



Universidad
de Alcalá

GUÍA DOCENTE

Multiculturalismo en los EEUU. Raza y género
en la literatura, la cultura y el arte
contemporáneos americanos //
American Multiculturalism. Race and gender in
contemporary literature, art and culture in the
US

Grado en Estudios Ingleses
Universidad de Alcalá

Curso Académico 2019/20
Cursos 3 y 4 – Cuatrimestre 1

GUÍA DOCENTE

Nombre de la asignatura:	Multiculturalismo en los EEUU. Raza y género en la literatura, la cultura y el arte contemporáneos americanos
Código:	
Titulación en la que se imparte:	Estudios Ingleses
Departamento y Área de Conocimiento:	Filología Moderna
Carácter:	Optativa
Créditos ECTS:	6
Curso y cuatrimestre:	3º- 4º primer cuatrimestre
Profesorado:	Luisa Juárez-Hervás
Horario de Tutoría:	Se comunicará en la primera semana de clases
Idioma en el que se imparte:	Inglés

1. COURSE SUMMARY

This module is designed to probe into the connections between history, politics and art in contemporary America through a selection of up-to-date socio-cultural art works and literary texts. Activities aim to familiarize students with the multicultural production of various ethnic groups in the United States. Key concepts such as race, ethnicity, class and gender are central to our project and will be used actively in our analysis of literature and other cultural objects, namely, photographs, street art, music videos, film, political activism, museums, monuments and more. Students will be introduced to various methodological and critical tools that enable independent work and research in the field of art, culture and literature in American Studies.

Our approach to the texts will involve a detailed analysis of the aesthetic aspects, a discussion of the content and ideological elements in the work, and a dialogue with the historical realities of the US echoed in the literary / art /cultural work. Whenever it is possible, a dialogue with texts and concepts discussed in previous modules on American literature and culture will be established. Class discussion will also encourage students to develop the expression of an individual critical mind and their aesthetic appreciation of sophisticated and more popular forms.

The presence of literary texts will only constitute approx. 30% of the compulsory primary sources for the subject and they will be restricted to recent titles by Afro-American, Jewish-American and/or Chicano authors.

Prerrequisitos y Recomendaciones (si es pertinente)

Since all activities are conducted in English, the module assumes a good working knowledge of English in the four skills (Common European Framework level C1 or above).

2. OBJECTIVES

General Competences:

1. Critical close reading of cultural artifacts, art works and literary texts.
2. Preparation of oral and written presentations.
3. Use of general and specific bibliography and e-resources.
4. Analysis and argumentation.
5. Independent and team work.

Specific Competences:

Knowledge

1. Examine the relation between the selected texts / works and the main aesthetic and content developments in contemporary American literature and culture.
2. Describe historical events, as well as social and political issues, which are relevant in the analysis of contemporary literary texts / art works.
3. Outline the principal literary concerns, themes, styles and symbols of the writers / artists studied in the course.
4. Provide precise definitions of the critical categories and concepts used in contemporary literary and art criticism, which are relevant for our approach to the texts.

Skills

1. Apply critical terminology and theoretical perspectives explained in class to the analysis of selected literary and art works.

2. Compare selected cultural, literary and art works in to probe into aesthetic and ideological issues.
3. Establish possible formal/thematic continuities or ruptures with earlier literary/art movements in the American tradition.
4. Analyze, interpret and discuss, both orally and in writing, contemporary works by American authors and artists.
5. Conduct individual research of bibliographical and e-sources for information to sustain personal views and provide precise reference of such information.
6. Elaborate cogent argumentative essays and/or shorter writings that usefully incorporate data and citations gathered through individual research of bibliographical and e-sources.
7. Write about the selected texts/art works, providing accurate and detailed references as support.

Attitudes

1. Participate actively and meaningfully in class activities.
2. Develop a good temporal organization to cover appropriately the reading, watching and written activities of the course at an individual level.
3. Respect and value aesthetic and content differences or opinions, which may spring from socio-cultural differences among authors and students.
4. Develop an informed opinion about specific literary texts and art works.
5. Connect literary/art works and everyday life by introducing personal experience in intellectual debate.
6. Develop the capacity to apply the knowledge of cultural concepts and analytical tools acquired in this course to contemporary texts of whatever nature.

3. CONTENTS

UNITS *

American Studies: An interdisciplinary subject

Key words and critical categories

The neo-slave narrative in the arts, literature and popular culture.
The representation of the Holocaust in the arts, literature and popular culture.
The representation of the Mexican border in the arts, literature and popular culture.
Conclusions

*The instructor will provide a detailed program for each unit at the beginning of the course.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

4.1. Student workload (150 hours)

Classroom hours: 50	15 lectures, 30 seminars, 5 workshops
Self-study hours:100	100 hours of independent study.
Total hours	150 hours

4.2. Learning strategies, materials and didactic resources

The class will be based on the format of a participative seminar; therefore, students must prepare all readings / film viewing / artifacts study prior to the class and be ready to discuss them in depth in class. All texts will have a guide to help students reflect on the text / film /artifact. There might be quizzes in class to ensure texts / films have been read and watched.

Teamwork towards a class presentation and short response papers will be produced as part of the final grade. Students will have group tutorials with the teacher to prepare their group project. Regular class attendance (a minimum of 80%) is compulsory.

Class	15 lectures on topics and theoretical concepts. 30 seminars for discussion of and analysis of assigned items.
Workshop	5 workshops with individual and team work to elaborate oral presentation on a specific topic. Each group (max. 4-5 students) will meet the teacher twice throughout the semester to organize, distribute, and present the work.

Reading questions, activities and quizzes

Each assigned text in the list has several set questions / activities that must be answered / completed individually in written format before class. In addition, there will be quizzes to check the understanding and knowledge on the compulsory texts.

5. ASSESSMENT

Assessment criteria:

- Demonstrate the capacity to form and articulate independent, critical thinking on the construction of an American identity and its reflection in literature and other texts, both orally and in writing, with the required level of English.
- Demonstrate the capacity to read and see critically and analytically literary texts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the historical and cultural background to the different literary texts and popular culture artifacts and how these are articulated through the texts themselves.
- Demonstrate the capacity to effectively write a critical paper on a literary or cultural text in English (at a near C.1 level or higher), using appropriate terminology and adequate support.
- Ability to find, use effectively and cite correctly a variety of bibliographic and specialized sources.
- Show awareness, respect and tolerance of different opinions, the ability to positively engage in group work and demonstrate active and meaningful class participation and an effective compliance with assignments.

Important: Students are warned that plagiarism will not be tolerated and will automatically result in the failure of the course. The ideas from other sources, regardless of whether they are quoted, summarized or paraphrased, must be documented adequately. According to article 34 of the University regulation on evaluation, any plagiarism found in the final version of a written activity or paper will be penalised and will result in the failure of the course.

Grading criteria:

Excellent (SB)

- Clearly shows independent and critical thinking, being able to analyze texts and identify their bias or faulty logic. Shows a depth of understanding of the historical and cultural background and how it informs the literary texts. Demonstrates the ability to argue effectively (orally and in writing at the appropriate level of English)

and write a critical paper in English, using correct terms and support from diverse sources. Use of sources is very effective and accurate throughout. Clearly shows respect and tolerance for alternative opinions and the ability of team work. Lively and meaningful class participation, producing quality work.

Very Good (N)

- Shows critical thinking and is able to analyze texts, identifying their bias. Understands the historical and cultural background of the literary movements and can argue a point in English (orally and in writing at the appropriate level) as well as writes a critical paper, using some specialized terms and sources. Use of sources is effective and correct. Shows respect and tolerance for alternative opinions and the ability to work in groups. Active and meaningful class participation with effective task compliance.

Satisfactory (A)

- Shows some ability for critical thinking, being able to analyze the basic aspects of a given text. Understands the basic aspects of the historical and cultural background of most literary movements. Can construct an argument in acceptable English (orally and in writing) and write a very basic paper, using some specific terms and sources. Use of sources is basically correct but with limited effectiveness. Shows respect for alternative opinions and has collaborated in the group project. Has participated in class, though not actively, and has complied with the minimum class assignments.

Fail (S)

- Unable to neither think critically nor analyze the basic aspects of a text, or to do so in a very limited manner. Tends to a simplified overview of the historical and cultural background with some inconsistencies and is not able to apply them meaningfully to the understanding of the texts. Oral and written ability in English is limited and significantly below a C1 level, often causing difficulties in understanding. Research paper is limited to a descriptive plot or character analysis with limited sources. Use of sources is little effective, mechanical and often incorrect. May not respect alternative opinions. Class participation has been very limited and task achievement very weak. Commits plagiarism.

Assessment procedures:

The course will be marked by continuous assessment except for those students who are granted evaluation by final exam, according to the University regulations. Students who follow the continuous assessment process will be assessed by:

- Participation in class, seminars and tutorials.
- Response papers due throughout the term.

- Group project and class presentations.
- Other class activities (writing activities, quizzes, reading guides).

Students must read / see all the texts, submit all the written and oral assignments and attend a minimum of 80% of the classes. Likewise, students must prepare and attend the workshops and tutorials. Failure to comply with class assignments and activities will result in failing the continuous evaluation. Students who fail the continuous evaluation will be asked to take the make-up exam in the second period in June.

Students who after having requested the overall final exam option and having received the authorization to do so will be evaluated by a comprehensive final exam covering all the material of the course. The exam will consist of one essay questions and a critical analysis of a text /artifact, plus three response papers, an audio of 5 minutes with an oral presentation of a text, and an essay (3000 words) on one of the project topics, which will be turned in on the exam date. Students who plan to take the overall exam should contact the professor early in the course to obtain specific information about the paper, essay/written exercises and exam, which will assess all the competences stated in the syllabus.

The make-up exam will follow the same format as the overall final exam (essay question and text analysis) for students who have not succeeded in the first exam period.

6. BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Bibliografía Básica

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- Burgett, Bruce and Glenn Hendler, eds. (2014) *Keywords for American Cultural Studies.* New York UP.
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- Gibb, Alan (2014) *Contemporary American Trauma Narratives.* Edinburgh University Press.
- Hartman, Geoffrey (1996) *The Longest Shadow. In the Aftermath of the Holocaust.* New York: Palgrave.
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Sollors, Werner and Greil Marcus, eds. (2009) *A New Literary History of America*. Harvard University Press.

Takaki, Ronald (2009) *A Different Mirror: A Multicultural History of America*. Little, Brown US.