



M.A. in American Studies (MAS) Course Catalog Winter Semester 2024/2025

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Updates

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Dear students of the M.A. in American Studies,

The Heidelberg Center for American Studies welcomes you to the winter term 2024/2025!

In the MAS course catalog, you will find all lectures and courses that are relevant for the program and taught in English. You may also take classes held in German if you speak German on a university level. Please consult with the MAS coordinator prior to signing up for any German-taught courses. You may find further classes and lectures in the university's online catalog (HeiCO) or on the respective department's website.

The here listed classes are offered by the Heidelberg Center for American Studies, the English Department, the Institute for Geography, the History Department, the Institute for Political Science, and the Theological Seminary/Department of Church History.

Please note that registration for particular classes may differ due to the multidisciplinary set-up of our program. You will find directions on how to register in each course description. Please also pay attention to different registration deadlines.

Please be aware that one individual class may not count toward two different modules at the same time. E.g., if you choose a seminar for the main module Literature & Culture, the class cannot count toward the research module Literature & Culture as well, but you need to take a different class for the research module. The same applies for courses that are listed in different modules. If you take a class, you must choose toward which module the credit points will count.

If you have any questions, please contact our MAS Coordinator Jonas Faust (jfaust@hca.uni-heidelberg.de) or PD Dr. Philipp Löffler (philipp.loeffler@as.uni-heidelberg.de).

M.A. in American Studies

The Program

Students enroll in the program each winter semester. The standard duration of study, including the writing of the Master's thesis, is four semesters. The M.A. in American Studies (MAS) program (100%) includes the academic disciplines Geography, History, Literature and Cultural Studies, Political Science, and Religious History and Culture. At the start of the program, students will choose two of those as their core disciplines. One of these two core disciplines will receive further emphasis in the research module, which is meant to prepare students for the writing of their M.A. thesis. The flexibility module gives students the opportunity either to take American Studies courses outside their core disciplines in order to broaden their understanding of the comprehensive field of American Studies, or to attend additional classes in one of their two core disciplines for a deeper engagement with their primary fields of interest. The interdisciplinary module is designed to bring the perspectives and methods of the various disciplines into dialogue with one another.

These subject modules are supplemented by a methodology module meant to impart both theoretical proficiency and empirical methods, as well as practical skills; and a module on cross-cutting perspectives, which—in the spirit of a traditional *studium generale*—affords students an opportunity to venture outside of the field of American Studies. There will also be a chance during the “mobility window,” usually slated for the third semester, to study abroad on an exchange, accept an internship, etc. The MAS program concludes with an examination module.

Modules and courses

By dividing the program into various modules, the HCA has three goals for students:

1. To acquire and deepen the latest subject-specific knowledge and research methods of the individual disciplines.
2. To implement multi- and interdisciplinary approaches, and to demonstrate the synergistic potential of such approaches.
3. To practically apply methodological and research skills in order to make graduates competitive in both the academic and the non-academic international job market.

The M.A. program “American Studies” is comprised of:

- A study plan (Kernfach)
- An examination module

The study plan encompasses:

- A subject-specific component
- A section on building “comprehensive competencies”

The subject-specific component of the program is divided into four parts:

1. **Main modules:** Students choose two of the HCA's offered disciplines as core disciplines in which they will develop and deepen their subject-specific knowledge and skills. Main modules in the chosen disciplines come with a minimum of one seminar that will be exclusively available to M.A. students, as well as an additional course (in either lecture or seminar format). Students can select their core disciplines freely. They may combine two fields from the humanities or from the social sciences, or they may choose to traverse academic disciplines. All combinations are possible.
2. **Research module:** After finishing the main modules, students complete a research module in order to immerse themselves more fully in one of their two core disciplines. For the research module, students will participate in a seminar offered exclusively to M.A. students. In an "Independent Study" format, students will autonomously work through and discuss with their professor an assigned reading list. This will usually serve as preparation for writing the M.A. thesis.
3. **Flexibility module:** In the flexibility module, students may choose 12 credits worth of courses from any discipline offered in the program. For these elective credits, any combination of courses is allowed. Students can either choose to broaden their understanding of American Studies with classes outside of their core disciplines, or they can choose to focus more deeply on their primary areas of interest.
4. **Interdisciplinary module:** The interdisciplinary module serves to promote an interdisciplinary approach to scholarship and demonstrate the synergistic potential of such an approach. Students will take part in an interdisciplinary seminar offered by instructors from two different disciplines, as well as a two-semester interdisciplinary colloquium in which variegated topics and approaches from the field of American Studies will be discussed.

The section of the program on "comprehensive competencies" is divided into the following three parts:

1. **Methodology module:** In this module, students will deepen their understanding of the theoretical and empirical methods of American Studies, as well as develop their academic writing skills.
2. **Cross-cutting perspectives:** In this module, students will take courses outside of the area of American Studies. These courses may either be related to or independent from the disciplines of American Studies. Language course credits also count toward this module.
3. **Mobility window:** The mobility window provides students with the opportunity for intensive and practical engagement with their degree in American Studies. Students can complete an internship in a relevant field, or can choose to study abroad in order to foster cultural understanding and strengthen intercultural competencies. For students interested in pursuing an academic career, completion of a teaching assignment can also be counted toward this module, provided the assignment does not concern a constituent curricular component of the HCA's B.A. or M.A. programs.

The program concludes with the examination module:

Examination module: With the completion of a Master's thesis in the same area as their research module, students will have acquired specialized knowledge in a particular area of American Studies and will have demonstrated the ability to use academic methods to work on and research a topic independently. The particulars of the M.A. thesis are described in section 7.11 of the *Modulhandbuch*. Completion of the thesis takes four months during which students will present an outline of the thesis to their peers at a research colloquium. After completing the thesis, students will take a 60-minute oral final exam. Additional details about the exam are covered in the exam regulations.

Sample Course of Study

<p>First Semester (28 credits)</p> <p>Methodology module Course: Theory & Methods (4 credits) Course: Academic Writing (4 credits)</p> <p>Main module I M.A. seminar: Core discipline I (10 credits) Lecture: Core discipline I (4 credits)</p> <p>Main module II Lecture: Core discipline II (4 credits)</p> <p>Interdisciplinary module MAS Colloquium I (2 credits)</p>	<p>Second Semester (30 credits)</p> <p>Main module II M.A. seminar: Core discipline II (10 credits)</p> <p>Research module M.A. seminar: Core discipline I (10 credits)</p> <p>Flexibility module Discussion group: Discipline III (4 credits) Lecture: Discipline IV (4 credits)</p> <p>Interdisciplinary module MAS Colloquium II (2 credits)</p>
<p>Third Semester (28 credits)</p> <p>Research module Independent study: Core discipline I (4 credits)</p> <p>Interdisciplinary module Interdisciplinary seminar (6 credits)</p> <p>Flexibility module Lecture: Core discipline I</p> <p>Cross-cutting perspectives 2 courses outside of American Studies (8 credits)</p> <p>Mobility window Internship (four weeks) (6 credits)</p>	<p>Fourth Semester (34 credits)</p> <p>Examination module Research colloquium (2 credits) M.A. thesis (24 credits) Oral final exam (8 credits)</p>

Sem	Modules			
4	Cross-Cutting Perspectives (\sum 8 CP) 2 courses outside of the area of American Studies	Examination Module (\sum 34 CP) Research colloquium (2 CP) M.A. thesis (24 CP) Oral final exam (8 CP)		
3		Mobility Window (\sum 6 CP) Study abroad, internship or teaching assignment		
2		Subject-Specific Classes (\sum 54 CP)		
		Research Module (14 CP) Core discipline I or II 1 M.A. seminar 1 Independent Study	Flexibility Module (12 CP) 12 CP worth of classes from any discipline in the program	Interdisciplinary Module (\sum 10 CP) 1 Interdisciplinary seminar (6 CP) 2 MAS Colloquium (2 x 2CP)
1	Methodology Module (\sum 8 CP) Theory & Methods (4 CP) Academic Writing (4 CP)	Main Module I (14 CP) Core discipline I 1 M.A. seminar 1 lecture	Main Module II (14 CP) Core discipline II 1 M.A. seminar 1 lecture	

Mandatory Classes

M.A. Academic Writing

Eligibility: Methodology Module

Lecturer: Dr. Anja Schüler

Time: Thursdays; 14:00-16:00

Location: HCA tba

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: This course offers students concrete guidelines and practical approaches to for writing academic texts. We will start with a review of your writing practices from thesis development to paragraph construction, discuss microskills like introductions and conclusions as well as revision, editing for coherence, style, and grammar, effective referencing and proofreading. Students are welcome to discuss any questions related to the academic writing process in class. Please expect to share your writing experiences and your texts as well as your opinion of the writings of others, students and non-students. The format of the seminar consists of both whole-class and small-group discussions.

MAS Colloquium

Eligibility: Interdisciplinary Module

Lecturer: Dr. Wilfried Mausbach; Prof. Dr. Welf Werner

Time: Thursdays; 18:00 - 20:00

Location: HCA Oculus

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: The Interdisciplinary Colloquium provides a venue for MAS students to meet with renowned experts from various fields, such as politics, economics, journalism, or academia. Most of them will be Americans who will share with us their current interests or most recent scholarship. The Interdisciplinary Colloquium will also serve as a forum for the presentation and discussion of state-of-the-art research in academic disciplines that are not otherwise represented in this year's curriculum. Participation in the Interdisciplinary Colloquium is mandatory for MAS students.

Theory and Methods

Eligibility: Methodology Module

Lecturer: Dr. Wilfried Mausbach; Philipp Löffler; Jonas Faust

Time: Tuesdays; 11:00 - 13:00

Location: HCA Stucco

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: Thinking about culture - if done with any sophistication, any depth or complexity - also calls for thinking about thinking. American Studies, along with cultural studies and the humanities more generally, is marked by this self-reflexive move, where the study itself is taken as the object of study. In this class, we refocus on the frames for and structures of thinking about culture, rather than on culture itself. Surveying contemporary critical theory, this class will consider and explore the ideas of the Frankfurt school, deconstruction, post colonialism, queer theory, psychoanalysis, and social constructionism, paying special attention to how that thinking about thinking can be used methodologically in the study of American culture.

Text: A course reader will be made available.

Courses by Discipline

1. Religious History

Advanced Seminar: Issues and Theories in American Religious History

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture; Research Module Religion and Culture

Lecturer: Jan Stievermann

Time: Thursdays; 14:15-15:45

Location: HCA Meeting Room

Registration: Please pre-register via e-mail to jstievermann@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description: Geared toward students specializing in American religious history, this advanced seminar will examine important theories and issues currently debated in the field. This semester's focus will be on recent literature exploring the complex relations between American religion, the Enlightenment, and its various legacies. But our course reading list will accommodate student interests and projects.

Texts: A reading list will be provided at the beginning of the semester

Seminar: James W.C. Pennington, Pioneer of the Black Church and the Abolitionist Movement in 19th Century America

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Jan Stievermann

Time: Thursdays; 11:15-12:45

Location: HCA Stucco

Registration: Please pre-register via e-mail to jstievermann@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description: This class will explore the life and work of James W. C. Pennington (1808-1870), who escaped slavery in 1827 and educated himself to become an internationally known Protestant minister, leading Black abolitionist and reformer of the antebellum period. Pennnatuivington's writings

will serve as a lens to look at a number of key developments in the history of African Americans and the US more generally before and during the Civil War. These include, among others, the rise and role of Black churches, the struggle over African colonization, the development of transatlantic abolitionism, the “Colored Convention” movement for African American civil rights, and the debates over Black self-defense and participation in the war effort. In studying Pennington’s autobiography, *The Fugitive Blacksmith* (1849), we will also have an opportunity to learn about the slave narrative tradition.

Texts: Course readings will be made available at the beginning of the semester.

Applied Skills Class: Social Reform and Religion in the United States, 1800-1860

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture; Flexibility Module, Research Module History

Lecturer: Dr. Ryan Gregg Tobler

Time: Mondays; 14:15-15:45

Location: HCA Stucco

Registration: via HeiCO or email to rtobler@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

Social reformers of all kinds overran the new United States in the nineteenth century, brimming with confidence about human transformation and new plans for optimizing American society. This Übung course explores that phenomenon, including its complex and intimate links with the religious history of the period. We will engage a range of important themes, including: diverse logics and theories of reform, the rise and power of „voluntary societies,“ reformist uses of media strategies and technologies (print, images, oratory), and the significance of reform in contemporary literature. The course will also consider the evolving relationship between reform activism and American politics, as well as some of the many attempts to create utopian communities isolated from the turbulence of American society. In addition to exploring the broader phenomenon of reform in general, we will also explore numerous specific reform efforts in particular, such as those favoring health reform, criminal rehabilitation, and sabbatarianism, and those opposing slavery, alcohol, and the displacement of Native Americans.

Lecture: History of Christianity in North America, 1500-1800

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Jan Stievermann

Time: Wednesdays; 11:15-12:45

Location: Grabengasse 3-5; HS 12a

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: This lecture course offers a survey of the history of Christianity in North America from the Reformation age to the revolutionary period. Always with an eye on the European background, the course will examine the often surprising ways in which the various forms of Christianity that were imported from the Old World developed in different contexts of colonization, mission, intercultural contact and conflict. While special attention will be given to the British colonies, we will also look at New Spain, New France and other European settlements. As we trace the evolution of churches, beliefs, practices and communities over three centuries and thousands of miles, students will be familiarized with important primary sources and key-concepts in the early history of North American Christianity.

After the lecture class on Wednesday (11-12) we will discuss one central primary document relevant to each week's topic. This additional "Quellenübung" is highly recommended but optional.

Recommended Reading: Edwin Gaustad and Leigh Schmidt. *The Religious History of America* (Harper, 2002)

Sydney E. Ahlstrom. *A Religious History of the American People* (Yale UP, 1972)

2. Political Science

Seminar: Elections and Campaigns in Comparative Perspective

Eligibility: Flexibility Module; Main Module Political Science; Research Module Political Science

Lecturer: Delia Dumitrescu

Time: Wednesdays; 12:00-14:00

Location: tba

Registration: online via HeiCO

Course Description: This seminar examines theoretical and empirical perspectives on how elections are organized in older and newer democracies, with a particular focus on electoral systems, on how political actors (e.g., political parties, leaders, media organizations, etc.) interact in the process, and on the conditions under which they compete. The relatively broad scope of the seminar aims to provide students with opportunities to consider and debate the factors affecting the quality of the electoral process and, ultimately, the acceptance of the election results.

Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students taking part in this seminar will be expected to:

- 1) Become familiar with key theoretical directions currently being applied in the study of elections, including parties and leaders, electoral systems, and the main tenants of campaigns.
- 2) Be exposed to current research on the topic, develop the ability to critically examine it by themselves and in groups, and present it in front of the class.
- 3) Become familiar with several case studies of how elections are organized around the world.

Seminar: Empirische Wahlforschung: US-Präsidentschaftswahl 2024

Eligibility: Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Bernhard Kornelius

Time: See HeiCO

Location: HCA Stucco

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: Am 5. November ist in den USA „Election Day“: Neben diversen lokalen und bundesstaatlichen Entscheidungen, der Wahl des Repräsentantenhauses sowie eines Teils des Senats findet in einem hyperpolarisierten Land und einem international von großen Krisen geplagten Umfeld die 60. Präsidentschaftswahl statt. Unmittelbar nach diesem elektoralen wie medialen Top-Ereignis werden aus demoskopischer Perspektive die Gründe für den Wahlausgang analysiert. Kompakt behandelt werden – erstens – relevante Erklärungsmodelle der empirischen Wahlforschung. Mit diesem modelltheoretischen Hintergrund soll dann – zweitens – die zentrale Fragestellung der empirischen Wahlforschung beantwortet werden: „Wer“ hat in den USA „Wen“ gewählt und vor allem „Warum?“. Es geht also um sozialstrukturelle und demographische Faktoren, um Inhalte und Themen und natürlich auch um Kamala Harris und Donald Trump. Datenbasis sind pol. Umfragen sowie der 2024 Exit-Poll des National Election Pool der großen US-Networks, weshalb – drittens – auch das Thema demoskopische Datenqualität und die Rolle der US-Medien in der Election Night behandelt werden. Letztlich liefert die Veranstaltung einen einführenden Überblick zur US-Präsidentschaftswahl mit viel Aktualitäts- und Praxisbezug zur institutionellen Wahl- und Meinungsforschung.

Course Information: This course will be held in German.

Seminar: US Economic Policy

Eligibility: Main Module Political Science; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Natalie Rauscher; Welf Werner

Time: Thursdays; 9:00-11:00

Location: Neue Uni; Hörsaal 05

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: The U.S. economy provides an important reference point in academic and policy discussions because of its success in providing rapidly rising living standards over a period of more than 200 years. At the same time, it serves as an example of a liberal market economy and an illustration of rising inequality and relative decline. For quite a few decades, it has been a showcase for new economic activities based on knowledge and information technology.

Among the topics discussed in this lecture are the current state of the U.S. business cycle and the economic policies of the Biden administration; the influences of economic globalization, technological progress and structural change; fiscal, monetary and regulatory policies; the (political) institutions involved in economic policy-making and matters of inequality, participation and discrimination. The course draws on economics, political economy and economic history. It puts current developments into international comparative and historical perspectives.

Credit Points/ECTS: Students of this lecture may receive a total of up to 4 ECTS and a grade by taking the written exam at the end of the semester. In order to earn these credits, the following two assignments have to be fulfilled:

Assignment A: A final exam will take place at the end of the semester in written form. It will be based on the lecture slides and the literature of this course. The exam will be a take-home exam paper with a couple of short essay questions that test the understanding of the materials of the course and its main ideas and topics. For the preparation of the exam, please see PowerPoint slides and readings on Moodle.

Assignment B: During the semester, another course requirement will consist of a literature review of the mandatory readings of one of the lecture sessions in the form of a handout. This handout will summarize the MAIN and MOST IMPORTANT points of the texts for the respective week. Each text is to be summarized in 5 bullet points maximum! The point of this exercise is to boil down the texts to the core and main arguments. Therefore, the handout will only consist of bullet points and no running text. Students may choose which session's literature they want to review. This assignment is ungraded. An ungraded 'Sitzschein' and 2 ECTS can be earned by fulfilling only assignment B (see above).

Seminar: US Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, and Contemporary Cases

Eligibility: Main Module Political Science; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Florian Böller

Time: Tuesdays; 14:15-15:45

Location: HCA Oculus

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: What are the drivers and sources of US foreign policy? Who are the actors that influence foreign policy decision-making? Which domestic and international factors account for the variant international strategies of the United States across time and policy fields? To answer these questions, this seminar discusses theories of International Relations and their application to the analysis of foreign policy. While mainstream approaches, such as neorealism, liberal theory, and constructivism serve as a starting point, the seminar also endeavors to make use of newer analytical frameworks, for example Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), role theory, neoclassical realism, or feminist theories. To test the empirical reach and explanatory power of the various theoretical perspectives, we investigate actors and cases of contemporary US foreign policy after the end of the Cold War (post 1991), including military interventions and democracy promotion, nuclear strategy and arms control, anti-terrorism policies, international trade, global environment policies, and relations to specific countries and regions.

The seminar aims to introduce into the current state of the art of theory-guided analysis of US foreign policy, which will also allow to apply a comparative perspective, beyond the US case. It will debunk some

traditional myths of US foreign policy regarding executive dominance and the “politics stops at the waters’ edge”-paradigm, and offer insights regarding the role of political parties, Congress and societal contestation of foreign policy.

The class will be held mostly in English, but oral contributions and term papers in German are also possible and welcome.

Literature: Michael Cox, Doug Stokes (2018): US Foreign Policy, 3rd edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Requirements:

- Active participation, reading of mandatory texts, etc.
- Presentation of a case study in class
- Term paper (15-20pp.)

Seminar: “Divided We Govern”? Congress and the Presidency in an Age of Polarization

Eligibility: Main Module Political Science; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Florian Böller

Time: Wednesdays; 10:00-12:00

Location: HCA Oculus

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: One of the defining features of contemporary US politics is the polarization between parties, but also within the electorate and society writ-large. Diverging ideologies and entrenched partisan differences have a profound impact on politics and policies in the US. This seminar focuses on the Congress and the presidency and analyzes how polarization impacts legislative-executive relations and how it affects the ability to legislate. In a system of checks and balances with frequent periods of divided government, compromise and bipartisan cooperation is essential to avoid political gridlock. Yet, in the current age of hyper-polarization bipartisanship and interparty agreement seem almost impossible. The seminar will discuss the sources behind these processes of polarization and the breakdown of bipartisan cooperation, its manifestations in elections and institutions, as well as the results in terms of policy-making. While the focus of the seminar will be contemporary politics – including the current election cycle – today’s polarized political system will also be set in historical context in view of past periods of intense polarization and partisan “warfare.”

The class will be held mostly in English, but oral contributions and term papers in German are also possible and welcome.

Recommended Reading: Abramowitz, Alan. 2018. The great alignment. Race, party transformation, and the rise of Donald Trump. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Requirements:

- Active participation, reading of mandatory texts, etc.
- Short research project (5 pages max., to be presented in class)
- Term paper (15-20pp.)

Advanced Seminar: Current Challenges and Controversies in U.S. Economic Policies

Eligibility: Main Module Political Science; Research Module Political Science

Lecturer: Natalie Rauscher; Welf Werner

Time: Thursdays; 11:00-13:00

Location: HCA Stucco

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: Based on the knowledge acquired in the lecture U.S. Economic Policy, this seminar invites discussion of a broad range of case studies on current U.S. economic developments and policies. Students will focus on challenges in the American economy under influences such as lowering inflation and macroeconomic dynamics, economic policy controversies surrounding the presidential elections, the American welfare state, U.S. environmental and climate policies and the AI-Revolution and its effects on industries, companies and labor market.

Prerequisites: Taking the lecture U.S. Economic Policy in the winter semester 2024/25 is a prerequisite for this seminar. For seminar participants it will be mandatory to attend the lecture's graded exam at the end of the semester, that is, to fulfill all assignments in the lecture.

Credit Points/ECTS: Students of this seminar can earn up to 12 ECTS by (a) fulfilling all assignments of the lecture U.S. Economic Policy, and taking the exam of the lecture (4 ECTS) and (b) attending the seminar and completing its examinations (8 ECTS).

Additional Information: The Wednesday hour (13:00-14:00) is set aside for individual tutoring. The classroom language is English, including student presentations and papers. During the in-person seminar, participants will be asked to fulfill several assignments, including presentations, readings, and active participation. Course Requirements: A reader with all texts will be made available on Moodle. Additional sources may be uploaded throughout the semester. A detailed description of the course requirements and structure will follow on Moodle.

For HCA students: The seminar is recommended for MAS students and advanced BAS students with a particular interest in economics and economic policy.

3. Geography

Lecture: North American City

Eligibility: Main Module Geography; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Ulrike Gerhard

Time: Tuesdays; 9:15-10:45

Location: Neue Universität, Aula

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: Comprehensive overview of the Urban Geography of North America: urban theory, urban systems, recent and historical urban developments (urbanization, suburbanization, reurbanisation), internal structure of cities (esp. urban inequalities, cultural patterns, neoliberalization), modeling and theorizing urban space, urban policies, planning the twenty-first-century city, future of cities. Lectures by colleagues from the US will be included in this lecture class.

Recommended Reading: The lecture will be accompanied by weekly readings that will be provided via Moodle. Basic reading suggestion for the whole class (highly recommended): Hahn, Barbara (2022): *The U.S. City in Transition*. Berlin: Springer.

4. Literature and Culture

Advanced Seminar: Ushering In Modernism: American Literature around 1900

Eligibility: Main Module Literature and Culture; Research Module Literature and Culture; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: PD Dr. Margit Peterfy

Time: Thursdays; 11:15-12:45

Location: Kettengasse 12; 115

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: Marshall Berman begins his famous study *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* with a list of essential features of what it means to be modern, quote, “Modern experiences cut across all boundaries of geography and ethnicity, of class and nationality, of religion and ideology; in this sense modernity can be said to unite all mankind.” Towards the end of the nineteenth century, US-American literature and culture started to react to the momentous changes going on in the country, but also in other parts of the world, working through the areas mentioned by Berman. In our course, we will additionally consider the aspect of the changing role of women in the public sphere, characterized by the struggle for recognition of intellectual equality and, politically, by obtaining suffrage. But literature (and other arts, e.g. theater, visual arts, and film) did not just react to modernity, but they also changed it and shaped it in the form of modernism. We will both look at modern “content”, but also emerging formal changes which ultimately resulted in the modernist innovations of the early twentieth century.

Texts: William Dean Howells, *A Modern Instance*, (1882)

Kate Chopin. *The Awakening*, (1899)

Stephen Crane. *The Red Badge of Courage*, (1895)

Shorter texts on moodle

Advanced Seminar: 20th Century African American Drama

Eligibility: Main Module Literature and Culture; Research Module Literature and Culture; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: PD Dr. Margit Peterfy

Time: Thursdays; 14:15-15:45

Location: Kettengasse 12; 108

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: In this seminar, we will study the development of African American drama throughout the 20th century, and also glance back to the 19th, when African American theatre started to liberate itself from the traditions and stereotypes of the ubiquitous minstrel productions. Thus, we will begin by discussing Pauline E. Hopkins's Peculiar Sam, or, The Underground Railroad (1879), which was written for Hopkins's own family's troupe, "Hopkins' Colored Troubadours". Then we will move on to a number of plays that can be read as milestones in the development of African American theatrical traditions, from plays performed during the Harlem Renaissance, on to projects of the Federal Theatre. The post- WW II period introduces new artistic developments catalyzed by the political and cultural struggles of the Civil Rights Era, starting with, among others, Lorraine Hansberry's play A Raisin in the Sun (1959). More experimental productions, such as Imamu Amiri Baraka's Dutchman (1963) and his Black Arts Repertory School in Harlem will also be part of our curriculum, as will be Ntozake Shange's 'choreopoem' For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When The Rainbow is Enuf (1975). The end of the century is marked by plays about the impact of the past on the present, for example in August Wilson's "Century Cycle" plays. Although we won't be able to cover all the plays of this cycle, the significance of Wilson's achievement will be a highpoint to finish the seminar on - and to encourage you to follow new developments in African American drama in the 21st century.

Texts: Course materials will be made available in a Course Reader and on moodle.

Independent Study: Recent Trends in US Literary and Cultural Theory

Eligibility: Research Module Literature and Culture

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Günter Leypoldt

Time: tba

Location: HCA tba

Registration: via HeiCO

Course Description: This colloquium is intended for aspiring post-graduate students and will serve as a forum for presenting and discussing research projects and debating project-related problems of literary and cultural theory. The list of readings will be announced in the first session.

5. History

Lecture: A House Divided: American Politics and Society from the 1960s to the Present

Eligibility: Main Module History; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Manfred Berg

Time: Mondays; 11:15-12:45

Location: Grabengasse 3-5, HS 14

Registration: in the first session

Course Description: In the two decades after the Second World War, the United States were widely seen as a model democracy based on economic prosperity and a civic-minded political culture. During the Nineteen-Sixties, however, this so-called liberal consensus unraveled as the Vietnam War, racial tensions, and the challenges to traditional gender and sexual norms divided Americans. In the late 20th century, globalization, mass immigration, changing values, and the communication revolution transformed American society but also spurred acrimonious culture wars and political polarization. Today, Republicans and Democrats, "red" and "blue" states, conservatives and liberals see each other as implacable foes. As we approach the presidential elections of 2024, America's democracy is in crisis and its future uncertain. Some observers even warn against a new civil war. In this lecture course, I will systematically explore the events, developments, and structural forces that have driven the process of polarization.

I will hold the lecture in English. All exams may also be taken in German. No prior registration necessary. Students may come to the first lecture and register on Moodle afterwards.

Advanced Seminar: American Political Thought from the Revolution to the Present

Eligibility: Main Module History; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Manfred Berg

Time: Tuesdays; 11:15-12:45

Location: Grabengasse 3-5, Übungsraum I

Registration: Students must register until 30 September 2024 at michaela.neidig@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de

Please provide the following information upon registration: degree program (Studiengang), subjects (Fächerkombination), academic semester (Fachsemester), matriculation number, and clarify for which module you will be taking this class.

Course Description: In this master-level seminar we will read and discuss basic texts of American political thought from the era of the American Revolution to the present. We will treat classic concepts such as the social contract and the checks and balances against untrammelled power, the roots of American individualism and anti-government sentiment, federalism, and the Social Darwinist and Progressive responses to modern industrial society. Discussions will consider key political ideologies, including liberalism, libertarianism, conservatism, communitarianism, and New Left Marxism. Students must be conversant in English and should bring a basic knowledge of American history and politics to class. The Tuesday morning hour will provide students with an opportunity to discuss their presentations and papers individually. The number of participants will be limited to 15 students.

Applied Skills Class: Die nordamerikanischen Indianer

Eligibility: Main Module History; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Klaus Kempter

Time: Fridays; 15:15-16:45

Location: Grabengasse 3-5, Übungsraum II

Registration: Interesse an grundlegenden sozialtheoretischen und philosophischen Fragen ist erforderlich.

Anmeldung per E-Mail an: kempter@uni-hd.de

Course Description: Der Dozent befasst sich in der Lehre seit langer Zeit mit der tiefen Krise der (europäisch-westlichen) Moderne, und auch diese Lehrveranstaltung steht im genannten Kontext. Leitfragen der Übung betreffen die Konfrontation von "traditionalen" Gesellschaften mit der Maschinerie der (von außen hereinbrechenden) Moderne vor dem Hintergrund der überkommenen Lebensweisen, Weltauffassungen und Gesellschaftsorganisation der Betroffenen; den machtpolitisch-militärischen Ablauf dieses sich über Jahrhunderte hin ziehenden Konflikts; die jeweiligen Strategien der Kontrahenten; die "philosophischen" Grundannahmen der Konfliktparteien; die Bilder, die die Kolonialisten und ihre Herkunftsgesellschaften von den Indigenen hatten und haben; die Verarbeitung des Geschehens in der Kulturindustrie; und seine Gesamtinterpretation.

Course Information: This course will be held in German.

Applied Skills Class: Europäische und Amerikanische Gendertheorien im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert

Eligibility: Main Module History; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Nicole Colaianni

Time: Fridays; 15:15-16:45

Location: Grabengasse 3-5, Übungsraum I

Registration: per E-Mail an: nicole.colaianni@zegk.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description: Dieser Kurs bietet eine umfassende Betrachtung von Gendertheorien, wie sie sich in Europa und den USA vom 20. Jahrhundert bis heute entwickelt haben. Mit Hilfe theoretischer Ansätze und konkreten Fallstudien werden wir die Konstruktion und die Transformation von Geschlechterrollen, -identitäten und -beziehungen erforschen. Beschäftigen werden wir uns mit bedeutenden Bewegungen, einflussreichen Persönlichkeiten und grundlegenden Texten, die die Gender-Theorie und ihre praktische Anwendung in verschiedenen sozialen, politischen und kulturellen Kontexten maßgeblich geprägt haben.

Sehr gute Englischkenntnisse sind für diesen Kurs unabdinglich.

Course Information: This course will be held in German and English.

Applied Skills Class: Native American History

Eligibility: Main Module History; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Wilfried Mausbach

Time: Mondays; 14:00-16:00

Location: HCA Oculus

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: Much of what most people know about North American Indians is wrong. That starts with their traditional designation as "Indians," which stems from Christopher Columbus' mistaken belief that he had reached the East Indies. More important, however, the label "Indians" led Europeans to lump together peoples who spoke hundreds of different languages and be-longed to myriad distinct cultures, all with their own way of life. It is impossible to fully re-construct this panoply. Yet in this course we will attempt to get a little closer to at least a few of the indigenous societies within the present confines of the United States, some of which had lived for thousands of years on a continent that

Europeans, after 1492, took to call a New World. We will look at America before Europeans invaded the land; at contact, cooperation and confrontation in the Southwest, Southeast, Eastern Woodlands and the Great Lakes Region; at the way the American Revolution influenced Indian-White relations; at the politics of Indian removal during the first half of the nineteenth-century and the struggles on the Great Plains and in the Great Basin during the latter half of that century; at efforts to “Americanize” Native Americans, and various forms of resistance. Whenever possible—i.e., as far as sources and literature allow—we will include Native American perspectives in our discussions.

Course Requirements: You will be asked to introduce one or two primary sources to the class and to actively contribute to in-class discussions. If you plan to use this course as an upper-level class, you will also have to submit a written primary source analysis (ca. 6 pp.) by the end of the semester.

Recommended Reading: Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, *North American Indians: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010)

Kathleen DuVal, *Native Nations: A Millennium of Indigenous Change and Persistence* (New York: Random House, 2024).

Applied Skills Class: The Year 1973 – A Turning Point in the Global Cold War

Eligibility: Main Module History; Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Marcus Dietrich

Time: Mondays; 10:00-12:00

Location: HCA tba

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: 1973 was an exceptional in the Global Cold War: The unveiling of the Watergate Scandal and the unravelling of the Vietnam war, the end of the Bretton Woods system governing the world economy and the acceleration of global finance, the fourth Arab-Israeli war and the oil-shock, the coup in Chile and the rise of neoliberalism, the New International Economic Order and the assertion of the Global South in world politics, the landmark ruling of *Roe v Wade*, Pink Floyd’s “The Dark Side of the Moon” and the peak of rock – these and many other events and transformations make the year perfect as a lens into the extraordinary period of the early 1970s.

We focus on the US but expand our view and put its history into the wider context of an increasingly globalized and interconnected world. By looking at a variety of sources from “below” and “above” we discuss some of these domestic events and popular movements in the US-society as well as global

developments and economic transformations and how these might be inter-connected. The course should introduce into Global Cold War history, strengthen our skills in different sources and foster critical thinking across various disciplines.

Learning Outcomes: The course should introduce and foster the critical engagement with various types of primary sources. Further the aim is to enable discussions and encourage interdisciplinary thinking.

Recommended Reading: Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War. A World History*, 2017, Introduction
Andrew Grant Jackson, *1973: Rock at the Crossroads*, 2019
The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective, Niall Ferguson et al., eds. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010)

Other Events & Classes

Book Club: Hot off the Press

Eligibility: Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Dr. Heiko Jakubzik

Time: Wednesdays; 16:15-17:45

Location: Kettengasse 12; Room 110

Registration: in the first session

Course Description: What is new in the cultural sphere of the United States? We will sample new books, films, tv-series, music etc. to find out what stirs the American minds and hearts at the present moment. While there will be a focus on new publications in literature and the arts, new contributions in the fields of politics, history, religion, and popular science writing will also be assessed. We will discuss a different work every week and students will take part in the choice and presentation of topics. In order to keep the workload manageable, we will read most of the works in excerpts and students who have familiarized themselves with the entire work will guide us through the discussion.

Film and Society: Other Worlds and the Otherworldly

Eligibility: Flexibility Module

Lecturer: Carolyn Burlingame-Goff

Time: Wednesdays; 18:00-21:30

Location: Kettengasse 12; Room 108

Registration: in the first session

Course Description: Other Worlds and the Otherworldly

Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror are film genres defined, in part, by their ability to create liminal worlds in which viewers can safely examine their own complicated social and personal issues.

This semester Film and Society will be taking a closer look at these three genres in an attempt to answer the following questions:

- What are the core identifiers and conventions that distinguish science fiction, fantasy and horror?
- Can a film successfully combine elements of more than one of these genres? How are the boundaries between the genres upheld and/or transgressed?
- What are the keys to successful world building?

- What compacts do filmmakers have to enter into with their audiences in order to create that most elusive of responses, the willing suspension of disbelief?

North American Philanthropic Foundations: Origins, History, Activities

Eligibility: Interdisciplinary Module

Lecturer: Natalie Rauscher

Time: Wednesdays; 14:00-16:00

Location: HCA Oculus

Registration: HeiCO

Course Description: Foundations (Stiftungen) are important institutions and actors in organized philanthropy, a sector distinct from, but not unrelated to the sectors of government/politics and business. Drawing from fields of (economic) history, sociology, political science, this interdisciplinary seminar will first provide an overview of the origins, history and growth of philanthropic foundations in North America, highlighting the perhaps unique legal and cultural framework for these institutions in this region of the world. After analyzing organizational types, legal rules etc. the seminar will turn to facts and figures about the impressive size, scope, and social role of philanthropy in North America today. Thereafter, the focus will be directed at case studies of foundations and their various activities – highlighting international activities of US-based foundations, and the motives of donors and philanthropists with a particular look at the role of women in philanthropy - as well as their interaction with related actors such as think tanks, other non-profits and government. The seminar will conclude with recent trends in North American philanthropy such as donor-advised funds, impact investing, or community foundations etc. Despite of – or perhaps because of - the often significant impact and key contributions of philanthropic giving and grantmaking, critiques of foundation philanthropy seem to be on the upswing, but upon closer look had a long history. Thus, we will try to better understand and evaluate the long tradition of criticism of foundations and philanthropy in North America and elsewhere.

Credit Points: 6 ECTS (attendance, oral contributions, presentation, simulation game, 12-15 page term paper.

For non-HCA students, please get in touch with instructor.

Recommended Reading: Bernholz, Lucy, and Brigitte Pawliw-Fry. 2020. *How We Give Now: Conversations Across the United States*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society.
Callahan, David. 2017. *The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

- Reich, Robert. 2018. *Just Giving: Why Philanthropy is Failing Democracy and How it Can Do Better*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Zunz, Olivier. 2011. *Philanthropy in America: A History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.