

*Approved by the Academic council
of the Education programme
“Foreign Languages and
Intercultural Communication”
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Syllabus
America Through Foreign Eyes
(N ECTS)

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Meeting Minute # ____dated _____ 2019

1. Course Description

a) Pre-requisites:

America Through Foreign Eyes is a two-module course designed for undergraduate students of the Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication programme. To fulfill the requirements of the course students need to have a good command of written and spoken English (required CEFR language proficiency level is B2).

b) Abstract

The United States has always been a source of fascination— both attraction and repulsion — for the people of France, Mexico, China, and African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, and Sudan. America Through Foreign Eyes is a rich, interdisciplinary, international course that features Rice faculty from a variety of disciplines and area studies. Focused on perceptions of America abroad, the course is a cross between World Cultures and American Studies. The course features four modules, each covering the perceptions and interactions of particular regions with America, Americans and Americanization.

2. Learning Objectives

1. Gain and apply knowledge and understanding of the way people perceive other cultures: genesis of Generalizations, Essentialisms, and Stereotypes;
2. Analyze foreign cultural outlook on the U.S., Americans, and the process of Americanization;
3. Gain insight into the way France, Mexico, China, Nigeria, Ghana, and Sudan perceive the USA;

3. Study key African, Chinese, French, and Mexican intellectual and artistic works devoted to the United States and Americans.

3. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Differentiate between *Generalizations*, *Essentialisms*, and *Stereotypes*;
2. Learn about the US culture from various perspectives;
3. Identify a border between perceptions and reality;
4. Weigh critiques of one's culture with detachment and objectivity;
5. Recognize and learn to challenge our own socio-cultural preconceptions;
6. Defend our opinions with reasoned arguments.

4. Course Plan

№	Course section	Hours		Learning Outcomes	Control
		lectures			
		seminars			
		self-guided work			
1	America through African Eyes	--		Examine historical and contemporary perceptions of America, Americans through the lens of African writers, artists, politicians, intellectuals, public opinion	Research project Tasks 1,2 (See §6. Grading system)
		--			
		38			
2	America through Chinese Eyes	--		Examine historical and contemporary perceptions of America, Americans through the lens of Chinese writers, artists, politicians, intellectuals, public opinion	Research project Tasks 3,4
		--			
		38			
3	America through French Eyes	--		Examine historical and contemporary perceptions of America, Americans through the lens of French writers, artists, politicians, intellectuals, public opinion	Research project Tasks 5,6
		--			
		38			
4	America through Mexican Eyes	--		Examine historical and contemporary perceptions of America, Americans through the lens of Mexican writers,	Research project Task 7
		--			
		38			

			artists, politicians, intellectuals, public opinion	
	Total hours:	--		
		--		
		152		

5. Reading List

a) Required

On-line course “America Through Foreign Eyes”

URL: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/america-through-foreign-eyes>

Authors: Dr. Anne S. Chao, Dr. Julie Fette, Dr. Jeffrey Fleisher, Dr. Moramay López-Alonso, Rice University

6. Grading System

$$O = 0,25 * O_{\text{tasks1,2,3,7}} + 0,25 * O_{\text{tasks4,5,6}} + 0,5 * O_{\text{exam}}$$

Research project – not blocking, cannot be resat.

Exam – not blocking, can be resat.

Research project topics:

a) “Examine historical and contemporary perceptions of Russia, Russians through the lens of American writers OR artists OR politicians OR intellectuals OR public opinion”

b) “Examine historical and contemporary perceptions of America, Americans through the lens of Russian writers OR artists OR politicians OR intellectuals OR public opinion”.

The project is carried out individually and submitted in hard-copy to the professor by June 1st.

Research project plan:

Task 1. Choose the project’s topic a) or b), choose any perspective given in the topic (writers OR artists OR politicians OR intellectuals OR public opinion);

Task 2. Conduct research on historical perceptions of America, Americans / Russia, Russians within the chosen context;

Task 3. Conduct research on contemporary perceptions of America, Americans / Russia, Russians within the chosen context;

Task 4. Conduct research on future perceptions of America, Americans / Russia, Russians within the chosen context;

Task 5. Visualize the obtained data;

Task 6. Make conclusions;

Task 7. Design the project’s portfolio.

Assessment criteria:

Tasks 1, 2	4 points	Research on historical perceptions
Task 3	4 points	Research on contemporary perceptions
Task 4	4 points	Research on future perceptions
Task 5	2 points	Data visualization
Task 6	4 points	Conclusions
Task 7	2 points	Portfolio design

All the grades are rounded half up (arithmetic rounding) to the nearest whole numerical grade.

7. Examination Type

The exam will be held online in the LMS system.

Structure: 30 questions. Each correct answer weighs 1 point. Maximum: 30 points.

Test question types: multiple choice, gap-filling, true/false, open questions.

Sample exam questions:

- 1) True or False: From the perspective of Latin Americans, the term "Americans" should be used to include all of the inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere, including Latin Americans.
- 2) Which American philosopher played a prominent role in the New Culture Movement in China?

Final exam grade will be calculated using the following formula:
 $O_{exam} = O_{cumulated\ points} : 3$. All the grades are rounded half up (arithmetic rounding) to the nearest whole numerical grade.

8. Methods of Instruction

The course has got a blended format including contact hours with the professor and self-guided work.

9. Special Equipment and Software Support (if required)

Standard technical equipment (PC+CPr) and requirements, including Wi-Fi access.