

**Course title:** American Studies: "The Old" and "The New" Paradigm

**Course code:** MSA0821

**Type of course:** compulsory

**Level of course:** MA

**Year of study:** 1<sup>st</sup>

**Semester:** 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Number of ECTS credits allocated:** 6

**Name of the lecturer:** Odette Blumenfeld

**Course objective:** The aim of the course is to familiarize the students with the fundamental concepts operating in cultural studies, with the texts, methods and theoretical tools specific to the American Studies by approaching a diachronic perspective (the "old" paradigm) and a synchronic perspective (the "new" paradigm); the course will cultivate multiperspectivism and the development of critical and creative thinking through an interdisciplinary approach, facilitating the orientation of the students towards a variety of academic areas.

**Course contents:** The course will start by a short history of the topic, its relation to cultural studies and the main areas of research. The Old Paradigm refers to the American exceptionalism from four perspectives: religious, constitutional, nationalistic and socialist/Marxist, and the Myth and Symbol School. The New Paradigm is analyzed from the perspective of a series of theories (melting pot, salad bowl, mosaic, multiculturalism, interculturalism), concepts (hybridity, ethnicity and race) and critical and theoretical intersections (postcolonial theory, American cultural imperialism, feminism, post nationalism, (neo)Marxism, globalization and globalism, post structuralism and postmodernism).

**Recommended reading:** Campbell, Neil, Alasdair Kean. 1997. *American Cultural Studies: An Introduction to American Culture*, London and New York: Routledge; Hartley, John, Roberta E. Pearson. 2000. *American Cultural Studies: A Reader*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press; Lipset, Seymour Martin. 1997. *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword*, New York and London: Norton & Company; Maddox, Lucy. 1999. *Locating American Studies: The Evolution of a Discipline*, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press; Rowe, John Carlos. 2002. *The New American Studies*, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press

**Teaching methods:** lectures, debates, case studies (literary analyses)

**Assessment methods:** (a) mid-term test (written) and seminar participation (40%); (b) final test (60%)

**Language of instruction:** English