

## Courses Catalog Winter Semester 2018/2019

### American Studies Leipzig

Below please find our course catalog. We will update these pages throughout the break and the semester. Unless stated otherwise, **classes start in the week of October 15, 2018.**

Students are responsible for keeping track of updates on actual course dates (some are alternating).

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## 1 Information

### Contact Information

The Institute for American Studies is located at the University's Humanities Building (Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum, GWZ), Beethovenstraße 15, on the 5th floor, in house 3, which is opposite the elevators/stairs.

Contact information on individual faculty members can be found on the faculty page.

### Registration for Classes

Most classes require prior registration. To learn more about registration procedures for students in different ASL programs (Magister, BA, MA; service for Lehramt), please have a look at the **Registration Information Sheet** available in the respective news item. As access to some classes is quite competitive, please take the procedures and deadlines for registration seriously.

### American Studies Modules

Modules in the BA and MA programs are designed to achieve specific learning goals, they entail a specific amount and specific types of coursework and examinations, and they may have prerequisites. To learn more about these, we strongly encourage you to have a look at our program's Module Catalog (BA; MA) and at the appendix to our Conditions of Study (BA; MA).

### International Students

International Students are very welcome in the courses offered by the Institute for American Studies. To learn more about places available in individual courses, please contact the instructor, and describe your situation briefly (i.e., exchange student, international guest student, participating in an international degree program). We will do our very best to include you in our courses.

### Courses

Course catalogs of past semesters can be found in the Downloads and Resources Area.

For course offerings in Linguistics, please consult the British Studies course catalog, available at the website of the Institute for British Studies ([anglistik.philol.uni-leipzig.de](http://anglistik.philol.uni-leipzig.de)).

Unless stated otherwise, **classes start in the week of October 15, 2018.**

Students are responsible for keeping track of updates on actual course dates (some are alternating).

#### Addresses:

GWZ (Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum), Beethovenstr. 15

NSG (Neues Seminargebäude), Universitätsstr. 5

HSG (Hörsaalgebäude), Universitätsstr. 7

## 2 BA Courses

### 2.1 Literature and Culture I (04-001-1001)

This module acquaints students with the basic issues and techniques of American literary studies. It provides a survey of United States literary history as well as an introduction to the methods and theories employed in literary and cultural analysis.

**The module consists of one lecture, one seminar, and one tutorial**

**Lecture: American Literature: Beginnings to Present**

Monday, 11 am - 1 pm, HSG HS 2  
Prof. Katja Kanzler

This lecture will provide a survey of American literary history from its colonial beginnings to the present. It will discuss important themes, modes, and genres that characterize American literature throughout its history, its cultural contexts, and the literary periods into which these developments have been organized. In the course of this survey, we will explore the—partly very different, partly continuous—ways in which texts across these periods define ‘Americanness,’ in which they approach human nature and social differences, and the ideas about the role and operations of literature that they reflect.

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**Seminar:**

**either a)** Wednesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG 224  
Sophie Spieler

**or b)** Wednesday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG 224  
Dr. Sebastian Herrmann

**or c)** Thursday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG 324  
Carlo Becker

Based on American Studies’ comprehensive notion of ‘text’ as referring to any complex cultural artifact and on an understanding of ‘narrative’ as a fundamental category of human existence, the seminar’s underlying assumption is that the ability to ‘read’ texts is central to the ability to understand, analyze, and discuss culture more generally. To thus facilitate your ability to read complex texts, the seminar focuses on two main perspectives. It aims to help you develop an analytic vocabulary to talk about the specifics of narratives and their implementation into texts, and it aims to help you understand basic theoretical frameworks that discuss the connection between texts and culture in analytic terms. The seminar will moreover help you to develop a feeling for the questions and approaches typical of American Studies. Coursework will cover basic techniques of critically engaging texts, exemplary analyses and interpretations, as well as an overview over contemporary approaches in literary and cultural theory.

**Tutorial (Übung):**

**either a)** Monday, 1 - 3 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Heather Pruessing

**or b)** Tuesday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Heather Pruessing

**or c)** Wednesday, 9 - 11 am, NSG 213  
Heather Pruessing

This course focuses on the language skills necessary for successful literary analysis. The tutorial will focus particularly on the form, function, and structure of the traditional English essay. Through various writing activities, which will progress in difficulty and length, students will gain the writing skills required to complete the module seminar's final assignment.

## **2.2 iTASK (international, interdisciplinary, integrated: Technical, Academic, Soft, and Career Skills) (04-001-1004)**

The goal of the module is to help students develop key skills to thrive in their studies and in their subsequent career choices. Reports from Germany and the United States show that a leading reason why students experience frustration and set-backs in their studies and career pursuits is because of a relative lack of preparation in how to integrate personal and professional goals into a comprehensive plan for continuous individual development. For the generation of students beginning university, your learning and working life is expected to last at least a half-century. This module is meant to help you prepare for that voyage. This module is thus meant to prepare you for the TASK ahead.

**The module consists of one professional seminar and one praxis seminar**

### **Professional Seminar**

Wednesday, 3 - 5 pm, NSG 224  
Prof. Crister S. Garrett

This class takes place every two weeks.

Due to the University's Immatrikulationsfeier on Weds, October 17th starting at 3 PM, Professor Garrett's iTASK Professional Seminar begins on **October 24th**.

There are four types of skills that determine to a large degree a student's success at university, and in different careers after receiving an undergraduate diploma. These are technical, academic, soft, and career skills. Moreover, the type of knowledge that one acquires at university plays a key role in how one thrives after leaving campus life. Especially important is knowledge that is international, interdisciplinary, and integrated into larger issues engaging societies worldwide. We will explore each set of skills, what they mean, and how to develop these further. We will do so by simultaneously exploring how they relate to the sort of knowledge and expertise expected across all sectors of the work world.

Lastly, we will integrate your learning experience together by developing your own studies-and-career-portfolio where you lay out goals, objectives, and plans for the next three years. This is the last but perhaps primary importance of the "i" before the TASK ahead, namely, it should be your individual experience that prepares you to thrive during your studies and career development.

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### **Praxis Seminar**

Tuesday, 9 - 11 am, GWZ 2.516  
Heather Pruessing

Using the broad themes discussed in the professional seminar, the module tutorial will delve into more practical detail. Through various written and oral assignments, students will deepen their professional skill set. Course goals include: cultivating skills for creating a persuasive CV and cover letter, optimizing an internship or job search, and acing an interview.

## **2.3 Language and Society – Applied Linguistics (04-001-1005)**

The objective of this module is to gain basic, but compared to module 04-001-1003 more extended, knowledge about the varieties as well as textlinguistics of US English.

**The module consists of one lecture and two seminars**

### **Vorlesung Varietäten: Varieties of English**

Monday, 9 am - 11 am, Cinestar im Petersbogen, Kino 8  
Dr. Sandra Jansen  
(Institut für Anglistik)

This lecture provides an overview of the syntactic, lexical and phonological variation across different varieties of English. It introduces participants to varieties in the UK, the US, Australia/New Zealand and other localities in the English-speaking world. We will also consider the issues of standards and standardisation, language contact, as well as ethnic, social and stylistic varieties of English.

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### **Seminar Varietäten: Varieties of US-English**

Friday, 9 am - 11 am, NSG 412  
Dr. Sylvia Reuter  
(Institut für Anglistik)

Reading list: Reader at Printy`s (Ritterstr. 5)

Exam: oral presentation

After the introduction into the concept of variation/varieties we will deal with language variation in contemporary American English/US-English. Regional variation will be the main issue as we learn about the history of US-English dialects and the contemporary dialect areas (e.g., Boston/New England and NYC) together with their features in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary as compared with General American English (= Western Type). Current developments and ethnic variation are connected topics. As we proceed, insights into theoretical phenomena will be gained such as how to elicit spontaneous speech for research, why linguistic variables are important, or what isoglosses and hypercorrection tell us about variation in language.

## **Seminar Geschichte des US-Englisch: Historical Roots of Present-Day US-English**

Friday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG 412

Dr. Sylvia Reuter  
(Institut für Anglistik)

Reading list: Reader at Printy`s (Ritterstr. 5) with syllabus, guidelines, and texts

Exam: written examination (60 min)

The seminar introduces into the earlier periods of all Englishes, i.e., into Old and Middle English, followed by Early Modern English as the decisive period for the birth of US-English. It then examines the most important factors that have shaped US-English from its beginnings in colonial times up to the present. Yet, as we move from the past into the present, we will not only discuss changes on all language levels, i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, but also investigate what authentic texts of various times teach us linguistically.

## 2.4 Society, History, and Politics II (04-001-1006)

This module is meant to provide students with an interdisciplinary, international, and integrated introduction to key developments and themes in the history, politics, and society of the United States from the Reconstruction period to the present.

*To complete the module, students need to attend the **Lecture**, one **Issues Seminar** (Seminar #1, A or B) and one **Key Documents Seminar** (Seminar #2, A or B)*

**The module consists of one lecture and two seminars**

### Lecture

Monday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ Hörsaal 2.010  
Prof. Crister S. Garrett

The lecture will explore the historical, political, and societal developments in the United States from the late nineteenth century to the emergence of the current century. While exploring the “uniqueness” of the “American experience”, care will also be taken to place American society in an international and global context.

This lecture is offered as part of the Module “SHP II”. It can be taken independently from the module by international and other guest students. The other two courses comprising the module SHP II are the Analytical Seminar and the Praxis Seminar.

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### Seminar #1: Issues in Contemporary American History, Politics, and Society

either Seminar #1 A:

#### Sources of Wealth and Roots of Power - United States Economic and Social History in an International Context

Wednesday, 3 - 5 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Tobias Schlobach

Course on Moodle  
(Password in syllabus or upon request)

Although it has been ten years since the global financial crisis struck, its impact can still be felt around the world, may it be directly or in the form of subsequent economic and political crises, giving (new) importance to questions about the nature, mode of operation and history of the current economic system, as well as its impact on society and politics. This course offers a survey of international economic and social history, designed to introduce students to the world of economics and the implications it had—and has—for our living environment.

For this purpose, the seminar will explore the historical development of economic thought, survey key concepts and terminology, and examine their application to reality. We will also analyze the economic and political mechanisms at play, as well as their interplay and interconnection with social and societal history. A distinct focus will be laid on the United States and its development from being a mere component of the British economic empire to becoming one of its own, including the challenges and

(r)evolutions involved in this process, as well as the implications on U.S. domestic and foreign policy. Within this context, additional emphasis will be put on the changing patterns of trade and the geopolitics/-economics of resources, from sugar islands over cotton fields to oil wells and digital industries.

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or Seminar #1 B:

**“America Through European Eyes: From Hegel to Adorno”**

Wednesday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG 213

Eric W. Fraunholz

All course materials can be found at Moodle!

First Session: 24 October!

(Immatrikulationsfeier on 17 October)

“In the beginning, all the world was America.” With this marginal note on the American project, John Locke outlined the transatlantic imagination of the New World. World history started anew in America. Since the beginning of transatlantic exchange, America has been conceived of as either an avant-garde model of a future Europe, or as an unfinished Europe of the past. In the transatlantic imagination, we cannot understand and describe America without describing ourselves as Europeans first. In this course, we will investigate how the American social experiment has always worked as projection screen for European self-conceptions.

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**Seminar #2: Key Documents in Contemporary American History, Politics, and Society**

**either Seminar #2 A:**

Monday, 9 - 11 am, GWZ 2.516

Heather Pruessing

**or Seminar #2 B:**

Wednesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG 213

Heather Pruessing

This tutorial will complement the module’s lecture and seminar by offering further exposure to a diverse collection of primary and secondary documents from contemporary American history, politics, and society. The goal of this course is to deepen students’ understanding of the lecture and seminar content, while simultaneously improving critical and analytical skills through verbal and written assignments.

## 2.5 Project Module (04-001-1009)

The module is designed to facilitate the acquisition of skills that prepare students to write a BA thesis in the near future. It will assist them in taking the necessary steps for developing a research project. This includes adequate ways of identifying the subject matter of a research project; researching relevant scholarship; formulating a research question; delimiting the body of material to be analyzed, determining appropriate research methods, and thus finding the topic for a scholarly project. Students will be required to design a research project; this includes submitting a short, annotated bibliography during the course of the semester and a poster presentation as well as a term paper at the end of the term.

**The module consists of one colloquium (out of three)**

### Project Colloquium 1

Monday, 5 -7 pm, GWZ 3.515  
Prof. Katja Kanzler

Professor Kanzler's Colloquium is meant for students who plan to write a BA thesis in the fields of American literature and culture.

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### Project Colloquium 2

Wednesday, 3 - 5 pm, NSG 213  
Prof. Gabriele Pisarz-Ramírez

Professor Pisarz-Ramirez' Colloquium is meant for students who plan to write a BA thesis in the field of US Minority Cultures and Literatures.

The first meeting will be on **October 24**.

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### Project Colloquium 3

Wednesday, 3 - 5 pm,\* NSG 224  
Prof. Crister S. Garrett

Professor Garrett's Colloquium is meant for students who plan to write a BA thesis in the fields of American history, politics and contemporary domestic and international affairs.

\*The first session taking place on **17 October** begins at **4:15 PM**.

## 2.6 Ethnicity and Diversity in US Culture (04-001-1018)

The goal of this module is to enable students to understand the United States as a multiethnic and multicultural space and to discuss on an academic level the cultural productions of various ethnic groups in the contexts of their specific historical and cultural development.

**The module consists of one lecture, one seminar, and one tutorial**

### Lecture

Friday, 11 am – 1 pm, HSG HS 20  
Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez

The lectures will discuss key concepts of and developments in race, ethnicity and minority studies as well as explore the cultures and histories of ethnic groups in the U.S., focusing especially on the literatures and cultures of U.S. Latinos/as, African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans.

This lecture starts on **October 26**.

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### Seminar: When Harlem Was in Vogue: Reading the Harlem Renaissance

Tuesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG 121  
Annika Schadewaldt

Roughly between World War I and the Great Depression, African American culture experienced an unprecedented florescence in literature and the arts that became known as the Harlem Renaissance. While the movement centered in New York City, it also reached out to other places both inside and outside of the US and has had a tremendous impact on African American culture ever since. In this course, we will study the rich literature of the Harlem Renaissance in its cultural, political, and transnational contexts. We will examine canonical texts of the Harlem Renaissance, such as writings by Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, and Jean Toomer, both as works of art and in the context of contemporary debates regarding the role of art in the African American community. We will also ask questions such as: Why Harlem? What is the relationship between literature and other forms of art such as Jazz in the Harlem Renaissance? What was the role of the so-called white patronage? Can there actually be such a thing as 'authentic' African American art? What was the relationship of the Harlem Renaissance to High Modernism? Etc.

Please keep in mind that this is a discussion-based course. I will offer background and context as needed, but we will spend the great majority of our time carefully reading and discussing the primary texts together. If you want to get started, an excellent introduction is David Levering Lewis's *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (Penguin, 1997).

## **Tutorial (Übung): Spoken Academic Discourse**

Monday, 3 - 5 pm, NSG 213  
Peter Tomic (Institut für Anglistik)

Exam: oral examination (15 min)

This course focuses on equipping students to improve their command of the processes involved in organizing clear, effective academic presentations as well as those practical language skills most frequently needed in spoken English as used in the context of researchbased academic discourse. The exercises have been designed to promote students' intercultural communicative competence while critical insight into the linguistic relevance of cultural determinants is gained by engaging in inquiry and reflection on past and present English usage.

### 3 MA Courses

#### 3.1 Methods and Theories in American Studies (04-038-2001)

This module provides students with an overview of key methods and theories employed in the interdisciplinary field of American Studies. It is meant to prepare students for the program's advanced modules.

**The module consists of two seminars**

##### **Seminar: Methods and Theories I**

Thursday, 3 - 5 pm, GWZ 3.515  
Prof. Gabriele Pisarz-Ramírez / Prof. Katja Kanzler

The seminar "Methods and Theories in American Studies I" will explore the various methodological and theoretical approaches to American Studies, the nature of the debate about the strengths and possible drawbacks of different methods and theories, and where the field of American Studies is today in its lively and open debate about the conceptualization, pursuit and results of diverse approaches in the field.

This course starts on **October 25**.

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##### **Seminar: Methods and Theories II**

Tuesday, 3 - 5 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Dr. Sebastian Herrmann

This seminar will address major paradigms of and theories employed in American Studies, their evolution and contestation in the past sixty years of scholarship within the field. We will read and discuss critical writing that probes into the beginnings of American Studies in the so-called Myth-and-Symbol School and into the various ways in which this foundational paradigm has been challenged and expanded, e.g., by the group of scholars who call(ed) themselves "New Americanists." We will explore some of the effects of the "theoretical turn" in American Studies scholarship, its insistent call to reflect on basic assumptions, e.g., about culture, texts, nation, "race," gender, and, ultimately, the nature of scholarship itself.

### **3.2 Graduate Colloquium in American Studies (04-038-2002)**

This module acquaints students with current issues and debates in American studies. Two exemplary seminars represent different academic traditions within this interdisciplinary field of inquiry, giving students an impression of their respective scholarly interests and approaches.

**The module consists of two seminars**

#### **Seminar: Deviance and Difference in American Culture**

Tuesday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 3.515  
Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez

This course will address the construction and negotiation of deviance and difference in American literature and culture from the early 19th century to the present time. We will look at novels, films, plays, visuals and other material to discuss how notions of deviance and difference have changed, which function the figure of the outcast has had in various periods and how the definition as outcast has impacted on identity constructions and group and self-representation. Our discussion of difference and deviance will be concerned with social non-conformism and crime, as well as with physical and mental disability and will address configurations of deviance such as the pariah, the outlaw, the freak, the extremist, and others.

The course starts on **October 23**.

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#### **Seminar: The Internationalization, Transnationalization, and Globalization of Society, Politics, and History: The Case of the United States.**

Tuesday, 1 - 3 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Prof. Crister S. Garrett

This seminar will explore with diverse readings the extent to which the “national” is being contextualized, re-configured, and re-imagined through international, transnational, and global themes and approaches for American Studies. Readings will come from such disciplines as history, political science, sociology, anthropology, and economics. We will explore prominent new book series from leading publishers that indicate new approaches to American Studies. These include Princeton University Press's “America in the World” series, the University of North Carolina's “New Cold War History”, Palgrave's “Rethinking World Politics”, Routledge's “New International Relations”, and Duke University Press's “The New Americanists”. These efforts to re-position American Studies, to complicate the field, have wide-ranging consequences for students seeking careers either in an academic or analytical setting and for students more interested in a professional and or policy field.

### **3.3 iCAN: international, interdisciplinary and integrated Career and Academic Knowledge (04-038-2003)**

The two seminars complement each other to introduce and embed for students how American Studies relates to major trends in international career development. What skills, knowledge, and experience are employers in such diverse professional sectors as education, media, international organizations, business, government branches, cultural exchange, and journalism looking for? How do these trends impact how one pursues graduate studies, and how one begins now to prepare for the period after graduate school? Repeated international studies confirm that students should be defining and designing their graduate school objectives and strategy from the outset of their graduate program. This goal is the purpose of requiring all students in the MA American Studies program at Leipzig to enroll in iCAN.

**The module consists of an applied seminar with two sessions each week**

#### **Applied Seminar (*aspeers*)**

Monday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 3.515  
Dr. Stefan Schubert

**and**

Thursday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 3.515  
Dr. Sophie Spieler

From identifying a topic of profound academic interest to writing a Call for Papers, from corresponding with authors to gathering financial support, from reviewing others' work to suggesting modifications, from grouping articles to sections to writing an introduction – editing a scholarly publication entails a wide range of professional skills central to academia and to non-academic work settings alike.

In 2007/08, the first group of editors founded and published *aspeers*, the first and currently only graduate-level peer-reviewed journal for European American Studies, i.e. a journal that publishes the critical work of pre-PhD authors from (other) European universities.

This semester, we will work to edit the 12th issue of the journal and to refine its positioning in the market. This will include learning about different publication formats and about academic publishing in the US and Germany in general. Most of the time and workload, however, will go into the editing process outlined above. Mostly working in project groups, the module thus provides a truly unique opportunity to acquire and improve professional skills in areas such as critical reading and writing, word processing, public relations, and communication.

### 3.4 Consumption, Culture and Identity (04-038-2011)

This module focuses on the study of consumer and popular culture. The two seminars approach consumer culture from different academic perspectives, aiming to acquaint students with the respective research interests and methodologies they contribute to the exploration of consumption, culture, and identity.

#### The module consists of two seminars

##### Seminar: Food, Identity, and Textuality in North American Literature and Film

Monday, 3 - 5 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Prof. Katja Kanzler

From Mary Rowlandson's ostentatious refusal to eat the food offered by her Indian captors to the unnamed protagonist's emphatic "I am what I yam!" in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, North American authors have repeatedly used food to unfold their stories. Their texts (in print and on screen) feature food—a wide variety of fare as well as scenes of its preparation, consumption, or refusal—as potent and multifaceted signifiers. In this seminar, we will explore some dimensions of this narrative tradition, along with selected critical paradigms by which literary and cultural scholarship have approached it. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which culinary signifiers have helped U.S.-American and Canadian narratives negotiate issues of national identity, ethnic belonging, gender roles, and psychological as well as bodily selfhood. We will discuss how food unfolds its signifying potential in a variety of cultural forms, such as autobiography, the novel, and film.

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##### Seminar: "We hold these truths to be self-evident": Offering Rhetorics - Consuming Morals

Thursday, 1 - 3 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Dr. Katja Schmieder

Who are "we," which "truths" are referred to, what does "self-evident" mean – and who has/claims the power to define all of these? "Rhetoric" is commonly perceived as the art of persuasive communication, crafted to evoke emotions and, ideally, actions – and the American communication scientist Herbert W. Simons was one of the first scholars who even detected a "rhetorical turn" at the end of the twentieth century. Rhetorics dominate not only political speeches and advertisements: Today, public discourse is saturated with and steered by rhetorical devices – they are employed to convey morals and values.

In this class, we will thus scan and dissect diverse "texts" for their rhetorical strategies: We will examine historical texts and newspaper articles, scientific and scholarly writings, political speeches and legal tracts, and fictions – movies, novels, TV shows – in order to dismantle their (soft) power to allure or appall their recipients. An initial discussion of the movie *Vantage Point* (2007) will serve as an example of how rhetorics unfold on different levels: narrative, visual, semantic, etc. While looking at more "classical" rhetorical tools, we will also consider the impact of the etymological roots and the historicity of terms and phrases as well as strategies of de-contextualization, fragmentation, and generalization. We will apply a semiotic, literary studies-driven, interdisciplinary approach in order to learn about the cultural meanings and implications of the regular consumption of such texts. The ideas of Bakhtin, White, Jakobson, Foucault, and Le Bon might further help us interrogate the relationships between power and rhetorics: Who determines which questions could be asked; who frames discursive premises and boundaries?

### 3.5 Immigration, Ethnicity, and Citizenship (04-038-2012)

The United States is a country of immigration; Germany is not. Thus the standard line to contrast a basic difference between the two countries in terms of mobility and citizenship. Reality is of course considerably more complex for both countries. Human mobility and ethnic diversity stand at the center of how the United States has perceived itself from its earliest moments. The concept of citizenship, of the formal political and social contract involving rights and obligations for those born into citizenship, or granted citizenship, lies at the heart of how a country perceives its basic values, norms, institutions – in short, that for which it stands. The American story cannot be understood without a strong appreciation of how immigration and ethnicity and their importance for defining citizenship have infused the country's construction, and struggle with itself. In the debates about state, society, and citizenship, the United States and Europe have played a fundamental role in influencing each other's evolving models with which to regulate mobility, diversity, and belonging.

**The module consists of two seminars**

#### **Seminar 1: Fictions of (Un)belonging: Citizenship in US literature**

Wednesday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 3.515

Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez

This course starts on **October 24.**

When white supremacists at the 2017 “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville spoke out against immigration and pro-“white rights”, they expressed ideas that are neither new nor uncommon. The debates and anxieties about who belongs and who does not, what an “American” should look like, sound like, worship like, think like, etc.—who s/he should be—raise questions about citizenship and belonging that in a globalized world are of pressing importance. What does it mean to be American? How is citizenship defined, and who defines it? And how is this definition shaped by our relationships to other human beings? This course will consider the concept of citizenship by examining how writers have used literature to represent and think the meaning of nationhood, race, migration, and belonging. We will discuss texts by, among others, Walt Whitman, W.E.B. DuBois, Rudolph Fischer, Hannah Arendt, James Baldwin, Chang Rae-Lee, Kendrick Lamar, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Guillermo Verdecchia, along with critical essays on the concept of citizenship.

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#### **Seminar 2: Contemporary Poetries That Sing from U.S. Histories and Ahistories**

Wednesday, 3 - 5 pm, GWZ 3.5.15

Prof. Sasha Pimentel (Picador Guest Professor)

“[H]ow we see ourselves (if our vision is not decolonized), or how we are seen is so intense that it rends us. It rips and tears at the seams of our efforts to construct self and identify,” bell hooks writes in *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, and we can add to that what historian and writer Aberjhani proposes, that “[t]he best of humanity’s recorded history is a creative balance between horrors endured and victories achieved.” In this course, we’ll study the many and varied contemporary poetries that speak to modern experience in U.S. literature, focusing on poets who speak from historically marginalized cultural positions. It’s poets who understand both speech and silence as the dueling texts of a poem—

matching too the need to assert, against the unspeakable realities, of the histories and ahistories of: U.S. slavery, genocides and colonizations of indigenous peoples and throughout the Americas and Asia, and historical national and state moves against the immigration and interrelationships of peoples because of racial or ethnic discrimination.

We'll study how a poet both sings against—and must fall silent too—in such spaces, studying full-length works such as: Kevin Young's *Ardency: A Chronicle of the Amistad Rebels*, Patricia Smith's *Incendiary Art*, Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric*, Juan Felipe Herrera's *187 Reasons Mexicanos Can't Cross the Border*, Natalie Diaz's *My Brother Was an Aztec*, Aracelis Girmay's *The Black Maria*, Chen Chen's *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities*, Paisley Rekdal's *The Night My Mother Met Bruce Lee: Observations on Not Fitting In*, Ocean Vuong's *Night Sky with Exit Wounds*, sam sax's *Madness*, Philip Levine's *The Mercy*, Edward Hirsch's *Gabriel*, Layli Long Soldier's *Whereas* and Fady Joudah's *Footnotes in the Order of Disappearance*, among individual poems and critical texts by historians/scholars/cultural and literary critics like hooks, Ta-Nehisi Coates, James Baldwin, Angela David, Emma Pérez, Matthew Frye Jacobsen and Ezra Cappel.

### 3.6 Transatlantic Space (04-038-2010)

The module consists of two seminars

#### Seminar 1: The 21st-Century Political Novel: Late Globalization and Transatlantic Space

Thursday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 2.516

Prof. Katja Kanzler

In *Toward the Geopolitical Novel*, Caren Irr argues that “the political novel has experienced a marked resurgence in U.S. fiction” of the last few years—that, more specifically, it has become reborn as “the geopolitical novel” which “address[es] the interconnected global environment of the new millennium” (2). Irr’s argument ties in with observations made by many other scholars that, since the turn of the millennium, U.S. literature has been marked by a socio-political turn, a conspicuous interest in providing a platform for reflections on political issues of the day. In this seminar, we will read and discuss a selection of contemporary novels that insert themselves into discussions of ‘late’ globalization, with a particular focus on its dynamics and effects in transatlantic contexts. Among the questions we will attend to in our discussions are: Where and how do the novels enter into political conversations about globalization? What critical reflections do they enable, from what political angle? How do they use the particular possibilities of fiction and of narrative to do so? How do they position themselves in U.S.-American literary traditions, especially in the traditions of postmodernism, the literary aesthetic that used to dominate late-20th century literature?

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#### Seminar 2: The Emerging Transatlantic Space

Thursday, 3 - 5 pm, GZW 2.516

Prof. Crister S. Garrett

The United States and Europe are of fundamental importance to each other in terms of interests, influences, and interdependencies. From these interactions emerge contestations, competitions, and diverse forms of cooperation. The transatlantic space – or the institutions, norms, and issues around which and with which the U.S. and Europe interact – is undergoing a dynamic phase of reconsideration and recalibration. One overarching theme that underlines the challenges to the transatlantic space is the concept of security in its fullest sense. With the end of the cold war and in the context of 9-11 the United States and Europe are engaged in a fundamental discussion about what societies mean by security, and what priorities citizens and governments want to set for pursuing security. In this seminar the concept of security communities will play a central role. Students will have a wide space in which to explore their more focused interests in the context of security communities, including economic issues, migration issues, environmental and energy issues, cultural issues, historical issues, religious issues, and of course more traditional military issues.

## 4 Lehramt Courses

### 4.1 Modul \*-2401: “American Literatures, American Societies”

The module is designed specifically to train future teachers in combining deepened American-studies knowledge with didactic skills (including the use of e-teaching and e-learning tools). This combination will enable students to practice ways of identifying, analyzing, and teaching typical topics and subjects concerning US literature, culture, and media to high school students. The module exam consists of an extensive analytic project prepared by the students during the course of the seminar.

**The module consists of one seminar and one lecture**

**Seminar “Teaching America: Literature, Media, and Culture”**

Wednesday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 2 5.16  
Eleonora Ravizza

**or**

Wednesday, 1 - 3 pm, GWZ 2 5.16  
Eleonora Ravizza

**or**

Thursday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG 224  
Eleonora Ravizza

**or**

Thursday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG 224  
Eleonora Ravizza

In the seminar, students will deepen their knowledge of American literature, society, and culture. By analyzing various types of texts (from literature, film, and television) as well as looking at detailed aspects of American culture, the seminar will particularly explore questions of gender, race, and class, which form a central part of understanding the contemporary and historical United States. Throughout the seminar, students will gain critical knowledge about important concepts, myths, and narratives that form part of the American imagination, about typical approaches and methods used to scrutinize diverse textual and cultural artifacts for their meanings, and about ways of critically and closely analyzing these texts and developing arguments about their cultural work and their textual ‘politics.’

In a final project (consisting of a presentation and a paper), students will be asked to apply the knowledge they acquired throughout the semester to a text of their choice. The project will particularly practice research skills, critical thinking, developing argumentative thoughts in writing and in a presentation, and combining the insights about American topics gained from the seminar with previously acquired didactic skills in order to apply this knowledge directly to the classroom.

## **Lecture**

(Choose either of the lectures as inspiration for your seminar project.)

### **“Literature and Culture I”**

Monday, 11 am - 1 pm, HSG HS 2  
Prof. Katja Kanzler

or

### **“Society, History, and Politics II”**

Monday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ Hörsaal 2.010  
Prof. Crister S. Garrett

or

### **“Ethnicity and Diversity in US Culture”**

Friday, 11 am – 1 pm, HSG HS 20  
Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez

The lectures will discuss key concepts of and developments in race, ethnicity and minority studies as well as explore the cultures and histories of ethnic groups in the U.S., focusing especially on the literatures and cultures of U.S. Latinos/as, African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans.

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In addition to the lecture(s) and the seminar, there will be a workshop covering practical, analytic, and theoretical skills that build on and practice what is taught in the seminar. Times and dates to be announced.

## 5 Creative Writing

### 5.1 BA Professional Skills Module “Creative Writing: Imagining America” (04-001-1019) (5 credits)

#### Seminar & Tutorial

Tuesday, 3 - 5 pm, GWZ 3 5.15  
Prof. Sasha Pimentel (Picador Guest Professor)

#### **Seminar: Advanced Poetry Writing: Poetry Workshop**

Tuesday, 3.15-4pm, GWZ 3.5.15

#### **Tutorial: Advanced Poetry Writing: Poetry Workshop**

Tuesday, 4-4.45pm, GWZ 3.5.15

In order to begin writing a poem writes Richard Wilbur, “there has to be a sudden, confident sense that there is an exploitable and interesting relationship between something perceived out there and something in the way of incipient meaning within you.” In this graduate workshop, we’ll work through your poems to mine that territory between the external and the internal, wrenching language down to rhythm and measure to arrive at what Denise Levertov says in a poem is not an approximation of an experience, “but the feeling of an experience, its emotional tone, its texture.”

In this graduate writing seminar, I’ll ask you to learn advanced skills in poetry by workshopping working poems written by you and your classmates, as well as studying contemporary texts—both creative and critical—in poetry. We will focus on: finding a poem’s *organic form*; creating complex meanings through line, language and whitespace; balancing momentum and resistance in poetic form; and developing rhythm and tension through syntax, punctuation, point of view, perspective, time, tense, sonic repetition and imagistic repetition. We’ll talk too about accessing Federico García Lorca’s poetic *duende*, how to arrive at what is truly “at risk” in art, in a poem, so that we may write as closely as possible to that which is ultimately unsayable—but necessary to say.

Please also see our news item for more information on this new module.