

AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER
WARSAW UNIVERSITY

OŚRODEK STUDIÓW AMERYKAŃSKICH
UNIwersytet Warszawski

COURSE CATALOGUE
BA Program
Fall 2019 Edition

LECTURES

1st year:

W001

History of the United States I

dr William Glass, prof. UW

This lecture provides a general survey of American History from the Spanish exploration through Reconstruction. Students will become acquainted with the main developments in American politics, society, and culture of this era.

W006

United States Government

dr Clifford Bates Jr, prof. UW

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.

W009

American Society

dr hab. Anna Sosnowska-Jordanovska

The lecture presents basic dimensions of social life in the United States: American values and ideology, religion, work, consumption, social movements, social stratification, racial and ethnic groups, immigration, and family. The historical roots of contemporary social processes are discussed.

W010

Audiovisual Culture and Media in the US

dr hab. Paweł Frelik, prof. UW

“Audiovisual Culture and Media in the United States” is a lecture introducing students to a range of American audiovisual forms. The course is divided into three blocks: the first introduces a range of theoretical concepts and issues crucial for understanding the American audiovisual culture; the second offers an overview of major media forms (film and visual art are not covered since there are separate courses devoted to them in the BA program); and the third examines a number of minor but increasingly important media. While some historical perspectives on these cultural forms will be included, the primary goal

is to provide students with a sense of the diversity and specificity of the discussed media as well as familiarize them with their formal, aesthetic, social, and political contexts.

W044

Human Geography of the United States

dr hab. Bogumiła Lisocka-Jaegermann

The course provides basic knowledge of the socio-economic and regional geography of the United States allowing understanding of the processes of settlement and management of the US territory and its transformations, with particular focus on the processes taking place in the second half of the twentieth century and the 21st century. It covers such issues as: natural factors shaping development, including resources; population, settlement and economic processes; regional diversification of the United States. The challenges associated with the idea of sustainable development are of particular importance. Students also acquire skills of proper use of cartographic illustrations.

2nd year:

W003

American Literature I

prof. dr hab. Marek Wilczyński

The present series of lectures focuses on the history of American literature and ideas in 1620-1865. The starting point is British colonization of North America as a result of the Reformation in Britain, which made Puritans seek religious freedom on the other side of the Atlantic. Lectures will cover the theology and colonial literature of the 17th and 18th century, the political ideas and literature of the Early Republic (the Enlightenment), the rise of American romanticism in its dark (Poe) and transcendentalist (Emerson) varieties, and the evolution of American poetry, fiction, and drama till the Civil War.

W023

Political Culture in the US

dr Marcin Gajek

The course discusses the problem of political culture in the United States. It explains the relationship between political process and values, beliefs and attitudes of American society. We are going to study when, why, and how Americans participate in politics. We are also going to examine their attitudes to political institutions and the way they see themselves in the system. We are

going to look at the way public opinion is formed and how it impacts on the dynamics of American politics.

W051

Introduction to American Studies

dr Marta Usiekniewicz

Basic research problems and major research methods in the study of US American society, history, and culture, with reference to the theoretical context are reviewed. The course also aims to introduce the terminology, history, key issues and contemporary interpretation of Cultural Studies in United States. Basic concepts, research problems and major cultural studies theories are reviewed in detail, especially in the cultural context of the Americas.

SECTIONS AND SEMINARS

1st year:

ZP001

Academic Writing I

Coordinator: dr Matthew Chambers

Academic Writing I introduces students to the fundamentals of university-level writing. The course teaches the basics of the essay form, including approaches to critical reading, essay structure, drafting, revision, editing and aspects of advanced grammar and style. The core focus will be the students' development of a short, polished essay with a clear topic and thesis.

ZP005

American History and Society

Coordinator: dr William Glass, prof. UW

The course gives students a foundation for understanding the rationale, methods and results of the study and interpretation of America. The course discusses primary texts that are crucial for understanding of past and present American society and politics. Each class focuses on a particular theme and a selection of primary texts that have shaped American identity and are still debated by the American public.

2nd year:

AL001

American Literature I

Coordinator: prof. dr hab. Marek Wilczyński

This course is a survey of American literature of the period between 1620 and 1885. The starting point is the establishment of the first colonies in North America; the course ends after the Civil War. Class meetings will be an occasion to read and discuss in depth a selection of major literary texts from the 17th and 18th centuries as well as seminal texts in a variety of genres of the Early Republic and American Romanticism. One of the major themes will be ethnic and race relations: The experience of slavery, the situation of Native Americans, cultural stereotypes and prejudice.

3rd year:

SA033

Introduction to Research

Coordinator: dr Małgorzata Gajda-Łaszewska

The course offered to third year BA students is supposed to give them practical training right before writing their BA thesis.

AL007

Intercultural Communication

Coordinator: dr Małgorzata Durska

The course will have a format of a workshop. It is designed to provide students with a comprehensive overview of effective communication tools and practices as they function in today's Americas. It will cover major elements of written and oral organizational communication with specific focus on building goodwill among receivers, bias-free language and positive emphasis. The cultural context and specificity of business communication in the United States and Latin America will be emphasized.

ELECTIVE COURSES

U.S. HISTORY

A003

The USA – A Colonial Empire?

dr Zbigniew Kwiecień

One of the most interesting issues of American history is that of territories belonging to the USA and being neither States nor Territories of the Union. The cases of such areas throughout US history will be discussed on the basis of

political programs, doctrines and disputes as well as policies applied to solve them from the plans of seizing the Caribbean Islands in early 19th century to the contemporary issue of Puerto Rico.

A018

The Vietnam War

dr Zbigniew Kwiecień

Started during the World War II, the conflict in Indochina became in the 1960's and 1970's the second great military confrontation of Cold War in Asia, after the Korean War. Between 1965 and 1973 the U.S.A. and several of its allies were militarily engaged there. The course will focus on those events as well as on the enormous impact of them on both international and domestic situation of the United States. The historical background of the conflict and its consequences for all the participants will be analyzed as well.

AMERICAN LITERATURE

C018

The Literature of Horror: Varieties of American Gothic

prof. dr. hab. 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.

C079

The American Essay since World War Two

dr hab. Agnieszka Graff-Osser

The essay is a genre at the crossroads of the personal and the social or political. We will read and discuss a selection of the best and most influential essays written by US authors since World War II, discussing their themes and looking closely at their stylistic and structural features. What makes an essay different from a memoir, what sets it apart from an academic or journalistic article? What makes it powerful?

C080

Not Just Cheap Thrills: American Crime Fiction and Film

dr Marta Usiekniewicz

This course offers a survey of crime genre in American 20th century culture, specifically literature and film. It will focus on representations of gender, race, ability and class, as well as politics of the genre. The course is considered an introduction to discussions of the function of popular culture in American culture and society.

C081

Readings in African American Literature

dr Krystyna Mazur

A survey of African American Literature from slave narratives to the present, focusing on such issues as the changing position of African Americans in U.S. culture; the politics of representation; definitions of race; intersections of “race,” gender, sexuality and class; the black aesthetic.

C082

American Graphic Memoir

mgr Aleksandra Kamińska

During this course, we will examine selected American graphic memoirs and ask what exactly makes comics such a fitting medium for the most personal and intimate narratives. Students will learn how to read and analyze comics and graphic memoirs. Focusing both on the format and the content of selected works, we will also study how gender, class, and race function within examined narratives, and how those narratives operate within the broader American cultural context.

C083

Literary Modernism

dr Matthew Chambers

The turn of the twentieth century brought with it new ideas about art and literature. In the US, artists and poets concerned about an American idiom either turned to Europe for inspiration or for contrast. This course will review the major markers of American literary modernism with an eye on the transatlantic exchange of ideas and influences. It will act as a survey of all the -isms, movements, and key figures of the period.

ART AND CULTURE

D072

Andy Warhol

dr hab. Tomasz Basiuk

The course explores Andy Warhol's many connections to queer culture.

D076

Religion in Modern America

dr William Glass, prof. UW

This course is an introduction to the study of religion and what it means to be religious in the modern, post-industrial society of the United States.

D0015

A Cultural History of American Photography: Traditions and Contexts

dr Karolina Lebek

The course focuses on the manifold developments of photography in the context of American culture, from the inception of the medium in the late 1830s to its current digital and universal uses as a mass optical medium. Avoiding a blunt division into generic taxonomies and categorizations yet roughly in keeping with historical developments, the course approaches American photography from the perspective of ideas and thematic problems, whose shape has been influenced by photographic theory and criticism. Additionally and parallelly, the course encompasses essential information on the technical (analogue/ digital) and institutional (journalism, photographic agencies), development of photography, and thus the history of its material reality and dissemination, which necessarily influenced photography's role as a medium of visual communication.

D0016

American Film Between New Hollywood and Now

dr hab. Paweł Frelik, prof. UW

This course provides a thorough survey of American cinema from the 1960s and the rise of New Hollywood until to the second decade of the 21st century.

Individual classes will focus on selected genres, styles, and groupings as well as the transformations of the film industry and technological advancements.

D0017

Discourse Analysis: Language, Power, and American Media

dr Ludmiła Janion

The interdisciplinary course introduces students to various methods of discourse analysis, including linguistic, sociological, and cultural approaches. The aim is

both to familiarize students with the most influential theoretical approaches to analyzing discourse and to show how these approaches have been executed in practice. During the class, a diversity of American media texts will be analyzed. The course will be helpful for the students who plan to conduct a textual/discourse analysis in their B.A. theses.

D0018

New Media in the US: Key Concepts

dr Blanka Kotlińska

In order to understand new media one has to look at the key concepts which define their character, role, and functioning in contemporary American culture. In that sense, this course concentrates on defining and analyzing such concepts and understanding what problems do they generate and are intertwined in practice. Topics discussed will therefore include, but are not limited to, interactivity, mobile media, Web 2.0, cyberspace, hacking, network or participation.

D0019

Representations of Asian Americans in US Popular Culture

dr Emma Oki

In the first part of this course, we will focus on early representations of Asian Americans in the American cultural landscape. We will consider the works of both Asian and non-Asian creators. In the second part of this course, we will analyze and discuss contemporary visual and non-visual texts produced mainly by Americans of Asian descent to see how they address the issue of (mis)representation in popular culture.

D0020

Popular Culture and Queer Representations

dr Jędrzej Burszta

The course will explore the different manifestations of queerness as depicted in American popular culture. We will examine the history of queer representation in popular literature and visual culture, focusing mostly on cinema and television. We will look at the politics of media texts, the changing attitudes of audiences as well as the subversive practices and the different ways in which queer communities consume popular culture. Students who complete this course will have a critical understanding of the diverse and often contradictory ways in which popular culture engages with non-normative gender and sexual identities, practices and desires.

U.S. ECONOMY

E024

US Economy: From Peripheral Status to World Hegemony

dr hab. Wojciech Bieńkowski, prof. Uczelni Łazarskiego

E025

Money, Banks, and the Federal Reserve in the US

dr hab. Andrzej Kondratowicz, prof. SWPS

This course will deal with three related groups of topics: (i) money; (ii) banking (mostly commercial) and (iii) central banking – all in the US. In a sense this is a combination of classical introductory course on money & banking with some rudimentary knowledge of how they operate in the United States – now and in the historical past. On the sidelines, students will also get some knowledge of selected financial instruments – like shares of stock, bonds, MBSs/ABSs, CDOs, promissory notes, bills of exchange. Also, the 2007-2009 events (the Housing Bubble, Financial Crisis, and the Great Recession in the US) will be explained. Rather than concentrating on rigorous theoretical concepts and models, the course will equip participants with understanding of notions most frequently encountered in the media (e.g. in Financial Times, the Economist or on the Bloomberg TV). Another aim is to show students where to find relevant data sources pertaining to money and banking in the US.

E027

Trumponomics: Sources and Consequences

dr hab. Andrzej Kondratowicz, prof. SWPS

The course's title is an obvious reference to Donald Trump's economic policies and their possible conceptual foundations (if any), on the one hand, and to policies and concepts of one of his predecessors – Ronald Reagan (called Reaganomics), on the other. Since both presidents come from the Republican Party, it will be instructive to see whether there are any differences between them and whether they could be considered variations of a standard economic platform (program) of that party. As we can see, although the course is centered around economic concepts, it cannot escape a larger political and ideological context. In passing, we will also look the man himself and at the (changing) people of the West Wing of the White House. Once we have identified the sources of Trumponomics, we will move to analyzing its detailed contents and its economic consequences for various stakeholders in the US and abroad.

U.S. INTERNAL POLITICS

F045

Where American Politics Really Happens: Federalism and State/Local Politics

dr Clifford Bates Jr, prof. UW

It is often claimed in American politics that “All politics is local” and this course will show the validity of such a claim. Several States and their governments will be examined in this course, as well as several local governments (i.e., cities, towns, and counties). This course will examine not only State & Local politics in the US, but also the interaction of both State & Local governments to the Federal government (i.e., Federalism). Thus, federalism in the United States is the evolving relationship between U.S. state governments and the Federal government of the United States. Since the founding of the country, and particularly with the end of the American Civil War, power shifted away from the states and towards the national government.

F046

Political Communication in the US

dr Alicja Fijałkowska

The course is designed to teach students the theory and practice of political communication in the US. Its types, symbols, actors and discourse will be presented in different circumstances, time and with relation to the specific target.

F047

US Constitutional Amendments: Their Substance, Procedure, and Purposes

dr hab. David Jones, prof. UW

This Course will acquaint the B.A. student with substantive and procedural elements involved in amending the U.S. Constitution. In the Constitutional Convention of 1787, initial Articles were proposed. Ratification dragged on with three quarters of the states having ratified once New Hampshire ratified in 1788. So when Statehood began on 04 March 1789, 11 of the 13 original Colonies had ratified the Constitution. Amendments to the Constitution tend to follow thematic patterns, we will approach them from this perspective. To date, all successful Constitutional Amendments have been proposed by Congress. Sometimes, states have tried to hold a Convention. Congress has sent 33 proposed Amendments to the States, 27 were ratified. An Amendment proposal requires a two-thirds “super-majority” of the House and Senate. Congress is allowed but not required to set a time limit on ratification, usually seven years. In all cases except one, Congress required ratification by state legislatures.

F048

US Elections

dr Ryszard Schnepf

During the course we will examine one of the most important elements of American political life – the elections. We will follow the historical foundation of the American voting system and the controversies around it. We will follow the building up of a strategy around the elections on the local and federal level. I plan to discuss some of the US presidential campaigns and ballots. The last one of 2016 and the appearance of new problems concerning the foreign influence, will be in our focus.

F049

The Impact of the Social Media on American Politics

dr Diana Stelowska-Morgulec

This course is an introduction to social media and its role in contemporary American politics. Students will learn about different types of social media and the mechanisms behind them. They will get to know the specific techniques used by the politicians and the impact social media may have on citizens' lives.

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

G034

Governing the Binational Commons: The Challenges of the Mexico-US Border

dr Hector Calleros Rodriguez

This course presents to the students a set of tools to enhance their understanding of the shared border between Mexico and the United States of America. It starts with an induction to theories and concepts useful in the analysis of international and cross-border issues and then reviews the process of formation of the international border in the mid-19th Century. The course approaches the border from different perspectives: one based on Mexico City and Washington D.C. and another based on the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Additionally, the course also presents a regional reading paying attention to border states. Case studies will illustrate different dimensions of the border: environmental, economic and commercial, social, security and migratory. Finally, students will examine different cultural manifestations of the U.S. – Mexico border.

G035

American Foreign Policy

dr hab. David Jones, prof. UW

This Course will encourage students to explore selected United States policies abroad from historical periods until the present time. Here it will be possible to consider a selection of examples of U.S. policies abroad, including policies by presidents: William McKinley to target of Hawaii and the Philippines for American access into Asia, William Howard Taft's "Dollar Diplomacy", Woodrow Wilson's ambitions to "Christianise China", Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbour Policy in Latin America, Harry S. Truman's Marshall Plan, Richard M. Nixon's opening of China to Western trade, Ronald W. Reagan's Iran-Contra Policies and eye on Afghanistan, William J. ("Bill") Clinton's intervention in the Balkans but failure to intervene in Rwanda, George H.W. Bush's and George W. Bush's intervention in Iraq, followed by Barrack Obama's withdrawal therefrom and the rise of an "Islamic State", Donald J. Trump's persistent effort to negotiate with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.

G036

US-Latin America: Living Next Door to Each Other

dr Ryszard Schnepf

Our classes will refer to US-Latin America relations in a historical perspective.

AMERICAN SOCIETY

H029

Social and Cultural History of the US in the 19th Century

dr hab. Włodzimierz Batóg, prof. UJK

This course introduces the key questions in the study of the nineteenth-century United States, including defining the early republic; the nature of American slavery; market expansion and urbanization; the Civil War and Reconstruction; and the place of the United States in the world. This course will allow students to understand cultural and social issues that took place in the 19th century.

H099

(A)sexualities in American Culture and Society: Redefining Sex, Sexuality, and Intimacy

dr Anna Kurowicka

This courses uses asexuality as a lens through which concepts such as sexuality, sex, intimacy, and norm can be redefined. Asexuality as a sexual identity but also a theoretical concept appeared in the public eye in the early 21st century and mostly commonly refers to lack of sexual attraction. Students will have an

opportunity to employ critical tools developed in the field of sexuality studies, gender studies, and queer studies to analyze various forms of asexuality, including asexuality as an sexual orientation, asexual community, political celibacy, religious celibacy, and the intersections of asexuality with disability.

H0001

Rock and Roll: Socio-Cultural Perspectives on American Music

dr Grzegorz Welizarowicz

The course proposes an analysis of diverse phenomena of popular American music from the socio-cultural perspective. The term "Rock and Roll" names here not only a popular music genre but stands metaphorically for the subject of the course (the relationship between American music and socio-cultural phenomena) and its aim (to prove that a tradition of time-keeping and syncopation as well as cultural hybridization are the key characteristics of the American culture). Musical phenomena are discussed in context, that is, linked to the socio-cultural sphere of the U.S. in particular historical eras. Questions asked include: how does music negotiate, express, and translate social anxieties? Is it a catalyst for social progress? What processes have shaped the way American music is created, sold and consumed? Discussed are: jazz, blues, rock'n'roll, country, American Indians, soul, funk, hip hop, techno, folk, recording labels, ragtime, musical, reggae, Chicano music, salsa, punk, etc.

H0002

Black Culture from Jim Crow to Harlem Renaissance

mgr Antoni Górny

An in-depth look at the formation of African American identity between the emergence of blackface minstrelsy and the cultural explosion of the Harlem Renaissance, this course surveys the social and cultural responses of African Americans to the rise of Imperial (White) America.

H0006

Power and Society in American Countries

dr Tomasz Rudowski

The focal point of the following course will be an introduction to the main concepts of interpretation of relations of power in the Americas.