%

ASSESSMENT:

- This subject follows the system of continuous assessment.
- All the exercises are **COMPULSORY**.
- All students are required to study the compulsory texts for this subject and participate in debates in class and on the virtual forum (Moodle). Any indication that students have not completed their work in this respect will affect their assessment in a negative way.
- Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted in the event that they have not submitted the two exams and at least one forum contribution.
- On carrying out each assessment activity, professors will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place. Students have the right to review their exercises (including reassessment) with their professor in a personal tutorial on the set dates, never after the next assessment activity has already been done. Students lose this right if they fail to collect their exercise within the period announced by the professor.
- The minimum pass mark for the whole subject is 5.
- The student's command of English will be taken into account when marking all exercises and for the final mark, too. In fact, "English" will count 25% of all the exercises.

REASSESSMENT:

Re-assessment for this subject requires a content-synthesis test, for which the following conditions are applicable:

- The student must previously have submitted the two written exams and at least one forum contribution.
- The student must previously have obtained an average overall grade equal to or higher than 3.5 in the two written exams.
- The maximum grade than can be obtained through re-assessment is 5.

VERY IMPORTANT: Plagiarism in any of the exercises will automatically lead to **FAILING (0/10)** the exercise, which cannot be reassessed. If the student plagiarizes a second time, s/he will fail the course. **PLAGIARISM** means copying a text (and this includes a single sentence) from unidentified sources and pretending it is part of one's own production (**THIS INCLUDES COPYING SENTENCES OR FRAGMENTS FROM THE INTERNET, WHICH ARE INCLUDED WITHOUT ANY CHANGES TO THE TEXT THAT IS PRESENTED AS ONE'S OWN**) and it is a serious academic offence. Students must learn to respect others' intellectual property and to always identify the sources they use. It is absolutely necessary for students to become entirely responsible for the originality and authenticity of their texts.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Active Participation	15	21	0.84	4, 3, 5, 6, 1, 8
Exam 1 (Midterm)	40	2	0.08	4, 3, 5, 6, 2, 7, 8, 9
Exam 2 (Final)	45	2	0.08	4, 3, 5, 6, 2, 7, 8, 9

Bibliography

Compulsory reading:

A dossier of short texts selected and provided by the professors.

Highly recommended bibliography:

Jenkins, Philip. *A History of the United States*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017 (5th edition).

King, David C. *American History. A Visual Encyclopedia*. Penguin Random House, 2019 (3rd Edition).

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States: 1492-Present*. London: Longman, 2010.

Secondary bibliography:

Anderson, Carol. *White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2016.

Barney, William (ed.). *A Companion to 19th Century America*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Boles, John (ed.). *A Companion to the American South*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Collins, Patricia. *Black Feminist Thought*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Davis, Angela J. (ed.) *Policing the Black Man: Arrest, Prosecution and Imprisonment*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2017.

Deverell, William. *A Companion to the American West*. Malden: Blackwell, 2006.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2014.

Foner, Eric. *A Short History of Reconstruction*. New York: Harper and Row, 1990.

Foner, Eric. *The Story of American Freedom*. New York: Norton, 1998.

Ford, Lacy (ed.). *A Companion to the Civil War and Reconstruction*. Malden: Blackwell 2005.

Genovese, Eugene. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World Slaves Made*. New York: Vintage Books, 1976.

Greene, Jack. *A Companion to the American Revolution*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Hewitt, Nancy. *A Companion to American Women's History*. Malden: Blackwell 2002.

Kleinberg, S.Jay, Vicki Ruiz & Eileen Boris (eds), *The Practice of US Women's History*, Rutgers UP, 2008. ebook

Morgan, Edmund. *American Heroes: Profiles of Men and Women Who Shaped Early America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2009.

Ortiz, Paul. *An African American and Latinx History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2018.

Vickers, Daniel (ed.). *A Companion to Colonial America*. Malden: Blackwell, 2006.

Vorenberg, Michael. *Final Freedom, The Civil War, the Abolition of Slavery, and the Thirteenth Amendment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Whitfield, Stephen (ed.). *A Companion to 20th-Century America*. Malden: Blackwell, 2006.

Wood, Gordon. *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic: 1789-1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Journals

American History. electronic journal

The Journal of African American History - electronic journal

Websites

The American Yawp <http://www.americanyawp.com/>

Software

No specific software will be used.