



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
JAV visuomenė ir kultūra / American Society and Culture	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Dr. Grant Rosson	Department of English Philology Faculty of Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
BA	Compulsory

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Face to face	Spring	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: English B2-C 1	Additional requirements (if any):

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	150	32	118

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed
<p>This course will provide a comprehensive look at the diverse and dynamic tapestry that is United States culture and society. Through a multimedia and multidisciplinary approach, exploring works of literature, film, visual art, news, and other media, students will examine the historical, social, political, and cultural factors that have shaped American identity and experience from the founding in 1776 to the present day. The course aims to foster a nuanced understanding of the complexities inherent in the United States' unique identity.</p> <p>Generic competences to be developed (as per the aims of the English Philology programme):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1. Responsibility: the ability to set goals and make plans, and take responsibility for them; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.1. will be able to set goals, choose and use resources necessary for the completion of a task, plan their time and follow deadlines; - 1.2. will be able to take responsibility for their work / study results and learn from mistakes; - 3. Intercultural competence: respect and openness to other cultures, the ability to work in a multicultural environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3.1. will be able to understand the specifics of different cultures and to analyze and assess cultural contexts; - 3.2. will be able to study, work, and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds and develop awareness, respect, and openness to cultural diversity; - 4. Problem solving: the ability to solve problems by relying on analytical, critical, and creative thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4.1. will be able to identify problems and challenges in their own and related fields; - 4.2. will be able to identify problems by finding, analysing, and critically assessing relevant information, generate new ideas, choose the most optimal solutions; - 5. Openness to change: the ability to understand the necessity of change and the intention to constantly improve oneself <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5.1. will be familiar not only with the changes taking place in their field of interest, but also their causes, challenges, opportunities; - 5.2. will be open to new ideas, strive to change, and be creative and innovative; - 5.3. will be able to evaluate the quality of their actions and achievements and strive to acquire the competencies necessary for future change

Subject-specific competences (as per the aims of the English Philology programme):

- 7. Essential knowledge and skills of literary science: perception of literature as a phenomenon and perception of literature as a scientific discipline:
 - 7.1. will know, understand and be able to describe literature as a phenomenon and properly use and interpret the basic concepts and terms of literary studies;
 - 7.2. will acquire knowledge of the main branches and methods of literary studies;
- 9. Understanding and analysis of English literature: the ability to analyze and interpret English literature as a phenomenon:
 - 9.1. will gain knowledge of the development of English literature, the most important authors and the most significant works;
 - 9.2. will be able to analyse, interpret and evaluate the phenomena of English literature in the wider context of world literature, using appropriate terminology and methods;
- 10. Understanding English culture: The ability to understand and explain the peculiarities of British and American culture;
 - 10.1 will gain knowledge of English-speaking countries (especially Great Britain and the United States) and their socio-cultural context (aspects of geography, history, public policy, literature and art, mentality and self-awareness, customs and traditions, everyday communication conventions, etc.);
 - 10.2 will be able to distinguish the most prominent features of British and American culture, compare the culture of English-speaking countries with Lithuanian culture, and identify and explain similarities and differences;

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
<p>Course-specific learning outcomes: Students will develop an understanding of US society and culture through studying literature, film, and other media; they will expand their knowledge of American history, its cultural movements, and factors involved in the development of American identity, particularly matters of gender, race, and class.</p> <p>Subject specific learning outcomes: students will become fluent in the use of analytical terms, particularly regarding the study of media and culture; they will learn to recognize the key movements in American culture; they will become familiar with social and political contexts that influenced the development of American identity.</p> <p>Generic learning outcomes: students will develop analytical and critical thinking skills; they will hone their ability to make connections among various texts and their contexts.</p>	<p>Lectures, seminar-style discussion; reading, discussion, analytical thinking.</p>	<p>Cumulative assessment: contribution to class discussion and participation in exercises, average test score (midterm and final examination).</p>

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours				Self-study work: time and assignments
	Lectures	Seminars	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
<p>1. <u>What is America, Anyway?</u></p> <p>J. Hector St. Jean de Crèvecoeur , “What is an American?”</p> <p>Thomas Jefferson, “The Declaration of Independence”</p> <p>Gordon S. Wood, “The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787”</p>		2	2		<p>Reading list: ←</p>

2. <u>Early American Identity</u> Benjamin Franklin, <i>Autobiography</i> (excerpts) Washington Irving, “Artists Account of Himself,” “English Writers on America” Nathaniel Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” (1832)	2	2	Reading list: ←
3. <u>Searching for America (in the Solitudes of Nature)</u> William Cullen Bryant, “The Prairies” (1832) Henry David Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> (excerpts) Walt Whitman, <i>Leaves of Grass</i> (1855)	3	3	Reading list: ←
4. <u>“Land of the Free”</u> Solomon Northup, <i>Twelve Years a Slave</i> (excerpts) Charles Chesnutt, “The Passing of Grandison” Paul Laurence Dunbar, “An Ante-Bellum Sermon” (1895)	3	3	Reading list: ←
5. <u>A Great American Novel</u> Mark Twain, <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	4	4	Reading list: ←
Midterm exam (week 8)	2	2	
6. <u>Another Great American Novel</u> F. Scott Fitzgerald, <i>The Great Gatsby</i>	4	4	Reading list: ←
7. <u>The American South</u> Carson McCullers, <i>The Heart is a Lonely Hunter</i>	4	4	Reading list: ←
8. <u>Post-War America: Hitting the Road</u> Jack Kerouac, <i>On the Road</i> (excerpts) Joan Didion, <i>Slouching Toward Bethlehem</i> (selections)	2	2	Reading list: ←
9. <u>Race in the 20th-Century</u> James Baldwin, “The Fire Next Time” Octavia Butler, <i>Kindred</i>	4	4	Reading list: ←
10. <u>Still Searching, After All These Years</u> David Foster Wallace, “Getting Away from Already Being Pretty Much Away from It All” (1994) Jamie Loftus, <i>Raw Dog</i> (2023) (excerpts)	2	2	Reading list: ←

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Midterm exam	40%	Midterm test is scheduled for week 8	The midterm examination will consist of a series of open- and close-ended questions based on the analysis of the texts discussed during the course. Students are expected to present a coherently-argued case in their responses. The examination is assessed on a 10-point scale.
Final exam	60%	June (the date will be announced in due course)	The final examination will consist of a series of open- and close-ended questions based on the analysis of the texts discussed during the course. Students are expected to present a coherently-argued case in their responses. The examination is assessed on a 10-point scale.
Assessment of examination tasks→			<p>Examinations are graded on a 10-point scale ↓ (see below).</p> <p>Grades in the range of 4.5 to 4.9 are not rounded up to 5 due to the policy that negative grades are not rounded up to a positive grade. However, grades from 5.1 onwards are rounded up to the next whole number.</p> <p>Examination Assessment</p> <p>10 (Excellent) The comprehension of the course material is exceptional; the student exhibits a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, skillfully applying acquired knowledge to address exam questions. Demonstrating a coherent and logical articulation, the student effectively conveys their approach to theme analysis, persuasively developing arguments. Moreover, the student adeptly integrates the social-historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical context of the period. When employing theoretical methods in analysis, the student does so appropriately. Additionally, the student consistently communicates in academic English.</p> <p>9 (Very good) The understanding of the course material is solid, showcasing the student's adept application of knowledge in responding to exam questions. The arguments presented are logical and well-articulated, demonstrating a clear grasp of key concepts. The student effectively incorporates the social-historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical context into their analysis. When employing theoretical methods, the student does so appropriately. Furthermore, the student consistently communicates in academic English.</p> <p>8 (Good) The student demonstrates a good understanding of the course material, providing correct answers to exam questions. While examples are given, they lack sufficient substantiation. The grasp of major concepts is generally sound, although occasional mistakes are noted. In analysis, the student appropriately references the social-historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical context. Additionally, the student incorporates literary criticism into their analysis. Notably, the use of academic English is correct throughout.</p> <p>7 (Highly satisfactory) The student displays a basic familiarity with the course programme and the ability to apply knowledge independently. However, there are unessential shortcomings in their answers to exam questions, characterized by a lack of in-depth knowledge and substantiation, with occasional errors, discrepancies, and illogical reasoning. The student does not consistently refer to the social-historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical context in their responses. Furthermore, there are some flaws in the use of academic English.</p>

			<p>6 (Satisfactory) The student possesses a below-average understanding of the course programme materials. While familiar with most content, discussions lack consistency and a logical structure, with limited examples provided. It appears that the student did not invest a sufficient amount of time and effort into studying the subject, resulting in inconsistent knowledge. Furthermore, the student minimally draws on the social-historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical context in their discussions. Additionally, the academic English used by the student exhibits notable flaws.</p> <p>5 (Sufficient) The student's knowledge of the course programme barely meets the minimum requirements for a passing grade. There is limited proficiency in applying the acquired knowledge, and the overall knowledge base is meager. The student fails to incorporate the social-historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical context of the period into their understanding. Furthermore, their use of academic English is notably poor.</p> <p>4,3, 2,1 (Insufficient) The student falls significantly short of meeting the minimum criteria for mastery of the course programme materials. Their understanding of the subject matter is very poor, bordering on nonexistent, or the knowledge they possess is irrelevant and insufficient. This inadequacy is evident in their inability to answer exam questions appropriately. Notably, the student has neglected to read the required books (poems) on the Required Reading List. Furthermore, their use of language lacks academic precision, as they resort to an informal register and present answers in bullet points, further diminishing the quality of their responses.</p>
<p>Reading Requirement:</p> <p>All books on the Required Reading List must be read in their entirety. Summaries or plot descriptions available online are not an acceptable substitute.</p>		Throughout the term	<p>Attendance requirements.</p> <p>Students are required to attend a minimum of 70 percent of classes. This attendance standard is rooted in the well-established and consistent correlation between learning (or academic performance) and class attendance.</p> <p>Failure to meet the 70 percent seminar attendance requirement will result in the student being ineligible to sit for the June exam.</p>

Author	Year	Title	Issue or volume	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
James Baldwin		"The Fire Next Time"		Available online
William Cullen Bryant		"The Prairies"		Available online
Octavia Butler		<i>Kindred</i>		Available online
Charles Chesnutt		"The Passing of Grandison"		Available online
J. Hector St. Jean de Crèvecoeur		"What is an American?"		Available online
Joan Didion		<i>Slouching Toward Bethlehem</i>		
Paul Laurence Dunbar		"An Ante-Bellum Sermon"		Available online
F. Scott Fitzgerald		<i>The Great Gatsby</i>		Available online
Benjamin Franklin		<i>Autobiography</i>		Available online
Nathaniel Hawthorne		"My Kinsman, Major Molineux"		Available online

Washington Irving		“Artists Account of Himself,” “English Writers on America”		Available online
Thomas Jefferson		“The Declaration of Independence”		Available online
Jack Kerouac		<i>On the Road</i>		
Jamie Loftus		<i>Raw Dog</i>		
Carson McCullers		<i>The Heart is a Lonely Hunter</i>		
Solomon Northup		<i>Twelve Years a Slave</i>		Available online
Henry David Thoreau		<i>Walden</i>		Available online
Mark Twain		<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>		Available online
David Foster Wallace		“Getting Away from Already Being Pretty Much Away from It All”		Available online
Walt Whitman		<i>Leaves of Grass</i>		Available online
Gordon S. Wood		“The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787”		Available online

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