

## Courses Catalog Winter Semester 2020/2021

### 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 26, 2020.**

Students are responsible for keeping track of updates on actual course dates (some are alternating). Please note that all instruction will take place in online formats and see our COVID-19 news item for more information.

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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 26, 2020**. Students are responsible for keeping track of updates on actual course dates (some are alternating).

Please keep checking our news item on how COVID-19 will affect the winter term for up-to-date information on how classes will take place.

#### 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)

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Kanzler

Module organization & coordination: Dr. Sebastian Herrmann

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: US-American Literature: Beginnings to Present**

Tuesday, 9 - 11 am, HSG HS  
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, 3 - 5 pm, NSG  
Annika Schadewaldt

**or b)** Thursday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG  
Dr. Sebastian Herrmann

**or c)** Thursday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG  
Mascha Lange

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)** Tuesday, 11 am – 1 pm, NSG  
Heather Pruessing

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

**or c)** Wednesday, 11 am -1 pm, NSG  
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)**

Overall module responsibility: PD Dr. Stieglitz

Module organization & coordination: Heather Pruessing

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**

### **Lecture**

Tuesday, 1- 3 pm, NSG  
Heather Pruessing

This class takes place every two weeks.

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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### **Seminar**

Wednesday, 1 – 3 pm, NSG  
Heather Pruessing

Using the broad themes discussed in the lecture, the module praxis seminar 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, for optimizing an internship or job search, for and acing an interview.

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

Overall module responsibility: Dr. Reuter (Institut für Anglistik)

Module organization & coordination: Dr. Reuter (Institut für Anglistik)

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

### **1005-1 Vorlesung Varietäten:**

Tuesday, 7 - 9 pm, HSG HS 3  
Valentin Werner  
(Institut für Anglistik)

(Starting in the second week of classes.)

This lecture aims to provide a broad overview of the phenomenon of variation, which is a central property of English (and actually all natural languages). In the course of the lecture, we will consider different types of variation at various levels of analysis (orthography, phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, etc.) and will look at various dimensions of variation, such as mode/medium (e.g. written vs. spoken language), region (e.g. traditional regional dialects and postcolonial varieties) as well as social (e.g. gender, age, education, profession) and stylistic factors. In addition, attitudes toward variation and related issues such as standardization will be discussed.

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### **1005-2 Seminar Geschichte des US-Englisch**

Wednesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG 122  
Dr. Sylvia Reuter  
(Institut für Anglistik)

Reading list: Reader at “universitätsdruckzentrum” (merkurdruck, Ritterstr. 10) with syllabus, guidelines, and texts

Exam: written examination (60 min)

This course provides an overview of the varieties of English spoken on the North American continent. Considering the settlement history of the United States and Canada, we will investigate how the different settler groups shaped the development of regional dialects and how contact with speakers from other languages resulted in the emergence of such contact varieties as African American English and Chicano English. The major aim of the seminar will be to trace the changes and developments in North American Englishes over the centuries as well as examine current changes in progress. In doing so, we will characterise North American varieties in terms of their linguistic features and examine to what extent variation in the use of these features is determined by extra-linguistic variables such as gender, age and ethnicity.

## 1005-3 Seminar

Wednesday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG 105  
Valentin Werner  
(Institut für Anglistik)

Exam: oral presentation

(Starting in the second week of classes.)

This course provides a sociolinguistic perspective on American English, arguably the variety with the strongest impact within the complexities of English as a pluricentric language in today's world. After a brief recapitulation of its emergence and unique colonial history as well as of its structural properties (phonology, morphosyntax, semantics, vocabulary, etc.), we will focus on its internal variability (e.g., regional and social variation, also including a detour to Canadian English) and factors that influence its various manifestations. As we go along, we will also discuss phenomena such as colloquialization and linguistic Americanization, and will focus on language contact between North American English and other languages. Further issues covered include its influence on other varieties of (postcolonial) English, attitudes toward North American English and associated developments of globalization and its allegedly dominating role in worldwide media and pop culture discourse (e.g., hip-hop language and its relation to African-American English).

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

Overall module responsibility: PD Dr. Stieglitz

Module organization & coordination: T. Schlobach

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.

The module consists of one lecture and two seminars

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

Lecture: American Horizons – North American History in a Global Context II: From the Civil War to 2001

Monday, 3 - 5 pm, HS  
PD Dr. Olaf Stieglitz

The lecture explores how the unfolding of American history after the Civil War shaped American society and thus the country's political culture, its institutions, and the different social groups living together in the United States. Topics to be covered include Reconstruction politics in the South, the rise of corporate America, the changing international role of American politics and culture, mass immigration and its impact, reform and civil rights movements, the globalization of American culture, and many more. The course thus integrates global, transatlantic, and international developments to better understand the nature of the American experience and its impact on international affairs.

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### **Seminar 1a: Sources of Wealth and Roots of Power – United States Economic, Political and Social History and its Global Dimensions**

Thursday, 3 - 5 pm, NSG  
Tobias Schlobach

Perhaps more than in any other country, the economy and economic issues seem to play a prominent—if not dominant—role in U.S. society and political culture, being widely perceived as—if not the—key factors of influence on both the country's domestic and foreign policy. Dating back to even before independence, this peculiar relation has consistently and decisively influenced the country's development ever since, with repercussions echoing in many of today's important issues, like the strive for social and climate justice, globalization, international treaty-making and alliance-building, or military efforts abroad.

More importantly, this process and the country's development from handful of small colonies on the fringes of the global economy to the seemingly unipolar superpower at its center, did neither occur without discontents, nor in isolation; contrary to the often almost mystic narratives of providence, exceptionalism and supremacy that still shroud many perceptions of U.S. history to this day, it was equally shaped by the global economic and political settings and currents, as it shaped them in return.

With the purpose of tracing and analyzing these developments, this seminar will explore U.S. history from an economic, political, and social perspective, contextualizing it with the global settings in which it unfolds. Using both key individual moments and essential broad developments in U.S. and global history as a backdrop, we will examine the material and structural settings and conditions that shaped U.S. economic and political culture, including the challenges and (r)evolutions involved in this process, as well as their implications for U.S. domestic and foreign policy. Within this context, additional emphasis will be put on the changing patterns of consumption and trade, as well as the geopolitics/-economics of resources, from sugar islands over cotton fields to oil wells and digital industries.

By employing methods, concepts and theories from the fields of history, economics and political science, we will critically analyze both the interplay between economic, political and social factors, as well as U.S. interactions with and within the global economy and global politics. This will also provide students with a general insight on the nature, mode of operation and history of the current economic system, as well as its impact on society and politics and the implications this had—and has—for our living environment. Through argumentative essays and written reflections on assigned readings, students will additionally sharpen their competence in critical and analytical thinking, thus enabling them to come up with their own approaches and answers to the plethora of questions this subject presents.

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### **Seminar 1b: Global Capitalism and the American People**

Friday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Friedrich Opitz

The economic backdrop of much of today's surge in American populism is a hotbed for debate. Populism can be seen as a timeless chiffre for the political implications of strains socioeconomic transformations put on the individual in the course of American capitalism. From ideas of liberty, wealth and power to interpretations of religious fervour or class struggle, capitalism tells a plethora of stories. Much is subject to overly neat narratives of the powerful vs. the powerless. The study of populism offers a scope to reflect on the economic visions of influential thinkers, and what they actually meant for "the people" in their everyday lives. How did the individual perceive the constant transformations inherent to capitalism? How did these experiences get charged politically in 19th and 20th century America? Studying the historical period between Reconstruction and two World Wars holds important lessons on the confluence of changing economic ideas and the politics they epitomized. The intersections of intellectual and socioeconomic history establish the fora for this course retracing the unravelling of American capitalism, its beneficiaries and its left-behinds. This touches upon many issues relevant for today's debate: rural-urban divides, old industrial areas and techy start-up metropolises, business monopolies and small-or middle-sized companies, captains of industries and migrant workers, free trade and protectionism, nationalism and globalization.

**Praxis Seminar 2a - 2b**

**either 2a)** Tuesday, 9 – 11 am, NSG  
Heather Pruessing

**or 2b)** Wednesday, 3 - 5, NSG  
Peter Hintz

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

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

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Piszcz-Ramírez

Module organization & coordination: Prof. Piszcz-Ramírez

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**

**Project Colloquium**

Wednesday, 3 - 5 pm, NSG  
Prof. Gabriele Piszcz-Ramírez

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.

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

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Pisarz-Ramírez

Module organization & coordination: Prof. Pisarz-Ramírez

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

Monday, 11 am – 1 pm, HSG HS  
Prof. Gabriele Pisarz-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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### Seminar: Reading the Transpacific: Asian American Cultures and Identities

Tuesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG  
Dr. Steffen Wöll

From fifteenth-century maritime mobilities and archipelagic networks to nineteenth-century labor migration, the 'Yellow Peril,' Pacific imperialism, and current challenges: In this seminar we will explore the rich cultural and literary histories of Asian American identities as they developed and continue to surface alongside the vectors of race, class, gender, and space. In order to make visible key concepts of ethnic identities and intersecting human geographies across Asia and the Americas, we will engage with a diversity of historical and contemporary sources, including short stories, novels, newspaper articles, and archival materials.

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### Tutorial (Übung): Spoken Academic Discourse

Monday, 9 - 11 am, NSG 225  
Dr. Patrick McAfferty (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 research-based 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)**

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Kanzler

Module organization & coordination: Dr. Schubert

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**

Tuesday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG  
Prof. Katja Kanzler

This seminar is dedicated to some of the 'grand' theories of the humanities and social sciences that are both utilized and shaped by American Studies scholarship. We will read and discuss a selection of theoretical writings on narrative, media, 'race,' gender/sex, and justice. The selection will aim to strike a balance between classics in the field of American Studies and approaches that have recently come to the fore. Additionally, it will make a point in exposing you to diverse voices and registers in theoretical writing.

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

Thursday, 3 - 5 pm, NSG  
Dr. Stefan Schubert  
Moodle Course

This seminar will address major paradigms of and theories used in American studies, tracing their evolution and contestation in the past sixty years of scholarship within the field. We will examine the history of American studies and the prevalence of different frameworks throughout the decades, from the myth-and-symbol school to the so-called 'New Americanists.' Our sessions will focus in particular on gaining an understanding of what 'method' and 'theory' entail, how they characterize a scholarly field, and how, for the humanities and American studies in particular, they are intrinsically connected to broader sociopolitical discussions. Students will learn to reflect on their own use of methods and theories and how to apply them in critical readings, scholarly arguments, and research projects.

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

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez, PD Dr. Stieglitz

Module organization & coordination: Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez, PD Dr. Stieglitz

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 1: Memory Studies & Popular History and/in American Cultural Studies**

Tuesday, 3 – 5 pm, NSG

PD Dr. Olaf Stieglitz

This class serves a double purpose. First, it takes as its starting point the current debates about the public role of history and its memory within US society and culture. As we can see, hear, and read every day, the visible presence of statues, flags, buildings and other material or immaterial artefacts and ideas trigger enormous emotions and lead to heated and at times even violent controversies. This class interrogates the chronicle of these ‘history wars’ and asks, how the struggle for some usable past shapes political and cultural conflicts of the present.

On that base, the class, as its second main objective, shall offer an introduction to key texts and key issues of Memory Studies and Public History, asking for the increased relevance that these fields got within American Cultural Studies over the last decades. How do Memory Studies and Public History enrich our interest on North American history, society, and culture, and how did the field of American Cultural Studies in general change because of interpretations offered by scholars working within these areas?

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#### **Seminar 2: Deviance and Difference in American Culture**

Wednesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG

Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez

This course will address the construction and negotiation of deviance and difference in American literature and culture. We will look at fictional as well as nonfictional texts as well as theory and critical essays 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 deviant 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 practices of exclusion such as stigmatization, sanctioning and “cimmigration,” addressing configurations of deviance such as the pariah, the outlaw, the migrant, and others.

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

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Katja Kanzler

Module organization & coordination: Dr. Schmieder

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, NSG  
Dr. Katja Schmieder

**and**

Thursday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG  
Dr. Stefan Schubert  
Moodle Course

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 14th 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)

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Kanzler

Module organization & coordination: Prof. Kanzler

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, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG  
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 yam what I am!" in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, North American authors have 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 poetry, autobiography, the novel, and film.

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#### **Seminar: Ethnicity, Inc.: Consumerism and ethnic representation**

Thursday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG  
Prof. Gabriele Pizarz-Ramírez

In their widely-read 2009 study, *Ethnicity, Inc.* John and Jean Comaroff Comaroff have addressed the question where the future of ethnicity lies by highlighting its increasing commodification. Drawing on recent research on the relationship between culture and the market and focusing on U.S. culture, this course will explore the production and performance of ethnic identities as well as the commodification of race and ethnicity in the field between representational politics, economics, and consumerism. Among the issues we will discuss are the marketing and self-marketing of ethnic bodies and products, the changing image of particular ethnic groups in the media, as well as particular sites of ethnic performance such as Blaxploitation movies, ethnic beauty pageants and parades, TV series, etc. We will discuss 19th century forms of commodification of racialized bodies and their impact on current forms of ethnic marketing as well as investigate the implications of recent demographic trends for the production and consumption of race and ethnicity.

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

Overall module responsibility: PD Dr. Stieglitz

Module organization & coordination: PD Dr. Stieglitz

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: Histories of Asian American Immigration**

Monday, 5 - 7 pm, NSG  
PD Dr. Olaf Stieglitz

This class aims to bring forward the many strands of Asian American history, highlighting the distinctive nature of the Asian American experience while placing it in the context of the major trajectories and turning points of U.S. history. Covering not only histories of Chinese and Japanese but also those of Filipinos, Koreans, Asian Indians, and Vietnamese, the class tries to give attention to the diversity within Asian America. We will deal with policies of regulation and with practices of resistance, with topics concerning histories of labor and business, gender and sexuality, representation and popular culture from the 19th century to current developments.

All participants are requested to read the assigned texts (primary sources and secondary texts) for each class meeting and take an active part in group discussions. Several class meetings will be moderated and additionally prepared by a group of selected students who "adopt" that meeting's topic, selecting additional or different material and guide through our discussions.

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#### **Seminar 2: Immigration, Ethnicity, and Citizenship in the American Short Story (Picador Guest Professor Oksana Marafioti)**

Tuesday, 5 - 7 pm, NSG  
Oksana Marafioti (Picador Guest Professor)

This course explores American literature and culture through what has been called our uniquely national art form, the short story, and its connection to questions of immigration, ethnicity, and citizenship. Writer Ann Patchett likens reading short stories to the experience of a swarm of bees, "blocking out sound and sun and becoming the only thing you can think about." We'll be doing a lot of

thinking about the short story—as a literary art form, as a social and historical record, and as a reflection of the cultural values that shape our ideas of who we are. From the ghosts and fantasies that haunted the nineteenth-century short story to the casual cruelties and everyday redemptions in twentieth century stories to today’s experimental fictions, the short story represents diverse visions of American identity and experience. We will thus roam widely to construct methods for thinking about and a critical vocabulary for discussing and writing about the short story. Students will examine the genre, learning about its formal structures and strategies, as well as its place among various historical literary movements, including realism, naturalism, modernism, and postmodernism. Special attention will be paid to the material conditions of short story writing and publishing—the 19th century rise of the literary magazine, the Little Magazines and anthology collections of the 20th century, and the possibilities for the short story in today’s digital environment. We will read individual stories from a wide range of American authors as well as a contemporary short story collection. We will discuss a variety of topics with special focus on questions of identity, race and ethnicity as well as issues of belonging and citizenship. Written assignments may include the formal essay, concise close-readings, critical reviews, and reflections.

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

Overall module responsibility: PD Dr. Stieglitz

Module organization & coordination: PD Dr. Stieglitz

**The module consists of two seminars**

#### **Seminar 1: Transatlantic Histories, Politics and Cultures of Black Liberation (with Daniele Puccio)**

Tuesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG

PD Dr. Olaf Stieglitz

For the last 500 years, the geographical space that some have termed the 'Atlantic World' has been absorbing a considerable portion of the world's population into its complex economic, political, and cultural systems. The transatlantic slave trades, the plantation economies in the Americas and colonial racial regimes consolidated capitalism as a world-system, led to the rise of the 'West,' to mass emigration out of Europe and Asia, to the widespread decimation of Native communities, and to the massive uprooting of Africans from their various geographical and cultural locations. However, where we can locate histories of domination, we invariably find histories of resistance and liberation. The cultural, intellectual, and political traditions of West Indian, African American or (Pan-)African liberation movements are equally histories of resistance to this social order as they are formulations of alternatives to it.

In this seminar, we will discuss how these systems of colonial and racial domination were grasped by those affected by it and then trace the wide range of intellectual, cultural and political traditions of Black Liberation throughout the Americas that sought to overcome these structures of domination. This course will draw most of its primary and secondary readings from the black intellectual traditions internal and external to American studies, which offer students a lens through which enslavement, liberation, class, race and gender oppression, as well as uprooting and migrations have been experienced. These readings will encompass a variety of authors from the US, UK, the West Indies, Latin America, and Africa. Moreover, through close readings, we will attempt to map out the wide range of conceptional, analytical and methodological approaches they have drawn from, expanded, or introduced. Finally, this course should provide students with an array of paradigms to conceptualize the current systems of racial oppression and their historical, cultural, spatial, and temporal reach.

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#### **Seminar 2: The 21st-Century Political Novel: Late Globalization and Transatlantic Space**

Wednesday, 5 - 7 pm, NSG

Prof. Dr. 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 angles? 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?

## 4 Lehramt Courses

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

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Piszcz-Ramírez, PD Dr. Stieglitz

Module organization & coordination: E. Ravizza

The module is designed specifically to train future teachers to deepen their American-studies knowledge. The students will engage with American literary and cultural texts, with critical theory, and with important socio-historical contexts. In the seminar, they will also practice their analytical skills in close readings of American literary and filmic texts, and they will learn how to implement this knowledge in the classroom. The exam for the module consists of an extensive analytic project, in the form of a portfolio exam, prepared by the students during the course of the seminar.

**The module consists of one lecture, one seminar and one (optional) workshop**

#### 2401-1 Lecture

Choose *one* out of two Lectures (2401-1a or 2401-1b):

#### **2401-1a American Horizons – North American History in a Global Context II: From the Civil War to 2001**

Monday, 3 - 5 pm, HS  
PD Dr. Olaf Stieglitz

The lecture explores how the unfolding of American history after the Civil War shaped American society and thus the country's political culture, its institutions, and the different social groups living together in the United States. Topics to be covered include Reconstruction politics in the South, the rise of corporate America, the changing international role of American politics and culture, mass immigration and its impact, reform and civil rights movements, the globalization of American culture, and many more. The course thus integrates global, transatlantic, and international developments to better understand the nature of the American experience and its impact on international affairs.

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#### **2401-1b Lecture “Ethnicity and Diversity in US Culture”**

Monday, 11 am – 1 pm, HSG HS  
Prof. Gabriele Piszcz-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.

## 2401-2 Seminar: Teaching America – American Literature, Media, and Culture

Choose one out of six seminars (2401-2a-f):

### 2401-2a/b/c American Monsters

Tuesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG  
Dr. Eleonora Ravizza

**or**

Wednesday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG  
Dr. Eleonora Ravizza

**or**

Thursday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG  
Dr. Eleonora Ravizza

As Judith Halberstam once claimed, monsters are “meaning machines.” The concept of the monster has the ability to instigate discussions on what it means to be human and to challenge such conceptions. A myriad of characteristics has been attributed to what constitutes monstrosity, evolving over time to reflect the most feared Otherness of the moment, from immigration to queerness, from diseases to anything considered ‘abnormal.’ The idea of the monstrous has historically been used to discriminate and to manufacture fear towards the Other, but it has, at times, also been embraced as an empowering label.

In this seminar, we will explore monstrosity from different angles, and we will discuss various strategies of meaning-making in fictional texts, looking at how the monster intersects with American studies categories such as gender, race, queerness, bodies, and genre.

The seminar will enable students to deepen their understanding of American literature and culture as well as to engage with literary and cultural theory in order to analyze a primary text of their choice.

The exam for this module is a portfolio exam that will consist of different written elements which will showcase what students have learned throughout the semester.

## 2401-2d/e/f Space and Place in America

Tuesday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG  
Dr. Eleonora Ravizza

or

Wednesday, 11 am - 1 pm, NSG  
Dr. Eleonora Ravizza

or

Thursday, 1 - 3 pm, NSG  
Dr. Eleonora Ravizza

The concepts of space and place have always played a central role in the construction of American identity. From the Midwestern plains and imaginations of the West as part of the American Frontier to 1950s suburbia and urban dystopias, different images of America have been constructed through a myriad of different places. The notion of place has been used to construct regional identities, to highlight local cultures, but also to create divides and oppositions: to form shared identities, or to keep minorities from public spaces and therefore from power.

In this seminar, we will explore the concepts of space and place from different angles, and we will discuss the portrayal of various places in fictional texts, looking at how all these different spaces intersect with American studies categories such as gender, race, queerness, bodies, and genre.

The seminar will enable students to deepen their understanding of American literature and culture as well as to engage with literary and cultural theory in order to analyze a primary text of their choice.

The exam for this module is a portfolio exam that will consist of different written elements which will showcase what students have learned throughout the semester.

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### Workshops:

In addition to the seminar, (optional) workshops will be offered. The workshops will support the students in developing important skills needed to complete the portfolio exam. Some of the topics covered will include how to create a research bibliography, how to discuss theory, and how to practice film analysis.

The exact schedule will be available on Moodle. Signup for the workshops will work via Moodle, as will be explained in the first week of classes. The workshops will take place on **Tuesday 3-5 pm, Wednesday 3-5 pm, or Thursday 3-5 pm.**

**Please note:** all of Dr. Ravizza's seminars will take place on **Zoom**. Make sure you are equipped with the appropriate technology before classes start.

## 4.2 Modul \*-1601 “US Society and Diversity: Politics, History and Culture” (Ergänzungsstudien)

Overall module responsibility: Prof. Pisarz-Ramírez

Module organization & coordination: T. Schlobach

*Please note: If you are taking both this module (1601) and the module American Literatures, American Societies (2401), then you must choose lecture 2401-1a (American Horizons – North American History in a Global Context II: From the Civil War to 2001 by PD Dr. Olaf Stieglitz) in module 2401.*

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

*To complete the module, students need to attend the **Lecture** and one **Issues Seminar** (Seminar 1a or 1b)*

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

Monday, 11 am – 1 pm, HSG HS  
Prof. Gabriele Pisarz-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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**Seminar 1a: Sources of Wealth and Roots of Power – United States Economic, Political and Social History and its Global Dimensions**

Thursday, 3 - 5 pm, NSG  
Tobias Schlobach

Perhaps more than in any other country, the economy and economic issues seem to play a prominent—if not dominant—role in U.S. society and political culture, being widely perceived as—if not the—key factors of influence on both the country’s domestic and foreign policy. Dating back to even before independence, this peculiar relation has consistently and decisively influenced the country’s development ever since, with repercussions echoing in many of today’s important issues, like the strive for social and climate justice, globalization, international treaty-making and alliance-building, or military efforts abroad.

More importantly, this process and the country’s development from handful of small colonies on the fringes of the global economy to the seemingly unipolar superpower at its center, did neither occur without discontents, nor in isolation; contrary to the often almost mystic narratives of providence, exceptionalism and supremacy that still shroud many perceptions of U.S. history to this day, it was equally shaped by the global economic and political settings and currents, as it shaped them in return.

With the purpose of tracing and analyzing these developments, this seminar will explore U.S. history from an economic, political, and social perspective, contextualizing it with the global settings in which it unfolds. Using both key individual moments and essential broad developments in U.S. and global history as a backdrop, we will examine the material and structural settings and conditions that shaped

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

By employing methods, concepts and theories from the fields of history, economics and political science, we will critically analyze both the interplay between economic, political and social factors, as well as U.S. interactions with and within the global economy and global politics. This will also provide students with a general insight on the nature, mode of operation and history of the current economic system, as well as its impact on society and politics and the implications this had—and has—for our living environment. Through argumentative essays and written reflections on assigned readings, students will additionally sharpen their competence in critical and analytical thinking, thus enabling them to come up with their own approaches and answers to the plethora of questions this subject presents.

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### **Seminar 1b: Global Capitalism and the American People**

Friday, 11 am - 1 pm, GWZ 2.516  
Friedrich Opitz

The economic backdrop of much of today's surge in American populism is a hotbed for debate. Populism can be seen as a timeless chiffre for the political implications of strains socioeconomic transformations put on the individual in the course of American capitalism. From ideas of liberty, wealth and power to interpretations of religious fervour or class struggle, capitalism tells a plethora of stories. Much is subject to overly neat narratives of the powerful vs. the powerless. The study of populism offers a scope to reflect on the economic visions of influential thinkers, and what they actually meant for "the people" in their everyday lives. How did the individual perceive the constant transformations inherent to capitalism? How did these experiences get charged politically in 19th and 20th century America? Studying the historical period between Reconstruction and two World Wars holds important lessons on the confluence of changing economic ideas and the politics they epitomized. The intersections of intellectual and socioeconomic history establish the fora for this course retracing the unravelling of American capitalism, its beneficiaries and its left-behinds. This touches upon many issues relevant for today's debate: rural-urban divides, old industrial areas and techy start-up metropolises, business monopolies and small-or middle-sized companies, captains of industries and migrant workers, free trade and protectionism, nationalism and globalization.

## 5 Creative Writing

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

Overall module responsibility: Annika Schadewaldt

Module organization & coordination: Annika Schadewaldt

From First Page to Last  
Wednesday, 5 - 7 pm

This comprehensive course is designed to advance the craft of writing fiction. It will be conducted in a studio-style setting, meaning that honing our writing skills will be our primary focus. We will develop an in-depth understanding of the elements writers master in order to create and, most importantly, complete their projects, and we will apply those concepts to our own material. Lessons will include plot, outlining strategies, narrative, dialogue, tension, pacing, conflict, world-building, character development, scene-building, voice, style, descriptive techniques, and editing skills. Accordingly, during lectures, we will discuss the structural/stylistic choices found in literary and genre works by recognized authors. During workshops, the class will share and discuss their own work. By the end of the course, each student will have a portfolio comprised of exercises, drafts, and at least one polished short story. There is no required textbook. Instead, we will use a combination of materials developed by me and also those found in syllabi of Margaret Atwood, Linda Barry, Joyce Carol Oates, and Neil Gaiman.

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