

COURSE CATALOGUE

BA

SPRING 2017

AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW



Course Catalogue – BA

SPRING 2017

LECTURES

Course ID: ***4219-AW002***
Course title: ***History of the United States II***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Sylwia Kuźma-Markowska***

This lecture provides a general survey of American History from Reconstruction through the early 21st century. Students will become acquainted with the main developments in American politics, society, and culture.

Course ID: ***4219-AW004***
Course title: ***American Literature II***
Course coordinator: ***Dr hab. Grzegorz Kość***

This lecture presents developments in U.S. literature following the Civil War, focusing on aesthetics as well as ideological sources and cultural contexts. We begin with Mark Twain and the rise of realism, examine naturalism and local color fiction, and look at the work of Henry James in some detail. After discussing the socially engaged literature of the thirties, we go on to examine key writers of Modernism, both poetry and prose, with the Harlem Renaissance discussed in a separate lecture. Major currents and schools in 20th century poetry are presented, as well as key developments in drama. Postmodernism is examined both as literary experimentation and a trend in cultural and literary theory. The final weeks are devoted to the diversity of recent American writing: the literature of various ethnic groups, key women writers since the 70s, the literary responses to 9/11 etc.

Course ID: ***4219-AW006***
Course title: ***United States Government***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Bohdan Szklarski***

This course seeks to introduce students to the American political system, focusing on the institutions and structures that shape American politics. It will look at the Constitutional frame that creates the political landscape in which American politics takes place. It will also attempt to address the various forces (political, social, and commercial) that compete with each other to influence what the government does.

Course ID: **4219-AW008**
Course title: ***Business Culture in the United States***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Małgorzata Durska***

We will analyze how different cultural dimensions manifest themselves in individual, group and organizational behavior, selected economic paradigms, managerial theories and methods as well as governmental policies. We will also trace back the developments of American business institutions, the changes in social perceptions of an American businessman and the evolution of American business culture itself.

Course ID: **4219-AW010**
Course title: ***Audiovisual Culture and Media in the United States***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Urszula Jarecka***

The aim of this class is to introduce and explore various social and cultural aspects of contemporary audiovisual culture in the USA through the lens of historical and contemporary aesthetics. The transition from a modern to an electronic postmodern culture is a frame of reference. The lecture will provide an overview of contemporary theories of media and visual culture; classes will be in the form of lectures and screenings. Readings will include important works in media studies and contemporary theory in the visual arts. Student should get to know detailed history of audiovisual culture and categories from aesthetics which are indispensable to analyzing the visual material.

Course ID: **4219-AW011**
Course title: ***Key Methods in Cultural Studies***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Karolina Krasuska***

Following the Cultural Studies pioneer Raymond Williams' initiative, and its more recent reformulations, the course explores key concepts and themes that have, for decades now, been shaping the diverse methodologies operating within and/or influencing the discourses of Cultural Studies in general and American Studies in particular. The lecture aims at tracing and exploring the problems and issues crucial and of ongoing interest in such research perspectives informing the field of Cultural Studies as discourse analysis and psychoanalysis, deconstruction, critical race studies, ethnic studies, gender, queer and sexuality studies, and postcolonial studies.

Course ID: **4219-AW026**
Course title: ***History of American Art***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Justyna Wierzchowska***

The aim of the course is to present the development of American art of the last three centuries. The course will discuss the formation of American cultural identity as it manifested itself in a distinct artistic tradition, increasingly independent from the development of European art. American art grew in direct correlation to historical changes and was additionally determined by the North American geographical context. The course will examine the following phases of its development: (1) dependence from Europe; (2) the beginnings of the state: Classicism and Romanticism; (3) the growth of landscape painting;

(4) Impressionism and Post-Impressionism at the turn of the 19th and 20th century; (5) American Modernism, (6) contemporary art.

Course ID: **4219-AW033**
 Course title: ***The US Economy***
 Course coordinator: ***Dr hab. Andrzej Kondratowicz***

The goal is to familiarize participants with the historical developments and the current state of the American economy. The role of some important American economists – historical and contemporary and their influence on economics and the US economy will be showed, as well. Stress will be put on the 20th century, although earlier developments in some areas will be scrutinized, too. The lecture intends to analyze both the economic processes along with their outcomes and the institutional/structural features of the US economy – with emphasis on the latter. To achieve this goal some basic economic concepts will be introduced to the student. Then, selected economic institutions will be analyzed in the changing historical perspective. The US economy - historically and today - will be put into an international comparative perspective. Sources of available economic/statistical data will be indicated and the ways they are gathered and made available to the public will be showed.

ELECTIVE COURSES – I year

Cluster 1

4219-SB044 *American Creed: between ideas and politics*
 4219-SC028 *Beyond the House of Usher: American Gothic Today*
 4219-SD080 *Happily Ever After: Dismantling the Myth of Romantic Love*
 4219-SD085 *American Media Cultures*
 4219-SH063 *Movies and American Society*

Cluster 2

4219-SF039 *The Free Market: Advocates and Critics*
 4219-SH004 *Seeing is Believing. The American Century in Photographs*
 4219-SH031 *Introduction to American Cities and Suburbs*
 4219-SH063 *Movies and American Society*

Cluster 3

4219-SB044 *American Creed: between ideas and politics*
 4219-SD085 *American Media Cultures*
 4219-SF025 *Introduction to Politics*
 4219-SF039 *The Free Market: Advocates and Critics*

Course ID: **4219-SB044**
Course title: ***American Creed: between ideas and politics***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Marcin Gajek***

The course discusses the content and meaning of American Creed. It presents ideas which constitute American Creed but most importantly it analyzes how the sources, traditions and usages of core ideas and their derivative compounds animate political discourse and structure the basis of political conflict in the US.

Course ID: **4219-SC028**
Course title: ***Beyond the House of Usher: American Gothic Today***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Agnieszka Kotwasińska***

In American Gothic, ghostly castles of the Old World are replaced with minds haunted by madness and bodies tormented by violence. This course will examine how, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, Gothic secrets keep on haunting American literature and how they point to the legacy of slavery, the failure of post-racial society and the unbearable uncanniness of Others.

Course ID: **4219-SD080**
Course title: ***Happily Ever After: Dismantling the Myth of Romantic Love***
Course coordinator: ***Mgr Anna Kurowicka***

The myth of romantic love is ubiquitous in American culture, from literary and cinematic classics to low-brow popular culture. This course will be an opportunity to examine this myth and its many incarnations through critical analysis of texts ranging from *The Great Gatsby* to Disney movies, romances, and young adult novels. Drawing on gender and queer studies methodologies, as well as popular culture studies, the course will look at tropes, archetypes, and genre conventions typical of texts about romantic love.

Course ID: **4219-SD085**
Course title: ***American Media Cultures***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Małgorzata Ziótek-Sowińska***

The course will focus on interpretations of the media content, based on the knowledge of the cultural/political context as well as of selected critical approaches to the study of popular culture. Students will get acquainted with various samples of media content, including the press, film, TV, music and internet formats, genres and formulas, at the same time tracing some of the key topics strongly present in today's U.S. media. We will also examine conventional persuasive strategies used in advertising and the language of advertising.

Course ID: **4219-SF025**
Course title: ***Introduction to Politics***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Clifford Bates Jr***

This is a general social science level introduction to the study of politics. The course offers a general introduction to political science. The topics to be introduced to the students include basic concepts such as power, authority, legitimacy; types of political systems and approaches to the study of politics; problems common to all political systems.

Course ID: ***4219-SF039***
Course title: ***The Free Market: Advocates and Critics***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. James Morrison***

This course will examine both the advocates and critics of the Free Market, both historically and in recent years. First we will consider the historical role of the market in human economics and how it differs from the concept of the free market. Then we will explore the many advantages of the free market, followed by a survey of the critics of the Free Market over the years, including a detailed analysis of their moral and practical criticisms of the system. Next we will look at how the free market managed to operate with some real success over the years and whether the conditions that made it work have been changing in the past 40 years. Then we will examine why the system has been so widely and uncritically accepted by almost everyone, including those who suffer most. Finally we will explore some of the many proposals that have been made for reforming, transforming, or completely changing the free market system.

Course ID: ***4219-SH004***
Course title: ***Seeing is Believing. The American Century in Photographs***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Włodzimierz Batóg***

The purpose of this course is to present the most important events in American 20th century social and political history through the lenses of camera. A selection of the most important phenomena will be analysed not from the historical perspective but from the perspective of a photographer who chronicles the events and the viewer who reads and received the photograph.

Course ID: ***4219-SH031***
Course title: ***Introduction to American Cities and Suburbs***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Anna Sosnowska-Jordanowska***

The course provides an overview of the history of the US cities and suburbanization, and offers a review of the classic and new urban, suburban community studies conducted in the post-1945 era. The course materials include an urban studies textbook, numerous ethnographic and sociological studies, documentaries (One Square Mile, Detropia, New York), HBO series The Wired, newspaper articles and survey reports.

Course ID: **4219-SH063**
 Course title: ***Movies and American Society***
 Course coordinator: ***Prof. William Glass***

Popular movies are one of the most important form of American mass culture in the twentieth century. In this course, we will explore the use of popular movies both as cultural artifacts (evidence) as well as a way of telling history.

ELECTIVE COURSES – II & III years

Cluster 1

4219-SC016 *American Modernist Poetry*
 4219-SC018 *The Literature of Horror: Varieties of the American Gothic*
 4219-SC029 *American literary humor*
 4219-SC068 *Major Themes in Native American Literature*
 4219-SD086 *Spirituality and Religion in African American Music*
 4219-SH032 *New Media in the American Society - The Search for the Internet*
 4219-SH041 *Paranoia (and conspiracy theories) in Contemporary American Culture*
 4219-SH066 *Bruce Springsteen's America*

Cluster 2

4219-SA009 *The USA and World War I*
 4219-SC029 *American literary humor*
 4219-SC068 *Major Themes in Native American Literature*
 4219-SD078 *Student Rebellion in the 1960s United States. Reasons, developments, global context, consequences*
 4219-SD086 *Spirituality and Religion in African American Music*
 4219-SF004 *The American Legal System*
 4219-SH032 *New Media in the American Society - The Search for the Internet*
 4219-SH041 *Paranoia (and conspiracy theories) in Contemporary American Culture*
 4219-SH042 *Immigrants in American Society: strategies of adaptation and upward mobility*
 4219-SH053 *Poverty and Inequality in the US*
 4219-SH066 *Bruce Springsteen's America*

Cluster 3

4219-SA009 *The USA and World War I*
 4219-SE016 *Introduction to U.S. Financial Markets*
 4219-SF004 *The American Legal System*
 4219-SF043 *Congress and American Politics*
 4219-SG017 *Key Issues in American Foreign Policy Up to World War II*
 4219-SH032 *New Media in the American Society - The Search for the Internet*
 4219-SH053 *Poverty and Inequality in the US*
 4219-SH066 *Bruce Springsteen's America*

Course ID: **4219-SA009**
Course title: ***The USA and World War I***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Zbigniew Kwiecień***

The course will examine the most important domestic and international problems faced by the American government and society in the years 1914-1921. We will discuss the question of neutrality (both formal and actual) of America in those years; the pro-ally and pro-German attitudes of American citizens; the causes of joining the war effort and the role of the USA in defeating the central powers. We will analyze Wilson's program for ending the war, and building a mechanism of world security, as well as the causes and circumstances of his political defeat in the years 1919-1920.

Course ID: **4219-SC016**
Course title: ***American Modernist Poetry***
Course coordinator: ***Dr hab. Grzegorz Kość***

William Carlos Williams famously proclaimed that T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* was "a great catastrophe to our letters." With this controversial claim Williams provides us with a microcosm of the various tensions and conflicting attitudes which comprise American modernist poetry. This course examines various poetic contexts, such as: the expatriate scene in Europe which embraced a more transhistorical approach to poetry, and "the American grain," or, poets who remained in America and stressed an American idiom (Williams, Stevens), the Harlem Renaissance (Hughes, Cullen), and the Objectivists (Zukofsky, Reznikoff, Niedecker). We will discuss the poetics of the diverse versions of American Modernism, and their political as well as aesthetic implications. Any student interested in how America developed into an international cultural force would benefit from taking this course.

Course ID: **4219-SC018**
Course title: ***The Literature of Horror: Varieties of the American Gothic***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Marek Wilczyński***

The course focuses on the history of American horror fiction from its beginnings at the turn of the 19th century to the 1930s. Starting with Charles Brockden Brown's tale, it begins with an analysis of specifically American gothic features contrasted to the original British formula of the genre. The continuity of the psychogothic is then traced in the tales of Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Herman Melville. The domestic gothic of the post-Civil War era (Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Annie Trumbull Slosson) is discussed as well, next to the horror tales by Ambrose Bierce. Finally, horror as a popular mode of fiction is exemplified by the works of Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Robert W. Chambers, and H. P. Lovecraft.

Course ID: **4219-SC029**
Course title: ***American literary humor***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Franciszek Lyra***

Out of the various types of humor the present course offers the study of literary humor characteristic of American culture in historical perspective, starting with the presence of laughter in the colonies present in various situations and embodied in humorous characters, notably the Yankee. Due to the brief time of the course (see enclosed Course calendar) no more types of humor are offered for study.

Course ID: **4219-SC068**
Course title: ***Major Themes in Native American Literature***
Course coordinator: ***Mgr Gabriela Jeleńska-Krajewska***

The course is an introduction to Native American literature with emphasis on themes and issues prevalent throughout its development. The structure of the works and narration techniques typical of Native American prose, originating in the oral tradition, will also be the focus of our attention. In addition to chosen literary works of prominent contemporary Native American writers (e.g. N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Louise Erdrich, James Welch, Sherman Alexie, Louis Owens, Simon Ortiz) we will discuss examples of Indian ceremonial chants and oratory, creation stories of various tribes and early critical writings and journals, as well as view two films based on analyzed novels.

Course ID: **4219-SD078**
Course title: ***Student Rebellion in the 1960s United States. Reasons, developments, global context, consequences***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Włodzimierz Batóg***

The 1960s student protest in the United States consisted of many faces – stopping the Vietnam War, demanding racial equality on campus and off, championing black power, feminism, radical educational reform, unrestricted free speech rights for students – and its means – including student strikes, anti-war teach-ins, campus sit-ins, and the torching of ROTC buildings. Before this era of student unrest closed, blood would be shed as armed troops and police fired and killed unarmed students at Kent and Jackson State.

Course ID: **4219-SD086**
Course title: ***Spirituality and Religion in African American Music***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Małgorzata Ziótek-Sowińska***

This course will present a socio-cultural and historical survey of African American religious music and a study of a spiritual thread running through most African American musical traditions. Particular emphasis will be placed on sacred music genres such as camp spiritual, hymns, slave spiritual, religious blues and gospel. The course will also trace the theme of spirituality and religion in classical music created by African American composers, freedom songs of the Civil Rights Movement, jazz, soul and rap.

Course ID: **4219-SE016**
Course title: ***Introduction to U.S. Financial Markets***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Wojciech Bieńkowski***

The course will introduce students to the main features of U.S. financial markets. It will bring to light some of the more significant boom-and-bust events in these markets. Designed for the curious-minded, the course does not require a background in economics, business or finance. All market terms and language will be explained.

Course ID: ***4219-SF004***
Course title: ***The American Legal System***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. David Jones***

This course will introduce the bachelor level student to the History of the American Legal System as it evolved from British common law and gained its own independence in the United States from 04 July 1776. Focus will be on traditional legal disciplines ranging from constitutional criminal law to the law of contracts, (real) property, intellectual property, and torts, to the more modern administrative and regulatory laws and practices, domestic relations law, sales and leases, warranties and product liability laws, and laws that attempt to regulate the internet. In addition, some attention will focus on the institutions that supervise the administration of justice in America: courts of law and equity, administrative law bodies, independent regulatory agencies, plus arbitration and mediation organisations (collectively known as Alternative Dispute Resolution, or “ADR”).

Course ID: ***4219-SF043***
Course title: ***Congress and American Politics***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Clifford Bates Jr***

This course closely and with detail examines the nature, character and role of the US Congress within the American political system. Focus will be placed on the historical development of congressional powers as well as those powers specifically assigned to it by the Constitution. Special focus will be put on the historical and institutional changes in both houses and upon the overall legislative process.

Course ID: ***4219-SG017***
Course title: ***Key Issues in American Foreign Policy Up to World War II***
Course coordinator: ***Dr Zbigniew Kwiecień***

This course will discuss the process of gradual rise of the United States from the position of a relatively weak post-colonial nation at the end of 18th century to that of a local, continental and world power that finally became a nuclear superpower in 1945. Political, military, geographical and other factors making that process possible will be analyzed using American source materials such as diplomatic documents, political statements, memoirs and correspondence of nation's leaders.

Course ID: **4219-SH032**
Course title: ***New Media in the American Society - The Search for the Internet***
Course coordinator: ***Mgr Tomasz Bednarz***

The objective of the course is an in-depth analysis of New Media in context of the United States' society with a particular interest in the internet. An attempt will be made to understand this dynamic environment of the web in context of various actors and groups within the U.S. who shape and define it. Furthermore, a number of theories and discussions arranging this area of cultural mixing and social interaction will be investigated.

Course ID: **4219-SH041**
Course title: ***Paranoia (and conspiracy theories) in Contemporary American Culture***
Course coordinator: ***Mgr Blanka Kotlińska***

This course aims to study the meaning, functioning and role of paranoia (and conspiracy theories) in contemporary American literature and public discourse. The course will offer a review of concepts and theories that are crucial for identifying paranoia in contemporary texts but also for shaping current attitudes towards these two concepts. We will see how questioning and challenging these theories and the attitudes they shape may, on the one hand, give rise to the normalization of paranoia together with its redefinition as a useful analytical tool and, on the other hand, constitute a way of going beyond human-centered types of agency. Topics discussed will include various political implications of paranoia and conspiracy theories, subjectivity, post-humanism, and the agency of matter.

Course ID: **4219-SH042**
Course title: ***Immigrants in American Society: strategies of adaptation and upward mobility***
Course coordinator: ***Mgr Beata Kowalczyk***

Immigrants settle down in the host society upon various strategies: from isolation through partial acculturation to assimilation. The process of full or partial integration within American society is framed by the hierarchy of statuses and as such is affected by its dynamics. This seminar will focus on sociological analysis of conditions that favor/hinder upward mobility in reference to specific migrants' groups (from prewar wave of Europeans to contemporary migration flow of Asians and Hispanics). We will trace factors: socioeconomic, geographical, cultural and linguistic, which affect the way newcomers (re-)establish their life in American society. We will discuss examples provided by works on Asian Americans (Yang; Yoshihara), who seek higher position in the social echelon by educational attainment, or mechanisms of accepting Afro-Americans at universities through the "kitchen door". Students will also get familiar with qualitative methods in sociological migration studies.

Course ID: **4219-SH053**
Course title: ***Poverty and Inequality in the US***
Course coordinator: ***Dr James Morrison***

When people think about the United States, they usually have an image of widespread prosperity and easy living, the American Dream. They think of the wealthy and the middle class and, compared with the rest of the world, a more equitable distribution of wealth. Poverty and inequality are not usually what come to mind when they hear the word America. But there is another America—and always has been. This course will explore the widespread poverty and inequality that has also an important part of the American reality. We will look at the causes and changing character of poverty and inequality, the way it has affected the lives of average Americans. We will also look at the relatively few studies and reports about this neglected part of American history, some ideas about why this problem has not disappeared and in recent decades, become even worse. Finally we will look at some of the proposals for dealing with this largely invisible part of American life.

Course ID: ***4219-SH066***
Course title: ***Bruce Springsteen's America***
Course coordinator: ***Prof. Bohdan Szklarski***

We propose an interdisciplinary and methodologically diverse look at contemporary America through the prism of Bruce Springsteen's songs and music. He will be our guide across all social strata and geographical locations. America can be seen as a symbol of modern capitalist society. In this sense "the Boss's America" is a portrait of the world. His songs not only describe the world which is disappearing: the world of small towns, urban industrial working class, ethnic tensions. He also depicts the vitality of America. He also does not shy away from examining painful moments and tendencies in American history. Unlike that of Forest Gump, Springsteen's view is more emotional and more critical. His analysis of contemporary America defines the cultural identity built by experience of many generations.

SECTIONS

Course ID: ***4219-ZP002***
Course title: ***Academic Writing II***
Course coordinator: ***Dr hab. Agnieszka Graff-Osser,
Mgr Ludmiła Janion***

Continuation of Academic Writing I. Part II puts emphasis on sources - the ability to find them, select appropriate ones and document their use.

The course prepares students to read, analyze and respond to academic texts and take part in academic discussions concerning various academic and social issues. The aim of the course is to teach students how to put in writing arguments and opinions derived on the basis of research.

Course ID: ***4219-AL002***
Course title: ***American Literature II***
Course coordinator: ***Dr hab. Grzegorz Kość***

This course is on the developments in American literature—fiction, poetry, drama—from the end of the Civil War until the present. It looks at changing literary styles, themes and assumptions concerning the role of literature. We will look at realism, naturalism and local color fiction, modernism, the Harlem Renaissance, politically engaged literature of the 30s, the post-war generation, postmodernism and finally the diverse literatures of contemporary multi-ethnic America including examples of very recent fiction. Significant attention will be paid to the evolving cultural context of literature: debates about the meaning of American identity, the changing role of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality.
