1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

PRE-REQUISITES:
Basic knowledge of world history and philosophy is required as well as a good working knowledge of English.

COURSE TYPE:
Compulsory

ABSTRACT:
As follows from the title of the course, its aim is twofold: first, it seeks to provide a historical survey of the most important developments in Western culture from ancient Greece to the 21st century, which have shaped Western civilisation. It addresses various modes of social organisation and behaviour, ways of thinking and artistic expression within their historical context. Second, it deals with the main concepts and interpretative strategies employed in the academic field of Cultural studies to explain both contemporary culture and the cultures of the past in their manifold dimensions. The overall aim of the course is to foster the development of a reflexive, analytical and critical understanding of culture and its various phenomena.

2. LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- to examine the most important developments in Western culture and enable students to analyse them within their historical context;
- to introduce students to cultural studies as a multi-faceted field addressing various aspects of culture both from its historical and contemporary perspectives;
- to provide students with the main categories and theoretical concepts of cultural studies as well as basic tools for the analysis of cultural objects and processes;
- to develop a critical and reflexive understanding of cultural phenomena.

3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who complete this course will be able to:

- relate cultural phenomena to their historical periods and analyse them within their historical contexts;
- understand various theoretical approaches to the study of culture;
- apply a new vocabulary and use the interdisciplinary critical perspectives to examine the meanings of cultural objects and processes.
### 4. Course Plan

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<th>№</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Contact hours</th>
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<td>Lectures</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Introduction to Cultural studies: key concepts, terms and debates</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>I. History of Culture</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>The culture of ancient Greece and Rome</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Medieval culture</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Early modern culture (late 15th – late 18th centuries)</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>European culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>II. Theory of Culture</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Nationalism studies. Postcolonial theory</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Feminist perspectives of culture. Body studies</td>
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**Overview of the Course**

**Lecture 1. Introduction to Cultural studies: key concepts, terms and debates**


**Lectures 2 - 6. History of Culture**


Lecture 2. Ancient Greece. Ancient Rome

Aegean Civilization: Minoan Crete, Mycenaean Greece. The culture of Archaic Greece, 800 – 500 BC. Greek colonial expansion and its impact on the Greek identity. The rise of the polis. Main developments in Greek art: from conceptual to optical representation.


The ambiguous status of Roman culture in the ancient Graeco-Roman civilization. Greek influences in Roman culture: philosophy, religion, art and literature. Rome’s own unique achievements: law, administration, engineering and military organization.

The culture of entertainment in ancient Rome.


Seminar 1. The Elgin marbles: should they stay or go?

- British Museum website.
- Acropolis Museum website.

Lecture 3. Medieval culture

“Middle Ages”: the problem of chronology and localization. Approaches to the study of medieval culture. Antique legacy and its transformations in the culture of the Middle Ages. The conversion of North-Western Europe. The role of monasteries as intellectual and spiritual centres. Changing concepts of time and space. Early medieval art. The Carolingian Renaissance.


“Collective privacy” and the rise of personal autonomy. Court culture: chivalry, the evolution of sensibilities and courtly love.

Late medieval culture. Black Death and its impact on the medieval societies. The
persecution of witches. The shattering of the unity of the Church. The invention of printing press. The growth of national monarchies.


Seminar 3. The changing meanings of the body in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1GI8mNU5Sg&list=PLlhSx0L1hpaGKfq1qXe1vWUhG1EgIN9Yf

Lecture 4. Early modern culture (late 15th – late 18th centuries)


The main features of Baroque style. The developments in sculpture: Bernini. The variations of Baroque style in European architecture.

**Seminar 4. From knights to courtiers: the transformation of aristocratic behaviour in early modern Europe.**


**Seminar 5. Robinson Crusoe as a cultural myth.**


**Lectures 5 - 6. European culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries**


Colonialism and imperialism. Orientalism as a specific cultural projection of the West. The concept of “civilizing mission”. Imperial culture and racial thought. The cult of science in the 19th century. Positivism. Darwin’s evolutionary theory. Challenges to rationality: Pavlov and Freud.

Mass industry and consumer culture. Social movements. Suffrage and the redefinition of womanhood.


**Seminar 6. The Redefinition of Womanhood in the 19th-century Europe.**


**Seminar 7. Modernism in Europe**


**Seminar 8. Cultural revolution**


**Lectures 7 - 9. Theory of Culture**

**Lecture 7. Critical theory and Cultural studies. Poststructuralism. Postmodernism.**


**Lecture 8. Nationalism and Postcolonial studies.**


Seminar 9. The Invention of Tradition.


Seminar 10. «Orientalism» and Postcolonial studies


Feminist and post-feminist critiques of culture. The notion of patriarchy. “Patriarchal bargain” (Deniz Kandiyoti) and “patriarchal dividend” (Raewyn Connell). Varieties of feminist programmes in the 20th and 21st centuries. Intersectionality. The works by Joan W. Scott, Judith Butler, Gayatri Spivak and Julia Kristeva and their role in conceptual redefinition of cultural studies.


Seminar 11. Feminist theory in Cultural studies


5. Reading List

*Required:*


OPTIONAL:


6. **Grading System**

The final grade of a student (G\text{final}) is formed of a cumulative grade (G\text{cumulative}) and the grade for examination (written test) (G\text{exam}), calculated in the following proportion:

\[ G\text{final} = 0,5 \times G\text{cumulative} + 0,5 \times G\text{exam} \]

Cumulative grade (G\text{cumulative}) is formed of the grade for the performance during the seminars (G\text{seminars}) and the collective presentation in class (G\text{presentation}). These grades have the following weight in the overall cumulative grade:

\[ G\text{cumulative} = 0,6 \times G\text{seminars} + 0,4 \times G\text{presentation} \]

7. **Guidelines for Knowledge Assessment**

*Class attendance and active participation*: Preparation for and participation in class discussion are essential parts of this course. Students are expected to come to class ready to discuss the assigned texts and contribute productively to class discussions. Regular attendance of the course is also important for the overall grade of a student. The students’ commentaries should be logical, well-structured, well-argued, should demonstrate good knowledge of the assigned text as well as the main theories and concepts of the course.
Presentations in class: Each student will have to participate in one collective presentation in class. Each presentation is focused on the work with one specialised text on the history or theory of culture. The mark for the collective presentation consists of the following:

- the quality of addressing the main issues of the text (2 points);
- the clarity of the presentation’s structure and accuracy in the use of visual material (2 points);
- the quality of the group work: coordination during the presentation and the level of its organisation (2 points);
- the quality of the questions posed to the text (2 points);
- the accuracy of the answers given by the presenting group to the questions of the audience (2 points).

Final Exam: a written test (40 min), consisting of several closed and one open question. The answer to the open question should demonstrate the knowledge of the lecture material, be well-structured, well-argued and clearly written.

8. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Organisation of seminars:
The first seminar is focused on the discussion of scholarly texts on theoretical issues, dealing with the concepts of culture. Starting from the second seminar and up to the end of the course the class work is organised according to the following scheme.

Before a seminar:

1) the whole group reads one text for the seminar (“basic” text), which provides the general context to a particular problem.
2) each seminar one presentation is made together by 2 or 3 students. The presentation is centred on another text, which is related to the basic one everybody reads, but is focused on a more specific problem. The group reads one basic text, and the presenters read two texts, their own and the basic text for everyone.
   - The main task of the presenters is to describe the key ideas and problems discussed in their text.
   - They will need to make a Power Point presentation to make their arguments clear. If the text concerns art history and involves the demonstration of artworks, each illustration must be provided with the name of the author of this artwork, title, year of production, technique, its present location.
   - The presenters will also have to prepare four questions to the audience on the basic text and four questions on the text they are presenting.

During a seminar:

- Before the presentation the group divides into four mini-groups.
- Then follows the presentation (15 min)
- After the presentation the audience can ask short “questions of understanding”.
- Then the presenters formulate two questions to each of the four groups, one concerning the text they were talking about, and another one concerning the basic text everybody read for the seminar.
- The mini-groups discuss the questions between them.
- The general discussion begins. The presenters are responsible for leading this discussion; they assess the quality of answers and make a conclusion after the discussion.
All presenters are given the dates on which they are making their presentations well in advance. If no one of the presenters appears in class on their date, their group gets zero mark for this task; their work is not accepted afterwards. All presenters in one group get the same mark, so the collective work should be well-organised and the presentation itself well-coordinated. The organisation of the work on each seminar around two texts, one of which is read by everyone, is aimed to stimulate the participation of the whole group of students in the classroom discussion.

9. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE SUPPORT (IF REQUIRED)
Laptop and projector. Power Point or similar software.