

COURSE SYLLABUS 2024-25

BASIC INFORMATION ON THE COURSE

Course:	British and American Cultures and Societies		
Course code:	70481104	Plan:	Master's Programme in English Studies: Professional Applications and Intercultural Communication
Academic Year:	2024/25	Undergraduate/Graduate:	Graduate
Degree Year:	1st	Type:	Compulsory
Duration:	1st Term		
Course Coordinator:	José Francisco Fernández Sánchez		

TIME DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO REGULATIONS

Credits:	3
Total time:	75

USE OF LEARNING PLATFORM (Teaching support, Multimodal, or Virtual):

Multimodal (Blended learning)

TEACHERS

Name	José Francisco Fernández Sánchez		
Department	Philology		
Building	Humanities II, 2nd Floor		
Office	2.72		
Telephone	950 214460	E-mail (institutional)	jffernan@ual.es
Website	https://www.ual.es/persona/505553494948565084		
Name	José Ramón Ibáñez Ibáñez		
Department	Philology		
Building	Humanidades II, 2nd Floor		
Office	2.26		
Telephone	950 015404	E-mail (institutional)	jibanez@ual.es
Website	http://cms.ual.es/UAL/personas/persona.htm?id=505748545651555566		
Name			
Department			
Building			
Office			
Telephone		E-mail (institutional)	

Website			
Name			
Department			
Building			
Office			
Telephone		E-mail (institutional)	
Website			

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Content Justification

This is a foundation course in the Master's Programme in English Studies. Students are expected to have an exhaustive knowledge of the culture and society of the two countries that have marked the course of international events in the 19th and 20th centuries: Great Britain and the United States of America. Their social and cultural importance in today's world is beyond doubt and, although students may have a general knowledge of these countries, this course will examine in detail aspects that may not have been the subject of analysis in their university studies: politics, education, media, religion, recent history, etc. A course of these characteristics will consolidate previous knowledge and will greatly expand the cultural background of the students of the master's degree on fundamental aspects of the life of these two countries.

Courses Related in Study Plan

Landmarks in Contemporary English and American Literature

British Presence in Andalusia

Required Knowledge to Address the Course

Since the subject is taught exclusively in English, students are expected to have a B2 level (or above) in English so that they can confidently meet linguistic requirements. Furthermore, students are required to be acquainted with English and American culture by means of the most diverse sources: books, popular culture, cinema, etc. since the course looks at certain issues in detail. It will also be necessary for them to be familiar with the analysis of texts and to know how to relate the cultural products of an era to its historical context.

Pre-Required Knowledge

Master's programme pre-requisites

COMPETENCES

Basic and General Competences

Basic competences

- Having and understanding knowledge
- Knowledge application
- Ability to communicate and social skills

General competences

- Having and understanding knowledge
- Knowledge application
- Ability to communicate and social skills

Key competences University of Almeria

- Second language knowledge
- Social competence and global citizenship awareness
- Capacity to use information and communication technology (ICTs)
- Self-learning skills

Specific Competences

SC4: Analysis of representative texts of linguistic and cultural plurality in British and American societies

SC5: Ability to distinguish and to use cultural standard of societies subject to study

SC6: Being able to act as a mediator so as to develop skills leading to the satisfactory outcome of problems and situations related to British and American societies.

SC8: Planning, structuring and developing written texts and oral presentations starting from hypotheses based on the right use of an appropriate methodology with the aim to express efficiently discourses and ideas.

SC22: Use of necessary tools required for source and reference search that may enable students to successfully write research papers.

SC31: Ability to summarise course contents taking into account contexts in which the English language is being used.

SC37: Acquisition of the necessary abilities for an efficient communication in an intercultural professional context.

OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, it is expected that the student should have been able to dramatically increase his or her concrete and specific knowledge of the cultural and social aspects of the countries under study. They will be

able to provide reasoned and informed judgments on the most recent events in the history of these two countries, thus being able to interpret current events related to Great Britain and the United States in their own contexts.

PLANNING

Contents

A. BLOCK I: GREAT BRITAIN AND THE US AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

Unit 1. Contemporary Britain: From Margaret Thatcher to Rishi Sunak.

Unit 2. Historical Margins: From the Reagan Era to Joe Biden.

B. BLOCK II: MULTICULTURAL BRITAIN. THE AMERICAN 'MELTING POT'

Unit 3. Multicultural Britain: Race and Ethnicity.

Unit 4. The American Melting Pot: Who Shaped the U.S. Society over the Last Century.

C. BLOCK III: DOMESTIC PECULIARITIES: EMERGING NATIONALITIES IN BRITAIN. THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN AMERICA

Unit 5. Identities and Nationalities: Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

Unit 6. The Puritan Heritage in the United States. The Unfathomable Burden of Religion in Modern America.

D. BLOCK IV: THE EXTERNAL IMAGE OF BRITAIN AND THE US

Unit 7. Mass Media in Britain.

Unit 8. The American Educational System: Between Elitism and Excellence.

Learning System and Methodology / Contingency Plan

Teaching Methodologies:

1. Lectures and active student participation
2. Information search
3. Text commentaries and class discussion;
4. Tutorials;
5. Video footage watching

Contingency plan

In the event of high health alert levels, the activities planned in the Teaching Groups will be taught online. The Working Groups will continue with face-to-face delivery according to the established planning. In the event of more restrictive measures agreed by the health authorities, working groups will also be conducted by videoconference.

Teaching Innovation Activities

Functional Diversity / Functional Disability

Those students with disabilities or special educational needs can get in contact with the Delegation of the Rector for the Functional Diversity (<http://www.ual.es/discapacidad>) to receive the appropriate guidance

and advice in order to facilitate their instructional, learning and training processes. Likewise, these students may request the implementation of the necessary and suitable adaptations of content, methodology and evaluation that guarantee equal opportunities in their academic development. The processing of any personal data or aggregated information regarding these aforementioned students, in fully compliance with the GDPR, is strictly confidential. Faculties and academic staff lecturing the course referenced by this guide/document will be in charge of applying the recommended adaptations approved by the Delegation of the Rector for the Functional Diversity. This fact will be, therefore, notified to the School or Faculty as well as to the coordinator of the academic course.

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

Criteria and Assessment Tools / Contingency Plan

Class attendance is of paramount importance. It will be necessary that the students read and prepare texts listed in the subject syllabus and gain insight of the material taught in both place-based sessions and online sessions. The criteria established for the evaluation of the subject are the following:

OPTION A – Continuous assessment

(1) End-of-term exam (70%). It will consist of a test based on the development of short questions and a text commentary. This exam will be based on the material discussed in the teaching sessions, the critical apparatus as well as on the reading materials included in the course content. Students will need to get a at least 50% of the end-of-the-term exam to pass the course.

(2) Active participation in the webpage (15%). Students will be invited to take part in a debate on topics, not included in the syllabus, related to current affairs in the USA and the UK. This forum of discussion will take place in the “Debates” section of our website, and students will be encouraged to make comments, upload news items, suggest internet links for further discussion, etc.

(3) Active participation in class (15%). Attending the course is not enough. Students are requested to ask questions, express their opinion, contrast and refute ideas, in short, to bring their experience into the class.

The course final grade will consist of the addition of 1, 2 and 3. In order to pass the course, students must get a grade equal to or higher than 50% in the final exam (both parts). That percentage will be added to the marks obtained in sections 2 and 3. Overall, the student final grade should be equal to or higher than 50%.

These criteria will remain in force for those students who fail end-of-semester exam. The percentage of sections 2 and 3 will be maintained, but students will have to redo the end-of-semester exam (1) in order to pass the course.

Academic integrity. In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 1.4.4 of the "Regulations for the evaluation of student learning at the University of Almeria", the presentation of another individual's work as one's own (plagiarism), or seeking any type of academic advantage through teaching will be severely penalized. The detection of deliberate plagiarism will result in the student receiving a failing grade (*suspense*) in their term paper or in the end-of-semester exam.

Contingency plan:

The contingency plan will be maintained. In those cases in which the health authorities advise and/or agree that the assessment tests shall not be taken in person during the ordinary and/or extraordinary sessions, the tests indicated shall be taken online.

OPTION B– Final evaluation system

(1) End-of-term exam (70%). It will consist of a test based on the development of short questions and a text commentary. This exam will be based on the material discussed in the teaching sessions, the critical apparatus as well as on the reading materials included in the course content. Students will need to get a at least 50% of the end of-the-term exam to pass the course.

2) Active participation in the webpage (15%). Students will be invited to take part in a debate on topics, not included in the syllabus, related to current affairs in the USA and the UK. This forum of discussion will take place in the “Debates” section of our website, and students will be encouraged to make comments, upload news items, suggest internet links for further discussion, etc.

3) Online interview (15%). Those students who have not been able to attend on-site classes will have a brief interview with the teachers in order to discuss a topic related to the course previously agreed between him/her and the instructors of the course.

The course final grade will consist of the addition of 1, 2 and 3. In order to pass the course, students must get a grade equal to or higher than 50% in the final exam (both parts). That percentage will be added to the marks obtained in sections 2 and 3. Overall, the student’s final grade should be equal to or higher than 50%.

Course final grade will consist in the addition of items 1 and 2. In order to pass the course, students must get a grade equal to or higher than 50% in the final exam. That percentage will be added to students’ term paper (point 2). Overall, student final grade should be equal to or higher than 50%.

Follow-Up Mechanisms

- Office hours
- Blackboard Learn platform access
- Participation in short questions sessions.

COURSE MATERIALS

Recommended Course Materials

Basic bibliography

Abercrombie , Nicholas. *Contemporary British Society*. Polity Press. 2000. Brogan, Hugh. *The Penguin History of the USA*. Penguin. 2001.

Campbell, Alastair. *The Blair Years*. Hutchinson. 2007.

Sobolenska, Maria y Robert Ford. *Brexitland: Identity, Diversity and the Reshaping of British Politics*. Cambridge University Press. 2020.

Martell, Luke. *The Sociology of Globalization*. Polity. 2010.

Rawnsley, Andrew. *Servants of the People*. Penguin. 2001.

Remnick, David. *The Bridge: The Life and Rise of Barack Obama*. Picador. 2010.

Thelin, John R. *A History of American Higher Education*. Johns Hopkins University Press. 2011.

Complementary bibliography

Afua Hirsch. *On Race, Identity and Belonging*. Random House. 2018.

Dixon, Hugo. *The In/Out Question*. 2014.

Hofstadter, Richard. *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. Vintage Books. 1966. MacShane, Denis. *Brexit: How Britain Will Leave Europe*. 2015.

Stone, Oliver & Peter Kuznick. *The Untold History of the United States*. Ebury Publishing. 2013. Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. Harper. 2005.

Couse Materials Available in UAL's library

WEBSITES

To browse existing bibliography and references at UAL Library System, please click on the following link:

- https://www.ual.es/bibliografia_recomendada70481104