
M.A. in American Studies (MAS)

Course Catalog

Winter Term 2020/21

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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 2020/21.

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 ([LSF](#)) 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.

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

Please be aware that one 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 MAS Coordinator Nikolas Mariani, M.A. (nmariani@hca.uni-heidelberg.de)

Information on Online and In-Person Teaching in the Winter Semester 2020-21

The Heidelberg Center for American Studies (HCA) strives to offer as many classes as possible in person during the winter semester 2020-21. In particular, we intend to teach the introductory courses for first-year students in our BAS, MAS and Ph.D. programs in the classroom. The HCA thus explicitly subscribes to the university's idea that first-year students should be given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the academic learning modes and scholarly methods of the university, and should be able to meet instructors and fellow students face to face.

Information on the respective teaching formats can be found in the course catalogue and on LSF. Should the Baden-Württemberg state government close the university again due to the infection situation, all in-person classes will be continued online.

In-person teaching can take place at Heidelberg University as long as adequate rooms are available that allow adherence to the distance and hygiene rules conforming to the current [Corona Ordinance of the State of Baden-Württemberg](#) and the [university](#). With the Curt und Heidemarie Engelhorn Palais, the HCA has its own premises in Heidelberg's Old Town where introductory events as well as seminars with up to 20 students can take place. Large lectures will be held online.

Please arrive punctually but only shortly before the beginning of each course at the HCA to avoid overcrowding.

Finally, we ask that you absolutely arrive to in-person courses in the first week of class. Should this not be possible for you, please contact the respective lecturer and inform him or her of your absence.

The orientation days for first semester students of the Heidelberg Center for American Studies will take place on October 26-27, 2020. Please visit the website of the respective degree programs for details in early October. The winter semester lecture period at Heidelberg University will begin on November 2, 2020 and end on February 27, 2021.

We look forward to welcoming you to the HCA in the fall!

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 of geography, history, literature and cultural studies, political science, and religious history. 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.

5.2 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 (∑ 8 CP) 2 courses outside of the area of American Studies	Examination Module (∑ 34 CP) Research colloquium (2 CP) M.A. thesis (24 CP) Oral final exam (8 CP)			
3		Mobility Window (∑ 6 CP) Study abroad, internship or teaching assignment			
2		Subject-Specific Classes (∑ 54 CP)			
		<table border="1"> <tr> <td> Research Module (14 CP) Core discipline I or II 1 M.A. seminar 1 Independent Study </td> <td> Flexibility Module (12 CP) 12 CP worth of classes from any discipline in the program </td> </tr> </table>	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	
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Academic Skills

Methodology Module

Academic Writing

Dr. Anja Schüler

WED; 16:15-17:45; **HCA / Atrium**

Registration via [LSF](#).

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.

Theory and Methods

Dr. Wilfried Mausbach, Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss, PD Dr. Martin Thunert

TUE; 11:15-12:45; **HCA / Atrium**

Registration via [LSF](#).

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.

Literature:

A course reader will be made available.

Interdisciplinary Module

MAS Colloquium

Dr. Wilfried Mausbach; Prof. Dr. Welf Werner

THU; 18:15 - 19:45; **Online heiCONF**

Registration via [LSF](#).

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. Due to the continuing COVID-19 situation, this interdisciplinary colloquium will once more have to take place online during the winter term. Scholars sharing their current interests or most recent scholarship will alternate with fellow MAS students presenting the outlines of their final thesis. A detailed program for the Colloquium will be available in October.

Students planning to earn credits for this course will be asked to prepare a short summary of one presentation/discussion.

Interdisciplinary Seminar: Explaining America: Readings in American Culture, Society, and Politics

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss / PD Dr. Martin Thunert

WED; 14:00 – 15:30; **Online**

Registration via [LSF](#)

Course Description:

From the days it was 'discovered' by Europeans to our own time, "America" has provided a continuous challenge to the human intellect and imagination. Countless books have been written to explain the special character of its society and culture. In this seminar we will sample some of these books – many of them very famous – and hopefully gain a sense of the different ways in which America and the United States have been conceptualized in the course of the centuries from the colonial era to the present. While some of the authors to be studied are foreigners who have looked at the country from outside, most of them are 'natives' who give us various insider views. Depending on the time in which they live and the position they occupy, they approach 'America' from different angles and focus on different aspects. The genre in which these views are expressed vary, too – we will read plays, novels, letters, travel reports, sermons, speeches, political treatises, and sociological studies. The readings selected will give students a theoretical foundation for understanding major processes, institutions and shifts in American culture, society and politics.

Co-taught by a political scientist and a literary historian, this interdisciplinary seminar will trace the relationship between the sphere of American politics and the cultural and literary realms from the early republic onwards to the present day. While the course is primarily designed for students of the HCA's Masters in American Studies program and advanced students of the HCA's Bachelor Program in American Studies, we will also admit (advanced) Bachelor and Hauptstudium students from the Anglistisches Seminar as well as advanced international exchange students. Students will be introduced to various controversies, theories, and multidisciplinary perspectives concerning the U.S. political, cultural and literary development.

Literature:

Most of the material to be discussed will be made available on Moodle2.

Flexibility Module

In the flexibility module students can take courses from all disciplines **within** the field of American Studies. Please consult the course catalogue to find courses that fit your interests. Each course is awarded 4 CP.

Cross-Cutting Perspectives

In this module students can choose 2 classes from **outside** the field of American Studies. Please consult the university's course catalogue (LSF) to find courses in other disciplines. Each course is awarded 4 CP.

Courses by Discipline

Geography

Lecture: North American Cities

Eligibility: Main Module Geography

Prof. Dr. Ulrike Gerhard

TUE; 9:00 - 11:00; **Online (Hybrid Format: narrated ppt (asynchronous) & weekly Q & A meetings (60 Min.)**

Tutorial (Martin Holler, HCA/Stucco):

November 13: 14:00 - 17.30

November 27: 14:00 - 17.30

December 18: 9:00 - 12:00

January 22: 9:00 - 12:00

February 12: 9:00 – 12:00

February 19: 9:00 – 12:00

Registration via nmariani@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

This lecture class offers a comprehensive overview of urban developments in North America. While the main perspective is an urban geographic one, it also includes cultural, political, economic and sociological aspects. We will start with a historic overview on urbanization and will then focus on more recent trends in urban development such as suburbanization, deindustrialization, and reurbanization. Here, important issues will be discussed such as urban renewal, public housing, urban inequality, and segregation that can be contextualized into broader themes such as polarization, postmodernization and globalization. Along the way, also aspects of urban theory, urban systems, and the internal structure of cities will be discussed to enable a comprehensive insight into urban geographic themes and debates. This includes the modeling and conceptualization of urban space, urban theory, the discussion of urban policy and planning, as well as the future of the twenty-first-century city.

This class is especially designed for master students in American Studies, but open for everybody interested in North American urban issues.

The lecture class will be accompanied by a mandatory tutorial for American Studies students in order to engage more interactively into the study of urban geography. In this tutorial, the participants will get the opportunity to discuss the contents of the lecture as well as deepen their knowledge. Additionally we are going to read texts, make short excursions, take a look at databases concerned with the US Census and find joy in the subject of geography. If necessary there may be little homework for the students. We are looking forward to high participation.

Advanced Seminar: The Roots of Political Geography

Eligibility: Main Module Geography, Research Module Geography

Dr. Ravi Baghel

Blockseminar: 09.01.2021: 9:00 – 17:00 (Voßstr. 2, CATS / 010.00.01)

10.01.2021: 9:00 – 17:00 (Voßstr. 2, CATS / 010.00.01)

16.01.2021: 9:00 – 17:00 (Voßstr. 2, CATS / 010.00.01)

17.01.2021: 9:00 – 17:00 (Voßstr. 2, CATS / 010.00.01)

Registration via [LSF](#)

If there are no free places, you can register on the waiting list by sending an email to baghel@uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

The sub-discipline of political geography is as old as Human Geography itself. It deals with the relations between space, power and people. The study of the State as a spatial power structure has been at the centre of the subdiscipline. However, many early geographers did not uncritically accept the idea of the state and questioned its very legitimacy. These critical voices have often been overlooked in modern study of political geography. This seminar uses a variety of texts to understand the development of political geography as a subdiscipline; its engagement with and critique of spatial structures of power and also the various emancipatory undercurrents within it.

Literature:

The reading list will be announced in the first session.

History

Lecture: The Age of American Empire: U.S. Foreign Relations in the 20th Century

Eligibility: Main Module History

Prof. Dr. Manfred Berg

MON; 11:15 - 12:45; **Online (asynchronous)**

Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/y3g6x2xd>

Course Description:

On the eve of the 20th century the United States emerged as a major player in world politics. Over the course of the "American Century," the United States triumphed over all rivals for global hegemony. At the turn of the 21st century, Americans marveled at their country being the sole remaining superpower. Curiously, Americans continue to debate whether their country is or should be an empire. And if so, what kind of empire? A traditional empire seeking power and domination? A liberal empire committed to spreading freedom and democracy? An informal empire predicated on economic expansion and cultural attraction? Has America actively sought hegemony or has it taken up the burdens of empire reluctantly? In this lecture course I will provide an overview of America's rise to world power in the 20th century. I will trace major events and developments from the Spanish-American War to 9/11 and I will discuss the traditions, ideologies, and interests that have shaped America's interactions with the world.

I will hold the lecture in English. All written and oral exams may be taken in either English or German. You can enroll for the lecture at the beginning of the course on November 2, 2020. In addition, all students are expected to sign up on Moodle.

Literature:

Suggested Reading: Herring, George C. *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*. New York 2008; Dennis Merrill and Thomas G. Paterson, eds. *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy. Volume II: Since 1914*. 6 ed. Boston and New York 2005; Michael J. Hogan, ed. *Ambiguous Legacy: U.S. Foreign Relations in the "American Century"*, Cambridge 1999; Berg,

Manfred. "America, United States of: 3. 20th Century to the Present." In Encyclopedia of Empire edited by John M. MacKenzie. 88-99. Malden, MA, 2016.

Advanced Seminar: Die Vietnam-Watergate-Ära: Politik und Gesellschaft der USA, 1960-1980

Only available in German

Eligibility: Main Module History, Research Module History

Prof. Dr. Manfred Berg

MON; 16:15 - 17:45; **Ü1 (Historisches Seminar)**

TUE; 10:00 - 11:00; **R 041 (Historisches Seminar)**

Anmeldung: bis 15.10.2020 per E-Mail an michaela.neidig@zegk.uniheidelberg.de

Kommentar:

Zu Beginn der 1960er Jahre erschienen die USA als eine liberale, prosperierende Konsensdemokratie und als Führungsmacht der „Freien Welt“ im Kalten Krieg. In den folgenden Jahren jedoch zerbrach der gesellschaftliche Konsens in den Konflikten über den Vietnamkrieg, die Rassenfrage und die kulturelle Revolution der „Sixties“. Amerika verlor weltpolitisch and Gewicht und Prestige, die US-Wirtschaft stürzte in die Krise, und die politische Elite verlor vor dem Hintergrund der sogenannten Watergate-Affäre dramatisch an Vertrauen. In diesem Seminar wollen wir zentrale innenund außenpolitische, soziale und kulturelle Entwicklungen und Ereigniskomplexe der 1960er und 1970er Jahre in den Blick nehmen.

Die Bedingungen für den Erwerb von Leistungspunkten sind die Übernahme eines Referates, regelmäßige Teilnahme (maximal zweimaliges Fehlen) und Mitarbeit sowie eine schriftliche Hausarbeit, deren Inhalt und Länge von den angestrebten Leistungspunkten abhängen. Das Plenum trifft sich wöchentlich am Montag von 16-18 Uhr. Der Termin am Dienstag von 10-11 Uhr dient der intensiven Vertiefung mit den jeweiligen Referentinnen und Referenten. Die Teilnehmerzahl ist auf maximal 20 Personen beschränkt. Zu diesem Kurs wird es ein semesterbegleitendes Online-Angebot geben.

Literaturhinweise:

Beth. L. Bailey and David Farber, eds. America in the Seventies. Lawrence, Kansas, 2004;
Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, eds. „Takin’ It to the Streets“: A Sixties’ Reader. New York

2003; Michael W. Flamm and David Steigerwald, eds. *Debating the 1960s: Liberal, Conservative, and Radical Perspectives*. Lanham 2008; Van Gosse and Richard Moser, eds. *The World the 60s Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*. Philadelphia 2003; Niall Ferguson, Charles Maier, Erez Manela, and Daniel Sargent, eds. *The Shock of the Global. The 1970s in Perspective*. Cambridge, Mass, 2010.

Übung: American History Online: Exploring Major Problems in U.S. History Through Primary Source Websites and Databases

Eligibility: Main Module History

Dr. Wilfried Mausbach

MON; 14:00 – 15:30; **Online**

Registration via [LSF](#)

Course Description:

Primary sources are the raw materials of history. As American historian Edward Ayers points out, “We all live in a world of primary documents—of daily newspapers and news reports, of e-mails and instant messages,” and—we may add—streaming services. “Every day,” Ayers continues, “every person triangulates among those primary documents, trying to make sense of history as it unfolds all around us, as we participate in it. By building our courses around primary documents [...] we build bridges between the past and the present.” With the advent of a plethora of internet collections, a wide variety of primary source material is now literally at our fingertips.

We will use this material to explore selected problems of American history. We will follow runaway slaves in eighteenth-century Virginia; investigate how the framers of the U.S. Constitution perceived the role of the presidency; examine President Andrew Jackson’s policy of Indian Removal; take a look at two communities during the Civil War; explore the experience of the 1930’s Great Depression; and delve into the Watergate scandal of the 1970s.

You will be asked to introduce a database/website and/or one of the primary sources to be found there to the class in a slide presentation. In addition, you should be prepared to contribute questions or comments about your fellow students’ presentations or the introductory reading

assignments to an online forum on a weekly basis. MAS students will be required to submit a short written primary source analysis (ca. 6 pp.) by March 31, 2021.

After taking this course, you should have been able to develop your skills at research into and analysis of primary sources, as well as gotten acquainted with the tools to evaluate them.

Literature and Culture

Lecture: The Literature of the American Renaissance

Eligibility: Main Module Literature

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss

TUE; 14:15 – 15:45; **English Department / R. 108**

Course takes place only if it can be taught face to face

Registration in person on first day of class

Course Description:

In 1941, Harvard Professor F.O. Matthiessen published a study entitled *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* that is regarded by many critics as the founding book of American literary studies. Matthiessen identified the second third of the nineteenth century as the age in which American literature experienced its first ‘flowering;’ henceforth this period came to be considered American literature’s classical age. Matthiessen also assembled a list of writers—Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, and Whitman—who came to be looked upon as the core authors of the American literary canon. In this lecture course, we will study selected works by the writers included in Matthiessen’s canon and explore their literary, social, and ethical philosophies. In addition, we will consider works by authors of the period excluded from his list, namely those written by women and African Americans. In studying the literature of the American Renaissance, we will try to understand the processes by which a particular brand of individualism, namely non-conformism and anti-establishment thinking, came to be considered to make up the core of American democratic culture and hopefully find an explanation for why this ethos has remained attractive ever since. In looking at the critical debates that have surrounded Matthiessen’s American Renaissance canon, however, we will also learn

how contested this ethos has become in the latter decades of the twentieth century and thus also get a sense of its limitations. The following works will be discussed in detail: "The American Scholar," "Self-Reliance," "Experience," and "The Poet" by Ralph Waldo Emerson; *Walden* (in particular the "Economy" chapter) and "Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau; "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "The Philosophy of Composition" by Edgar Allan Poe; *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne; "Bartleby the Scrivener," "Benito Cereno," by Herman Melville; *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe; *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*, Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; and Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.

Literature:

Texts: Most of the readings can be found in Vol. B. of Robert S. Levine (ed.), *The Norton Anthology of American Literature: American Literature 1820-1865*, ninth ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017). [Older editions of the NA can be used, too.] Additional texts will be made available on Moodle.

Proseminar: Introduction to US American Poetry

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Flexibility Module

Dr. Heiko Jakubzik

THU; 11:15 – 12:45; **English Department / R. 115**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

This course will repeat and develop basic means of poetry analysis (meter, rhyme, sound, diction, imagery, symbolism, theme etc.) and it will introduce some of America's greatest poetry from Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost to T.S. Eliot, W.C. Williams and Sylvia Plath.

Proseminar: Introduction to the Study of Fiction: Contemporary Fiction and the Environment

Eligibility: Main Module Literature

Désirée Link

WED; 9:15 – 10:45; **English Department / R. 113**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

Writing about nature has a long tradition in literary history, but the urgency of the climate crisis has changed the way writers have engaged with nature and the environment in fiction. As the fate of our planet becomes increasingly uncertain, writers have begun to envision different futures for humanity, leveraging the genre tropes of dystopian and post-apocalyptic fiction as well as more hopeful, optimistic narratives. Even contemporary novels that are not explicitly about climate change often incorporate environmental themes, suggesting that the topic is unavoidable no matter what issues one would rather think about. This class will introduce you to contemporary fiction that makes the environment the focal point of the story. We will ask questions about the extent to which literary and cultural forms shape the ways that people see and relate to nature and the environment, as well as how those forms have been treated within the narrative texts themselves. You will also deepen the knowledge acquired in the Introduction to the Study of Literature and apply it to the selected books in close-reading sessions.

Literature:

Please read the following text before the semester starts and bring a copy of it to class (no specific edition required): Richard Powers: *The Overstory* (2018)

A second novel will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

Proseminar: Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) and Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome* (1911)

Eligibility: Main Module Literature

Dr. Eva Hänßgen

FRI; 11:15 – 12:45; **English Department / R. 116**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

The American authors Henry James (1843-1916) and Edith Wharton (1862-1937) were contemporaries and friends. Wharton's novella might have been influenced by James'. Both novellas are framed narratives that generate a lot of suspense for the readers, in James' case by the use of unreliable narration, and both end with a twist. James' novella, which is set in England, can be read as a ghost story with elements of gothic fiction; Wharton's is an example of New England naturalism. We'll be working with the Norton Critical Editions of both texts that provide us with the primary texts, contexts and secondary sources and help us with the critical terminology used above.

Literature:

Please purchase and read the primary texts in these books:

James, Henry. *The Turn of the Screw*. Edited by Deborah Esch and Jonathan Warren. 2nd ed. London:W. W. Norton, 1999.

Wharton, Edith. *Ethan Frome*. Edited by Kristin O. Lauer and Cynthia Griffin Wolff. London: W. W.Norton, 1995.

Proseminar: The Harlem Renaissance in Word and Image

Eligibility: Main Module Literature

PD Dr. Margit Peterfy

WED; 9:15 – 10:45; **English Department / R. 112**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

In the 1920s, Harlem, a former suburb, and now neighborhood, of New York City, became a vibrant center of black cultural activity. Music, theater, painting and above all literature contributed to a rich cultural life, in which African Americans created new forms of expression. In this seminar, we will look at a number of texts dealing with the phenomenon. Requirements: regular attendance, a short presentation and oral participation (30%), and research paper (70%).

Literature:

Please buy the following anthology:

David Levering Lewis, ed. *The Portable Harlem Renaissance Reader*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1995.

Proseminar: American Civil Religion in Text and Image

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Flexibility Module

PD Dr. Margit Peterfy

WED; 11:15 – 12:45; **Neue Uni, tba.**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

Sociologist Robert N. Bellah used the phrase “Civil Religion” to describe a conceptual relationship between structures of religious belief and the national self-definition of US-Americans. According to this theory, American citizens share (or, arguably, used to share) a set of cultural values, which follow the patterns of certain religious feelings and rituals, without being part of an explicit denomination. In this course, we will examine the history of some of the texts, images, and the rituals of this “civil religion,” such as the role of the Declaration of Independence, the development of national holidays and the American flag, etc., in US-American literature and culture. At the same time, we will also discuss reactions against a hegemonic interpretation of “civil religion” in contemporary contexts. Requirements: Regular attendance, preparation of texts, participation in classroom discussions and short presentation (30%), term paper (70%).

Literature:

A Reader with the texts to be discussed will be available at the Copy Corner by the beginning of the semester.

Proseminar: A History of “Otherness”: Disability and Difference in the United States, 1620-Present

Eligibility: Main Module Literature

Dr. Sherry Föhr

TUE; 9:15 – 10:45; **Online**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

In 2003, Catherine Kudlick argued in the *American Historical Review* that “we need another other” to explore disability as a social category and a way of being, rather than as a defect, deficiency or curse that causes suffering and pain. Such a reconceptualization is necessary to counter a long tradition of using the language of disability to justify discriminatory treatment not only of people with supposed mental or physical impairments, but of marginalized groups including women, people of color and immigrants. Woman suffragists had to fight the common belief that women were fragile, mentally weak and susceptible to hysteria just as civil rights advocates had to fight popular assumptions that immigrants and people of color were inherently less intelligent and thus less capable of political participation than Anglo-Saxon males. In order to explore the roots of these and other popular perceptions, this course examines the actual experiences of disabled people in the United States from the colonial era to the present. Using a variety of primary sources, including texts created by people with disabilities themselves, we will trace the political, social and cultural developments that shaped Americans’ understanding of disability and people with disabilities, considering disability as a social category that is crucial for understanding the way American culture defined the “proper” social order and justified the need for social control.

Course requirements: The course is structured as a series of asynchronous online discussions centered on weekly readings (usually @60 pages per week), so it is important that you are prepared to contribute meaningfully to these discussions at least twice a week. You are also responsible for preparing a brief biographical sketch of a person with a disability and answering any questions about your person over the course of a week. You will have the opportunity to sign up for a person to write about during the first week of class. The course concludes with a final take-home exam. No research paper is required.

Course requirements:

The course is structured as a series of asynchronous online discussions centered on weekly readings (usually @60 pages per week), so it is important that you are prepared to contribute meaningfully to these discussions at least twice a week.

Literature:

Our textbook for the class will be Kim Nielsen (2012) *A Disability History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press. ISBN 978-0-8070-2204-7

I recommend that you purchase your own copy. The course reader will be available at Copy Corner and in the Moodle classroom in early September.

Proseminar: A cultural history of disability in the US

Eligibility: Main Module Literature

Dr. Sherry Föhr

TUE; 11:15 – 12:45; **Online**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

Representations of disability abound in literature. From Captain Ahab to Benjy Compson, “Boo” Radley to Beth March, characters with disabilities play key roles in a wide range of American classics. In many works of fiction, disability serves as a device that drives the plot forward, presenting the other characters with a challenge to overcome, a source of inspiration or a confirmation of the threats posed by abnormality, frailty and incompleteness. These representations reflect popular perceptions of disability as a defect, deficiency or curse that causes suffering and pain rather than a way of being. They also reinforce a long tradition of using the language of disability to justify discriminatory treatment not only of people with supposed mental or physical impairments, but of marginalized groups including women, people of color and immigrants. Woman suffragists had to fight the common belief that women were fragile, mentally weak and susceptible to hysteria just as civil rights advocates had to fight popular assumptions that immigrants and people of color were inherently less intelligent and thus less capable of political participation than Anglo-Saxon males. In order to explore the roots of these and other popular perceptions, this course examines the actual experiences of disabled people in the United States from the colonial era to the present. Using a variety of primary sources, including texts created by people with disabilities themselves, we will trace the political, social and cultural developments that shaped Americans’ understanding of disability and people with disabilities, considering disability as a social category that is crucial for understanding the way American culture defined the “proper” social order and justified the need for social control.

Course requirements: The course is structured as a series of asynchronous online discussions centered on weekly readings (usually @60 pages per week), so it is important that you are prepared to contribute meaningfully to these discussions at least twice a week. You are also responsible for preparing a brief biological sketch of a person with a disability and answering any questions about your person over the course of a week. You will have the opportunity to sign up for a person to write about during the first week of class. The course concludes with a final take-home exam. No research paper is required.

Course requirements:

The course is structured as a series of asynchronous online discussions centered on weekly readings (usually @60 pages per week), so it is important that you are prepared to contribute meaningfully to these discussions at least twice a week.

Literature:

Our textbook for the class will be Kim Nielsen (2012) *A Disability History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press. ISBN 978-0-8070-2204-7

I recommend that you purchase your own copy. The class reader will be made available on Moodle (PDF) and at Copy Corner in early September.

Proseminar: Intersectionality: An Introduction to Key Thinkers, Texts, and Theories

Eligibility: Main Module Literature

Corinna Assmann

TUE; 11:15 – 12:45; **English Department, R. 112**

Registration via [SignUp](#)

Course Description:

As the Black Lives Matter movement went global after the murder of George Floyd at hands of police, sparking an overwhelming show of support as well as protests across the world, it revealed not only how deeply racism is entrenched in the structures of our societies and understandings of a world built on systemic inequality and exploitation. It also cast light on the increasing diversity of the movement as well as on the importance to recognise differences between individuals, groups, societies, while acknowledging a shared or at least similar history of

oppression of marginalized people. In order to tease apart the complexities of and to better understand the mechanisms of discrimination, questions of representation and of identity in general, an intersectional perspective can be helpful.

Since its beginnings in the context of second wave feminism, or, more precisely, Black feminism, the concept of intersectionality has moved from the margins to the centre of discussions around identity. As a key concept in cultural studies, it has found its way into the methodology of many disciplines and research fields and has become a leading approach in social and cultural analysis as well as in political activism. In this class, we will read a range of key texts of intersectional theory and discuss how they have informed gender and cultural studies. Furthermore, we will explore how the concept can be made fruitful in conjunction with questions of representation, for which we will draw on a variety of different examples from novels, film, and television from the US and the UK.

As this class is theory- and discussion-based, preparation of the texts and participation are essential. All texts will be made available in digital copies. For presentations, students are invited to come up with topics of their liking that can be analysed in a presentation format.

Advanced Seminar: Aspects of Historical Fiction

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Research Module Literature, Flexibility Module

Prof. Dr. Günter Leypoldt

TUE; 16:00 – 18:00; **English Department, R. 114**

Registration: Please register via email: leypoldt@as.uni-heidelberg.de.

Course Description:

This seminar will explore historical fiction, one of the most popular and varied genres in the novel today. We will start out with Walter Scott's paradigm-defining *Waverley* (1814), which made its author world-famous as the "inventor" of the historical novel. By letting his "middle hero" Edmund Waverley wander through the Scottish highlands during the Jacobite uprising of 1745, Scott established a new way to make the historical past resonate with the present that influenced several generations of writers. After exploring Scott's novel in the context of the nineteenth-

century rise of a historical sense, we will look at the more extensive thematic and stylistic range of historical fiction in the twentieth century. Scott's mixing of historical events with passionate romance plots reappears in Diana Gabaldon's *Outlander* (1991), about a British Army nurse in WWII who during a holiday at Inverness is suddenly transported into a camp of highland rebels in the year 1743. For another time travel novel with a markedly different setting and sensibility we will read Octavia Butler's *Kindred* (1979), a story told through the perspective of a young African-American woman writer who lives in 1970s Los Angeles, until she winds up on a pre-Civil War plantation in Maryland. The question of race relation also shapes Lin-Manuel Miranda's award-winning Broadway production *Hamilton* (2016), which revolves around the life of the US "Founding Father" Alexander Hamilton. Miranda's production is a progressive retelling of official US history that blends the idioms of the traditional musical with rap, hip hop and R&B influences. For a classic take on the history of empire, we will read John Williams' National-Book-Award winning epistolary historical novel *Augustus* (1972). Our course will conclude with a brief look at the more popular Iron-Throne variety of medievalist history: we will read Maurice Druon's *The Iron King* (1956), a story revolving on the French King of Philip IV "The Fair" in the fourteenth-century (Druon is a French novelist, to be sure, but one that George Martin said inspired his *Game of Thrones*).

Literature:

Please buy the following texts:

Walter Scott, *Waverley* (Oxford UP, Revised, 2015: ISBN: 978-0198716594

Diana Gabaldon, *Outlander: A Novel* (any edition, a good one is: Dell: ISBN: 978-0440212560)

Octavia Butler, *Kindred* (any edition).

John Williams, *Augustus* (New York Book Review Classics: ISBN: 978-1590178218)

Maurice Druon, *The Iron King* (any edition, a good one is: HarperCollins: ISBN: 978-0007491261).

The libretto of Miranda's *Hamilton* will be made available on moodle.

Advanced Seminar: The Modernist Poetry and Prose of William Carlos Williams

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Research Module Literature

PD Dr. Margit Peterfy

THU; 9:15 – 10:45; **English Department, R. 112**

Registration: Please register via email: margit.peterfy@as.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

In this seminar we will read and discuss the poems and prose works of the great American modernist poet, William Carlos Williams. Besides being a prolific writer, and member of the modernist avant-garde in New York and Europe, Williams was a physician with his own practice. Here, he encountered people from all walks of life and sought out the “American idiom” that became central for his compositions and for this dedication to “the word”. Williams was also interested in new artistic developments, whether in the medium of image, music, or dance. His position in the field of 20th-century American literature is unique inasmuch as his wide-ranging influence is traceable in several directions of American poetry, from the Beat Generation to the poets of the Language school.

Requirements:

HS: Regular attendance, preparation of texts, participation in classroom discussions oral presentation (30 %), final paper (70%).

Literature:

Please buy the book *Imaginations* (New York: New Directions Publishing House). Additional texts will be made available in the Copy Corner

Advanced Seminar: “Rising Glory of America”: The Literature and Culture of the Early American Republic

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Research Module Literature

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss

WED; 11:15 – 12:45; **English Department, R. 122**

Registration: Please register via email: dietmar.schloss@urz.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

After having engaged in a successful struggle for independence, many Americans hoped that the nation would experience a flowering of the arts and sciences. In the understanding of the time, the newly established republican government would profit from such a renaissance of learning because it required a well-informed and enlightened citizenry for its proper functioning. For a short period of time, American intellectuals and writers saw themselves courted by the politicians; their contributions were thought to give legitimacy and permanence to the American republic. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, this intellectual idealism was waning. No American Homer had showed up on the horizon; and the American government as well as the public was losing interest in cultural, scientific, and educational matters. The United States no longer seemed to need a virtuous and enlightened citizenry to give it stability: the constitution apparently took care of this. In addition, the agriculture-based patriarchal society of old was rapidly giving way to a modern, urban, middle-class market society: to succeed in the latter, one needed a quick and practical intelligence rather than classical learning or an artistic sensibility. With the exception of a group of women novelists who knew how to read the signs of the times, most artists and men of letters found themselves marginalized by the new social and political developments.

In this class, we will sample the literature of the founding period of the United States, an age – to use R. W. Emerson’s words – “where the old and new stand side by side, and admit of being compared”. Many of the ingredients of the American cultural “imaginary” were formed in this period although we may have difficulties in recognizing them at this early stage. In the early republic, “literature” was not only comprised of belles lettres, but also of works of history, politics, philosophy, and even science. In this course, we will follow this understanding of literature and read works from different fields to see how they illuminate each other. Among the works to be read are Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence; Madison’s Federalist No. 10; letters by John and Abigail Adams; autobiographical writings by Benjamin Franklin and Olaudah Equiano; essays by Judith Sargent Murray and J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur; poems by Joel Barlow, Philip Freneau, and Phillis Wheatley; novels by Hannah Webster Foster and Charles Brockden Brown; and a play by Royall Tyler.

Literature:

Norbert S. Levine et al. (eds.). Volume A (Beginnings to 1820) of *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Ninth Ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2017.

Charles Brockden Brown, Arthur Mervyn Or, *Memoirs of the Year 1793: With Related Texts*. Ed. by Philip Barnard et al. Hacket Publishing, 2008. (Paperback or Kindle Edition available.)

Advanced Seminar: The Literature of the American Renaissance

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Research Module Literature

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss

THU; 14:15 – 15:45; **English Department, R. 108**

Course takes place only if face to face teaching is not possible

Registration: Please register via email: dietmar.schloss@urz.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

In 1941, Harvard Professor F.O. Matthiessen published a study entitled *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* that is regarded by many critics as the founding book of American literary studies. Matthiessen identified the second third of the nineteenth century as the age in which American literature experienced its first 'flowering'; henceforth this period came to be considered American literature's classical age. Matthiessen also assembled a list of writers - Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, and Whitman - who came to be looked upon as the core authors of the American literary canon.

In this course, we will study selected works by the writers included in Matthiessen's canon and explore their literary, social, and ethical philosophies. In addition, we will consider works by authors of the period excluded from his list, namely those written by women and African Americans. In studying the literature of the American Renaissance, we will try to understand the processes by which a particular brand of individualism, namely non-conformism and anti-establishment thinking, came to be considered to make up the core of American democratic culture and hopefully find an explanation for why this ethos has remained attractive ever since. In looking at the critical debates that have surrounded the Matthiessen's American Renaissance canon, however, we will also learn how contested this ethos has become in the latter decades of the twentieth century and thus also get a sense of its limitations.

The following works will be discussed in detail: "The American Scholar", "Self-Reliance", "Experience", and "The Poet" by Ralph Waldo Emerson; Walden (in particular the "Economy" chapter) and "Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau; "The House of Usher" and "The Philosophy of Composition" by Edgar Allan Poe; The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne; "Bartleby the Scrivener", "Benito Cereno" by Herman Melville; Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe; Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself; Harriet Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl; and Alexis de Tocqueville's Democracy in America.

Literature:

Most of the readings can be found in Vol. B. of Robert S. Levine (ed.), The Norton Anthology of American Literature: American Literature 1820-1865, ninth ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2017). [Older editions of the NA can be used, too.] Additional texts will be made available on Moodle2.

Advanced Seminar: Documentary Literature During the Great Depression

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Research Module Literature

PD Dr. Margit Peterfy

THU; 14:15 – 15:45; **English Department, R. 113**

Registration: Please register via email: margit.peterfy@as.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

The years between 1920 and 1940 represented an economic, cultural, and political roller-coaster ride for Americans. The hedonistic extremes of the "Roaring Twenties" were followed by the devastating economic depression of the 1930s, with wide ranging repercussions in the field of the literature and the arts. Thousands of journalists, playwrights, musicians, artists had lost their livelihoods given that their impoverished audiences had no money for the necessities of life, let alone for the so-called "luxuries," such as art and literature. In this situation, several US-government projects were founded in support of intellectuals and artists: the Federal Theatre Project, Federal Writers' Project, etc. Authors and artists were able to continue to work and to produce remarkable works of art. Literature was influenced by modernist styles, but also by new approaches to literature. One of the most important new directions were documentary styles, relying on modernist techniques, including the development of new traditions of literary

expression, for example the so-called “Living Newspaper”, or the interest in the rich historical tradition of slave-narratives. Photographers and writers traveled across the land and took famous pictures, such as the “Migrant Mother” (Dorothea Lange), or wrote extraordinary books, such as “Let Us Now Praise Famous Men” (James Agee/Walker Evans). We will look at the documentary style of these works both from a formal-aesthetic perspective, as well as considering the moral problems that they manifested.

Requirements:

HS: Regular attendance, oral participation and short presentation (30%), research paper (70%)

Literature:

Please buy and read *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* by James Agee and Walker Evans. (Mariner Books, 978-0618127498). Additional texts and materials will be made available on moodle.

Advanced Seminar: Explaining America: Readings in American Culture, Society, and Politics

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Research Module Literature, Main Module Politics, Research Module Politics

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss / PD Dr. Martin Thunert

WED; 14:00 – 15:30; **Online**

Registration via [LSF](#)

Course Description:

From the days it was ‘discovered’ by Europeans to our own time, “America” has provided a continuous challenge to the human intellect and imagination. Countless books have been written to explain the special character of its society and culture. In this seminar we will sample some of these books – many of them very famous – and hopefully gain a sense of the different ways in which America and the United States have been conceptualized in the course of the centuries from the colonial era to the present. While some of the authors to be studied are foreigners who have looked at the country from outside, most of them are ‘natives’ who give us various insider views. Depending on the time in which they live and the position they occupy, they approach ‘America’ from different angles and focus on different aspects. The genre in which these views are expressed vary, too – we will read plays, novels, letters, travel

reports, sermons, speeches, political treatises, and sociological studies. The readings selected will give students a theoretical foundation for understanding major processes, institutions and shifts in American culture, society and politics.

Co-taught by a political scientist and a literary historian, this interdisciplinary seminar will trace the relationship between the sphere of American politics and the cultural and literary realms from the early republic onwards to the present day. While the course is primarily designed for students of the HCA's Masters in American Studies program and advanced students of the HCA's Bachelor Program in American Studies, we will also admit (advanced) Bachelor and Hauptstudium students from the Anglistisches Seminar as well as advanced international exchange students. Students will be introduced to various controversies, theories, and multidisciplinary perspectives concerning the U.S. political, cultural and literary development.

Literature:

Most of the material to be discussed will be made available on Moodle2.

Political Science

Lecture: U.S. Economic Policy

Eligibility: Main Module Politics

Prof. Dr. Welf Werner

THU; 9:00 – 11:00; **online**

Registration via [LSF](#)

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 marginalization. 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 Trump 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 ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the response by the US government will also be discussed in this lecture. The course draws on economics, political economy and economic history. It puts current developments into international comparative and historical perspective.

Registration: LSF registration.

In the winter semester of 2020/21 this lecture is an online lecture: Each week a PowerPoint presentation with audio commentary will be provided on Moodle. On the last day of the class at the end of the semester, students will be asked to be available for the final exam.

Even though we expect that the online format of this lecture will not change during the semester, the instructor reserves the right to changes of the format during the semester depending on the dynamic developments around us.

Credit Points/ECTS:

A. Graded Schein

B.A. students of this lecture may receive a total of up to 3 ECTS and a grade by taking the written exam at the end of the semester. MA students may earn up to 4 ECTS. 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 (3 ECTS for Bachelor, 4 ECTS for Master students). The exam will be an **open-book exam** 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 all the literature items 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.

B. Ungraded "Sitzschein": An ungraded 'Sitzschein' and 2 ECTS can be earned by fulfilling only assignment B (see above)

Mandatory Reading: A reader with all texts will be made available on Moodle. You can find the course under WS 2020/21, Philosophische Fakultät, American Studies, *US Economic Policy*. Additional sources may be uploaded throughout the semester.

After the registration period on LSF is complete, you will receive an e-mail through your student e-mail account with further information on the Moodle registration.

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

Eligibility: Main Module Politics, Research Module Politics

Prof. Dr. Welf Werner / Natalie Rauscher, M.A.

THU; 11:00 – 13:00; **online**

Registration via [LSF](#)

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. In the winter semester 20/21 this seminar will focus on challenges within the US under the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic including the presidential elections and their outcome, ongoing economic challenges, the American welfare state, policy reactions by the federal and local governments to the health crisis, and social activism.

The Wednesday hour (13:00-14:00) is set aside for individual tutoring. The classroom language is English, including student presentations and papers.

Prerequisite: Attending the lecture *U.S. Economic Policy* is a prerequisite for this seminar.

Credit Points/ECTS: Students of this seminar can earn up to 12 ECTS by (a) attending the lecture *U.S. Economic Policy* and taking the exam of this lecture (3 ECTS) and (b) attending the seminar and completing its examinations (9 ECTS).

Registration: Please register for this seminar over LSF. Due to space and size limitations, only a limited number of participants will be able to attend this seminar. HCA students have priority.

Advanced Seminar: U.S. Foreign Policy Analysis in a Polarized Age

Eligibility: Main Module Politics, Research Module Politics, Flexibility Module

Dr. Gordon Friedrichs

Blockseminar: 27.11.2020: 16:00 – 18:00 (**online**)

18.12.2020: 9:00 – 17:00 (**online**)

19.12.2020: 9:00 – 17:00 (**online**)

Registration via [LSF](#)

Course Description:

Polarization has become a prevalent phenomenon in contemporary American politics. Partisan division, both among the public and political elites, has consumed American democracy, transforming a political system dependent on compromise into one suffused by political hostility, gridlock, and dysfunctional democratic governance. These trends have only become more pronounced with the rise of populism and personal attacks on opposition party members under the Trump presidency.

This course examines the trend lines and consequences of domestic polarization for U.S. foreign policy and global power. Students will explore institutions and individuals responsible for foreign policy decision making while considering factors such as the decline of the ideological center and the distribution of foreign policy preferences; the role of affective polarization and the transformation of the political parties as carriers of foreign policy ideas; as well as changes to the institutions involved in U.S. foreign policymaking, namely Congress and the president. The goal is to obtain a fundamental understanding about the more general forces shaping U.S. foreign policy and apply this knowledge to the contemporary era of polarization.

The course will use readings from both the foreign policy analysis and polarization literatures in order to acquire theoretical and analytical knowledge about how to define, assess, measure, and observe the forces of polarization in U.S. foreign policy execution. Students will engage with a broad variety of polarization data, methods of Foreign Policy Analysis, and empirical cases to identify how U.S. foreign policy has been shaped by polarization.

The course is designed as an intensive workshop that will take place over the course of two full days (December 18 & 19, 2020). There will be one introductory session taking place prior on November 27, 2020. All meetings will take place virtually via HeiConf. During the workshop, students will give presentations and engage with each other through different discussion forms to illuminate general patterns and processes, but also specific choices and trade-offs of U.S. foreign policy in a polarized age. The introductory session serves the purpose to provide an intellectual foundation for the subject as well as assign students (groups) to topics that they will then research independently with the supervision of the teacher. Students also have the opportunity to write a term paper (Hausarbeit).

The course is designed for MA students with prior knowledge of U.S. foreign policy and Foreign Policy Analysis.

Literature:

Abramowitz, Alan I. 2018. *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump*. London: Yale University Press.

Alden, Chris, and Amnon Aran. 2017. *Foreign Policy Analysis: New Approaches*. 2 ed. London: Routledge.

Brands, Hal. 2016. *Making the Unipolar Moment U.S. Foreign Policy and the Rise of the Post-Cold War Order*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Campbell, James E. 2016. *Polarized: Making Sense of a Divided America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Carter, Ralph G. 2014. *Essentials of U.S. Foreign Policy Making*. Boston: Person.

Daalder, Ivo H., and James M. Lindsay. 2018. *The Empty Throne: America's Abdication of Global Leadership*. New York: PublicAffairs.

- Day, Benjamin S., and Valerie M. Hudson. 2020. *Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic And Contemporary Theory*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Hook, Steven W. 2017. *U.S. Foreign Policy: The Paradox of World Power*. 4. ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Hudson, Valerie M. 2014. *Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic and Contemporary Theory*. 2 ed. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kaufman, Joyce P. 2017. *A Concise History of U.S. Foreign Policy*. 4 ed. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield
- McCarty. *Polarization: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Morin, Jean-Frédéric, and Jonathan Paquin. 2018. *Foreign Policy Analysis: A Toolbox*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Neack, Laura. 2019. *Studying foreign policy comparatively: cases and analysis*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pauly Jr., Robert J. 2010. *The Ashgate Research Companion to US Foreign Policy*. Farnham, England: Burlington.
- Powaski, Ronald E. 2019. *Ideals, Interests, and U.S. Foreign Policy from George H. W. Bush to Donald Trump*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Snow, Donald M. Snow. 2017. *Regional Cases in U.S. Foreign Policy*. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Thurber, James A., and Antoine Yoshinaka. 2015. *American Gridlock: The Sources, Character, and Impact of Political Polarization*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Walt, Stephen M. 2018. *The Hell of Good Intentions: America's Foreign Policy Elite and the Decline of U.S. Primacy*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Advanced Seminar: Explaining America: Readings in American Culture, Society, and Politics

Eligibility: Main Module Literature, Research Module Literature, Main Module Politics, Research Module Politics

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Schloss / PD Dr. Martin Thunert

WED; 14:00 – 15:30; **Online**

Registration via [LSF](#)

Course Description:

From the days it was 'discovered' by Europeans to our own time, "America" has provided a continuous challenge to the human intellect and imagination. Countless books have been written to explain the special character of its society and culture. In this seminar we will sample some of these books – many of them very famous – and hopefully gain a sense of the different ways in which America and the United States have been conceptualized in the course of the centuries from the colonial era to the present. While some of the authors to be studied are foreigners who have looked at the country from outside, most of them are 'natives' who give us various insider views. Depending on the time in which they live and the position they occupy, they approach 'America' from different angles and focus on different aspects. The genre in which these views are expressed vary, too – we will read plays, novels, letters, travel reports, sermons, speeches, political treatises, and sociological studies. The readings selected will give students a theoretical foundation for understanding major processes, institutions and shifts in American culture, society and politics.

Co-taught by a political scientist and a literary historian, this interdisciplinary seminar will trace the relationship between the sphere of American politics and the cultural and literary realms from the early republic onwards to the present day. While the course is primarily designed for students of the HCA's Masters in American Studies program and advanced students of the HCA's Bachelor Program in American Studies, we will also admit (advanced) Bachelor and Hauptstudium students from the Anglistisches Seminar as well as advanced international exchange students. Students will be introduced to various controversies, theories, and multidisciplinary perspectives concerning the U.S. political, cultural and literary development.

Literature:

Most of the material to be discussed will be made available on Moodle2.

Religion and Culture

Lecture: History of Christianity in North America, 1900 - Present

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture

Prof. Dr. Jan Stievermann

TUE: 11:00 – 13:00; **Online**

WED: 11:00 – 13:00; **Online**

Registration via [Moodle](#)

Course Description:

This lecture course offers a survey of the history of Christianity in North America from the beginning of the 20th century to the present. Always with an eye on the wider cultural context, the course will trace the dramatic changes in America's religious landscape during this period, and examine central events, issues, and conflicts such as the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, religious responses to two world wars, the rise of neo-evangelicalism, or the role of religion in the civil right struggles and the so-called culture wars. While special attention will be given to the transformations of America's Christian churches, we will also discuss the increasing religious pluralization of the US and look at the development of non-Christian immigrant faiths and the emergence of new religious movements and individualistic spiritualities. As we trace the evolution of churches, traditions, beliefs, practices and communities during the "American century," students will be familiarized with important primary sources and key-concepts for this period of American religious history.

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.

Literature:

Recommended Reading:

Edwin Gaustad and Leigh Schmidt. *The Religious History of America* (Harper, 2002) Sidney E. Ahlstrom. *A Religious History of the American People* (Yale UP, 1972)

Proseminar: History of American Christian Missions

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture

Ryan Hoselton

Blockseminar:

13.11.2020: 10:00 – 17:00; HCA / Atrium

14.11.2020: 10:00 – 17:00; HCA / Atrium

20.11.2020: 10:00 – 17:00; HCA / Atrium

21.11.2020: 10:00 – 17:00; **HCA / Atrium**

Registration via email: ryan.hoselton@ts.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

Ever since the arrival of European colonists, the missionary enterprise has deeply shaped America's domestic and international affairs. When the Puritans embarked on an "Errand into the Wilderness" to settle New England, they had a mission to establish a "City Upon a Hill" for the world to watch and emulate. By the nineteenth century, however, Americans increasingly sought to spread their errand to the world, many wishing to advance the gospel of salvation hand in hand with American civilization. Still today, America's churches send and support thousands of missionaries to further the kingdom of God around the globe through preaching the gospel, translating the Bible, and charitable action. This course will introduce students to the complex history of American missionary thought and activity from the colonial period to today. Among other things, the course will examine how missions shaped European encounters with Native Americans and blacks, galvanized evangelical awakenings, incited indigenous movements, advanced women's causes, attended the expansion of the Western frontier, inspired global humanitarianism, intersected with foreign affairs and cultural imperialism, fueled theological debates, reinforced and challenged American cultural norms, globalized American Christianity, and more.

Literature:

The students will receive access to the assigned readings before the semester, and they are expected to have read them before the respective class sessions. Texts will be provided on Moodle.

Proseminar: Introduction to American Religious History

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture

Dr. Benjamin Pietrenka

TUE: 16:15 – 17:45; **HCA / Atrium**

Registration via email: pietrenka@ts.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

This proseminar will provide a general introduction to the history of religion in America from the earliest beginnings to the 21st century. A unit on methodologies used by scholars who study the history of religion in America will be followed by a roughly chronological overview of major issues, events, and figures that governed the development of a wide variety of religious traditions. Given its sustained prominence in American culture, this course will necessarily track the transfer, foundations, and transformations of Protestant Christian groups. These narratives, however, will be set alongside other hugely influential religious traditions, such as Catholicism, Indigenous American and African animism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism, as well as the emergence of new religious movements, such as Mormonism, New Thought, Christian Science, Spiritualism, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Pentacostalism. Along the way, the course will address how American religion mediated issues of liberty, freedom, empire, diversity, pluralism, Enlightenment, immigration, reform, politics, economics, cultural wars, social justice, gender, ethnicity, and race. Students will gain an understanding of how religion shaped American society over the course of four centuries.

Literature:

All students enrolled in this course are responsible for obtaining a copy of the following text:

Edwin Gaustad & Leigh Schmidt, *The Religious History of America: The Heart of the American Story from Colonial Times to Today* (New York: HarperOne, 2004).

Advanced Seminar: African American Religious History

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

Prof. Dr. Jan Stievermann

TUE: 14:00 – 16:00; **Online**

Registration via email: jstievermann@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

This class offers a survey of the religious history of African Americans from the emergence of black Christianity amidst the transatlantic slave trade, through the dramatic Civil Rights-era to the present period and the role of religion in the Black Lives Matter-movement. We will examine how black Christianity provided theological, institutional, and personal strategies for survival, empowerment and resistance during bondage and into an era of partial freedom, even as the Bible and theological arguments were wielded in defense of slavery and oppression. We will also look at how black communities have negotiated the tensions between European traditions and African-derived practices, and how some came to reject the “white man’s religion” in favor of alternatives such as the Nation of Islam. The course will discuss the writings of black leaders and “highbrow” theologians such as James W.C. Pennington, Martin Luther King and William Barber but also pay attention to the religious experience of ordinary African Americans.

Literature:

Please buy and read:

Albert J. Raboteau, *Canaan Land: A Religious History of African Americans* (New York, Oxford UP, 2001)

A course reader will be available at the beginning of the semester.

Advanced Seminar: Issues and Theories in American Religious History

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

Prof. Dr. Jan Stievermann

TUE: 14:00 – 15:30; **HCA / Stucco**

Registration via email: 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 specifically American forms of engagement with the Bible and

negotiations of scriptural authority from the colonial period to the present. But our course reading list will accommodate student interests and projects.

Literature:

A course reader will be available at the beginning of the semester

Advanced Seminar: The American Jeremiad Tradition and Social Criticism in the U.S.

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

Prof. Dr. Jan Stievermann

TUE: 11:15 – 12:45; **HCA / Atrium**

Registration via email: jstievermann@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

This course examines how prophetic discourse has functioned as a form of social criticism in American history. Particular attention is given to the tradition of the American Jeremiad, a mode of public exhortation going back to the New England Puritans that joins lament over moral decline to a call for spiritual and social renewal. This rhetorical mode has been used by minority rights advocates as much as conservative critics. We will discuss a wide variety of jeremiads and the diverse cultural and reformist work they did from the colonial period into the present era of social protest. Examples include black prophetic critics such as Frederick Douglass or Martin Luther King but also representatives of the Christian Right.

Literature:

Please buy and read:

Andrew R. Murphy. *Prodigal Nation: Moral Decline and Divine Punishment from New England to 9/11*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

A course reader will be available at the beginning of the semester

Übung: Gender, Female Agency, und Charismatic Authority in American Religious History

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture

Dr. Benjamin Pietrenka; Claudia Jetter

TUE: 9:00 – 10:30; **HCA/Atrium**

Registration via email: pietrenka@ts.uni-heidelberg.de, cjetter@hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

This course addresses the history of American religious culture through the lens of gender as an analytical category and highlights the influence and contributions of women from the colonial period to the present. Exploring a variety of interwoven topics, including female exhorters and charismatic prophets, religiously constructed gender roles, conflicted relationships between religion and sexuality, as well as gendered religious experiences, identities, and bodies, students will study the ways in which women and notions of gender have played crucial roles in the development and maintenance of religious traditions in America. Drawing upon theoretical concepts of charismatic authority and spiritual equality, this course will highlight the role of exceptional religious women who transcended patriarchal boundaries and established authoritative positions that enabled them to express dissent and emphasize reform, including the Puritan Anne Hutchinson in colonial New England, the 19th century African abolitionist preacher Sojourner Truth, the temperance reformer and suffragist Frances Willard, and the anti-feminist conservative Phyllis Schlafly in the 20th century. As such, this course will utilize historical documents and secondary source scholarship to explore the religious lives of women and religious constructions of femininities and masculinities over the long arc of American history, eventually reaching contemporary religious debates about gender performativity and LGBTQIAPK+ concerns.

Übung: Readings in American Christian Thought

Eligibility: Main Module Religion and Culture

Ryan Hoselton

MON: 11:15 – 12:45; **HCA / Atrium**

Registration via email: ryan.hoselton@ts.uni-heidelberg.de

Course Description:

This Übung will introduce students to important writings in American Christian thought. The texts will span the colonial period to today, cover a range of issues concerning theology, practice, and culture, and incorporate a range of voices—including women and racial minorities as well as various denominational traditions. We will highlight topics like Puritan practical divinity, evangelical revivalism, liberal theologies, abolitionism, social gospel, fundamentalism and modernism, liberation theologies, and more. Students will learn to understand these texts in light of their historical context and the wider history of world Christianity.

Literature:

Texts will be provided on Moodle.