

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Communications, Arts and Social Sciences
Programme:	Communications
FHEQ Level:	5
Course Title:	Sociology of Culture & SubCulture
Course Code:	COM 5115
Course Leader:	Dr. Nicola Mann
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Semester:	Fall, Spring or Summer
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

Introduces the field of cultural studies by examining various concepts of culture, the positions taken in cultural criticism, and the relationship between social and cultural transformation. Emphasis is placed on differences between US and UK culture and the theory of subcultures.

Prerequisites: SCL 3100 or MGT 3200

Aims and Objectives:

The main objective of this course is to provide students with a thorough grounding in the history and sociology of the study of culture. This course examines the ways in which debates about culture and cultural change have developed in the last 150 years and how cultural phenomena are related to the kinds of societies in which they emerge. By the end of this course successful students will be able to:

- assess the strengths and weaknesses of a wide range of cultural theories
- understand the main themes in the creation of youth and ethnic subcultures
- engage critically with contemporary cultural and mass media artifacts.

Programme Outcomes:

5A(i); 5A(iii); 5C(i); 5D(ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and is located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

- Development of a detailed understanding of the ways in which different cultures and subcultures may make use of cultural texts and products in the construction of social realities, cultural maps and frames of reference
- Students are expected to engage in a sophisticated, critical and knowledgeable way with major thinkers, debates and intellectual paradigms related to culture and subculture and put them to productive use
- Students are expected to demonstrate the ability to formulate and synthesize arguments cogently, retrieve and generate information, and select appropriate criteria to evaluate sources, with a detailed understanding of appropriate methods
- Students are expected to deliver work in oral and written formats with limited direction or supervision, demonstrating the capacity to consider and evaluate their own work using justifiable criteria

Indicative Content:

- Key definitions, issues and theories about culture and identity
- Moral panics
- Hip Hop & gangsta
- Punk and its aftermath
- Youth subcultures
- Celebrity and fan culture
- Researching culture; Sources and Methods.
- Semiology and other approaches to interpreting culture
- Mapping London: class and ethnicities
- The Chicago School approach
- British cultural studies
- Taste, class, difference: Pierre Bourdieu

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board.

Teaching Methodology:

General subject matter will include art, literature, cinema, television, style, and music. The course will use video presentations and consist of lectures, screenings and class discussion. There will be an emphasis on student engagement with the research process and the critical exploration of a variety of sources, databases and archives. Where possible, visits will take place to relevant locations and exhibitions. Student work is

assessed through a variety of ways using both formative and summative approaches. Feedback is intended to help improve student approach to learning and achieve better results.

Bibliography:

Indicative Text(s):

REQUIRED READING

Gelder, Ken and Sarah Thornton, (Eds). *The Subcultures Reader*, Routledge

1997 Marcus, Greil, *Lipstick Traces*, Harvard University Press, 1990

Rojek, Chris, *Celebrity*, Reaktion Books, 2004

Frank, Thomas, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*, University of Chicago Press, 1997

Journals

It is essential to regularly research journal articles through academic databases. The most used for topics relevant to this course are:

JSTOR

Humanities Full Text, Social Sciences Full Text: Wilson Web - also partially accessible through EBSCO Host

Web links

- Henry Jenkins_
<http://www.henryjenkins.org/>
- Culture Machine_
<http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm>
- BFI - British Film Institute – Stills, vids, books, articles..._
<http://olib.bfi.hostedbyfdi.net/cgi-bin/bfi.bat>
- COPAC_
<http://copac.ac.uk>
/
- Findarticles.com_
<http://findarticles.com/>
- Kent cartoon archive_
<http://www.cartoons.ac.uk>
/
- Creation of “pseudo events” – Reality TV – “Susan Boyle Gets Discovered,”
Clip with subtitled theorisation_
<http://vids.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=vids.channel&ContributorID=40824451>
- Romantic representation of celebrity – Diana on Panorama, Clip with
subtitled theorisation
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THjJr6nl340>
- Moulding the Masses, compilation with voice over theorisation_
http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xad09p_moulding-the-

masses news

