



North American Studies Program, Doctoral School of Literature, **UD**

## **BTP2NA\_T\_1**

### **INTRODUCTION TO ADVANCED AMERICAN STUDIES**

*Spring 2021*

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*Make-up classes, if needed:  
subject to negotiation*

*Office hours: before and after class,*

*or by appointment, online*

#### **Prospectus**

The course will focus on American Studies (hence AS) as a branch of philology; on its history and theoretical background earlier and today; on questions of interdisciplinarity and method; the AS movement, traditional topics and new directions (including canon debates, reconceptualizations, and the internationalization of AS); reference literature, journals, resource collections, and technology (web sites); AS in the US, Europe, and Hungary; as well as professional associations and fellowships.

**Class Format:** seminar; 2 hours per week in even distribution, block-taught in fact; graded (discussion, presentation, and papers).

**Status of Course:** required for American stream, optional for British stream students

#### **General Requirements**

The reading assignments are kept as reasonable as possible. Students will be expected to attend class faithfully, to keep up with the readings, and to come to class prepared with questions and comments for discussion. The classes will be conducted in an atmosphere in which the instructor and the students take the time to discuss readings and share their insights. We can set aside part of any class meeting for informal discussion of our work if needed.

#### **Course Requirements**

Informed attendance and participation, two oral presentations, two 5-page and two 3-page papers, as well as technological assignment

#### **Presentations**

Students are expected to conduct two discussions in class, based on any two of their four papers (see writing assignments below). The presenter's aim is to present his/her position

and, by using the interrogative method, generate a good debate. **Sign-up deadline: March 19** (on a sign-up sheet); 2 presentations per double class sessions at the maximum.

### **Writing Assignments**



**OUT-OF-CLASS PAPERS**—Each student is expected to prepare four papers in which s/he examines (one aspect of) his/her dissertation research topic **in the contexts of 1) one relevant traditional AS topic and 2) one new-accent AS topic.** (Both are five-page papers.) The other two are position papers (three typed pages each) based on two articles of the student's choice: one from the *American Quarterly* and one from either the *Journal of American History*, *Journal of American Culture*, or the *Journal of Popular Culture*. None of the 4 papers should be based on texts indicated for class discussion in the syllabus Schedule. ***Electronic submissions are required. Deadline: continuous; submissions to be complete no later than May 20.***

### **Technological assignment**

**INTERNET RESOURCES**—Each student will study one of the “new accents” web resources that relate, in some relevant way, to her/his dissertation topic. A brief (half-page) description and a ***one-page professional evaluation of the web material*** must be submitted (electronically), with the title and the web address of that resource appearing top-page, as the title of the submission. Deadlines: continuous.

### N.B.

1. **Documentation, format**—When you consult or quote a source, document it according to the usual academic principles. In all matters of form, use the *MLA* format. If you have questions about how to do so, ask me, or ask a librarian for the *MLA Handbook*, not earlier than the 7<sup>th</sup> as for its edition.
2. **Editing**—Take pride in your work, edit it carefully, root out mechanical errors. Expect your papers to lose one point per every five errors.
3. **Font, margins**—Out-of-class papers must be typed, double-spaced, in an ordinary font. Those with abnormally wide margins or typeface, will be returned unmarked, and must be resubmitted as directed.
4. **Late paper policy**—No late paper policy. The papers must clearly indicate which of the four paper-requirements they satisfy. They may be submitted in any order, at any time, but no later than May 20, without penalty. Papers cannot be accepted for credit beyond this deadline. The same applies to the technological assignment.
5. **Academic misconduct**—Plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is my practice to levy the maximum penalty against plagiarism. You can be assigned a grade of zero for it, and

can even be dropped from the class with a grade of F. The Doctoral School of Literature expects its students to adhere to the university's policies regarding student conduct, especially academic misconduct. **A statement must be typed on the title page of your essay: "This paper has been prepared in full awareness of the international norms of academic conduct."**

### **Grading**

Participation in class discussion will count 30%;  
 2 oral presentations: 10% each (=20);  
 4 out-of-class essays: 10% each (=40);  
 technological assignment (online-source evaluation): 10%.

Excellent (5) = 91-100; good (4) = 81-90; average (3) = 71-80; satisfactory (2) = 61-70; F (1) = 0-60.

### **N.B.**

1. **Course requirements**— The out-of-class papers and the oral presentations are course requirements; i.e., a student must complete all of these assignments in order to pass the course.
2. **Absence policy**— Regular attendance and participation are always required in a Ph.D. course. Faithful and alert attendance is extremely important to what you learn in the course, as well as to successful work as a whole. Considering the block-taught nature of the course, however, *attendance is mandatory*. If circumstances exist that cause you to be absent, make an appointment to speak to me about your progress in the course. It is possible to fail the course by absences alone.
3. **Tardy policy**— Tardiness and early departures are not allowable. They are offensive to your fellow students and to the instructor because they disrupt class work. If you have a compelling reason for arriving late or leaving early, speak with me about the problem. If you regularly cut the beginning and/or the end of class sessions, it can add up to unexcused full-class-time absences.
4. **Extra credit**— No extra credit policy.
5. **Borderline grades**— If your grade is borderline, it depends on attendance and the general pattern of your work (performance improvements) if you can get a break.
6. **Discussing grades**— If you have questions about how I evaluated your work, please stop by to see me; or rather, in the present epidemic circumstances: get in touch online. It is my policy not to discuss grades over the telephone or via e-mail.

# S C H E D U L E

Month	Day	Theory, method, issues (discussions)	Reference, resource
February	26/1	<u>Orientation: course introduction and requirements</u>	
	26/2	<u>The Discipline</u> 1. Roy Harvey Pearce, "AS as a Discipline" (CP) 2. Warren I. Susman, "History and the American Intellectual: Uses of a Usable Past." (CP, LAS) 3. Howard Temperley and Malcolm Bradbury, "Introduction" (CP, IAS)	AS reference, bibliographies
	26/3	<u>Theory, Methods</u>	Library of Congress
	26/4	1. Henry Nash Smith, "Can AS Develop a Method?" (CP, LAS) 2. Richard M. Huber, "A Theory of AS" (CP) 3. Leo Marx, "AS—A Defense of an Unscientific Method" (CP, NLH) 4. Joel Jones, "AS: The Myth of Methodology" (CP, <i>American Self</i> )	
March	19/1	<u>Directions, Cross-disciplinarity</u>	AS and technology * The Crossroads Project
	19/2	1. Edwin H. Cady, "'AS' in the Doldrums: Or Whistling up a Breeze" (CP) 2. Robert Sklar, "The Problem of an AS 'Philosophy': A Bibliography of New Directions" (CP, AQ) 3. Giles Gunn, "Interdisciplinary Studies" (CP)	

Month	Day	Theory, method, issues (discussions)	AS outside US
March	19/3 19/4	<u>Culture, Cultural Studies</u>  1. Richard E. Sykes, "AS and the Concept of Culture: A Theory and Method" (CP) 2. Gertrude Jaeger and Philip Selznick, "A Normative Theory of Culture" (CP) 3. David Bathrick, "Cultural Studies" (CP) 4. Robert Sklar, "Cultural History and AS: Past, Present, and Future" (CP)	Internationalization of AS
April	16/1 16/2	<u>Myth-and-Symbol vs. Empirical Research and the Reflective Turn</u>  1. Bruce Kuklick, "Myth and Symbol in American Studies" (CP) 2. Gene Wise, "'Paradigm Dramas' in AS: A Cultural and Institutional History of the Movement" (CP, LAS) 3. Gordon Kelly, "Literature and the Historians," (AQ 26.2 [1974])	Transatlantic studies
	16/3 16/4	<u>The Crisis of Hegemonic American History: Pluralism or Synthesis?</u>  1. Thomas Bender, "Wholes and Parts: The Need for Synthesis in American History" (CP, JAH) 2. Nell Irvin Painter, "Bias and Synthesis in History" (CP, JAH) 3. Richard Wightman Fox, "Public Culture and the Problem of Synthesis" (CP, JAH) 4. Roy Rosenzweig, "What Is the Matter with History?" (CP, JAH)	AS in Europe
April	30/1 30/2	<u>AS and Poststructuralism (debate) 1</u> Steven Watts, "The Idiocy of AS: Poststructuralism, Language, and Politics in the Age of Self-Fulfillment" (CP, AQ) *** <u>Critical Internationalism and Transatlantic Studies</u>  1. Jane C. Desmond and Virginia R. Dominguez, "Resituating American Studies in a Critical Internationalism" (CP, AQ) 2. Will Kaufman and Heidi MacPherson, "Transatlantic Studies" (CP, New Perspectives)	AS in Hungary

Month	Day	Theory, method, issues (discussions)	Associations, grad. progrs, r. centres
April	30/3	<u>AS and Poststructuralism (debate) 2</u>	AS associations
	30/4	<p>1. Barry Shank, “A Reply to Steven Watts’s ‘Idiocy’” (CP, <i>AQ</i>)</p> <p>2. Nancy Isenberg, “The Personal is Political” (CP, <i>AQ</i>)</p> <p>3. Steven Watts, “Reply to Critics” (CP, <i>AQ</i>) ***</p> <p>Richard Pells, “American Studies: On the Margins of Europe” (CP, <i>CHE</i>)</p>	
May	14/1	<u>Reconceptualizations</u>	AS graduate programs in the U.S.
	14/2	<p>1. Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., “A New Context for a New AS?” (CP, <i>LAS</i>)</p> <p>2. Donald E. Pease, “The Place of Theory in the Future of American Studies” (<i>HJEAS</i>)</p> <p>3. Vincent B. Leitch, “Disorganization and Death of Theory American Style” (<i>HJEAS</i>)</p>	
	14/3	<u>Cultural Theory and AS</u>	AS research centers
	14/4	<p>1. George Lipsitz, “Listening to Learn and Learning to Listen: Popular Culture, Cultural Theory, and AS” (CP, <i>LAS</i>)</p> <p>2. Alice Kessler-Haggis, “Cultural Locations: Positioning AS in the Great Debate” (CP, <i>LAS</i>)</p> <p>3. Vincent B. Leitch and Mitchell Lewis, “U.S. Cultural Studies” (CP, <i>Hopkins Guide</i>)</p> <p>4. Susan Bordo, “The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity” (CP, <i>Norton</i>)</p> <p>5. Selected Bibliography: Cultural Studies (CP, <i>Norton</i>)</p>	

Month	Day	Theory, method, issues (discussions)	Journals, diss-s, fellowships
Recommended further reading		<p><u><i>Remapping American Culture</i></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peter Carafiol, “‘Who I Was’: Ethnic Identity and American Literary Ethnocentrism.” (CP, Wonham 43-62)</li> <li>2. Shelley Fisher Fishkin, ‘Interrogating ‘Whiteness,’ Complicating ‘Blackness’: Remapping American Culture” (CP, Wonham 251-90)</li> <li>3. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. “The Trope of a New Negro and the Reconstruction of the Image of the Black.” (CP, Fisher 319-45)</li> <li>4. Barbara Smith, “Toward a Black Feminist Criticism” (CP, <i>Norton</i>)</li> </ol>	AS journals, dissertations
		<u><i>Shifting the Center, Multiculturalism</i></u>	Fellowships
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Patricia Hill Collins, “Shifting the Center: Race, Class, and Feminist Theorizing” (CP, <i>American Families</i> 197-217)</li> <li>2. Karen Brodkin Sacks, “Toward a Unified Theory of Class, Race, and Gender.” (CP, <i>American Families</i> 218-29)</li> <li>3. John Trombold, “The Uneven Development of Multiculturalism” (CP, <i>Profession</i> 236-47)</li> </ol>	
		<p><u><i>The Futures of AS</i></u></p> <p>Donald E. Pease and Robyn Wiegman, “Futures.” (CP, <i>The Futures of AS</i> 1-42)</p> <p><u><i>Concluding the seminar</i></u></p>	

**Traditional topics**

the Frontier  
 the Old South  
 19<sup>th</sup> cent. Am. Lit.  
 the 1920s  
 the 1930s  
 the 1940s  
 the 1950s  
 the 1960s  
 the 1970s  
 the 1980s  
 the 1990s  
 the early 21<sup>st</sup> century  
 autobiography  
 cultural geography  
 education  
 folklore, folk culture  
 labor, the worker  
 the presidency  
 religion

**New accents**

African American studies  
 Arab American Studies  
 Asian American studies  
 body studies  
 communal history  
 cultural studies  
 (the) culture of poverty  
 ecology  
 ethnic studies  
 film studies  
 gender/women's studies  
 globalization studies  
 Hispanic American studies  
 inter-American studies  
 material culture  
 multiculturalism  
 Native American studies  
 pop culture  
 regional studies  
 transatlantic studies  
 urban history  
 visual studies  
 youth studies

## Texts

**The “course packet” is available in electronic format (CD) (or printed form if requested from the librarian) in our Institute’s Library.** Several CP-items come from *American Quarterly*, *Journal of American History*, *New Literary History*, or *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, you can locate them in those journals.

### **Recommended bibliography (some essential items only)**

Bass, Randy. *Engines of Inquiry: A Practical Guide for Using Technology to Teach American Culture*. Crossroads Project, 1997.

Bate, William and Perry Frank, eds. *Handbook for the Study of the United States*. Washington, D.C.: USIA, 1989.

Bennett, David, ed. *Multicultural States: Rethinking Difference and Identity*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Bercovitch, Sacvan. *The Rites of Assent: Transformations in the Symbolic Construction of America*. New York: Routledge, 1993.

Bradbury, Malcolm and Howard Temperley. *Introduction to American Studies*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Longman, 1989.

Coontz, Stephanie, Maya Parson, and Gabrielle Raley. *American Families: A Multicultural Reader*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Dixon, Melvin. *Ride Out the Wilderness: Geography and Identity in Afro-American Literature*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1987.

Feischmidt, Margit, ed. *Multikulturalizmus*. Budapest: Osiris, 1997.

Fisher, Philip, ed. *The New American Studies: Essays from Representations*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1991.

Franklin, Phillis, ed. *Profession 1999*. New York: MLA, 1999.

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. *Reading Black, Reading Feminist: A Critical Anthology*. New York: Meridian, 1990.

Gibaldi, Joseph, ed. *Introduction to Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literatures*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: MLA, 1992.

Giles, Paul. *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and Transatlantic Imaginary*. New Americanists. Durham: Duke UP, 2002.

Girgus, Sam B., ed. *The American Self: Myth, Ideology, and Popular Culture*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1981.

Gordon, Irving, L. *American Studies: A Conceptual Approach*. Rev. ed. New York: AMSCO, 1984.

*Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies*. “Theory and American Studies” thematic issue. 7.1 (2001).

Hopkins—*The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Forthcoming.

Kaufman, Will, and Heidi MacPherson, eds. *New Perspectives in Transatlantic Studies*. Lanham, MD: UP of America, 2002.

Kelly, Gordon R., “Literature and the Historians.” *American Quarterly* 26.2 (1974): 141-59.

Kolodny, Annette. *The Lay of the Land: Metaphor as Experience and History in American Life and Letters*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1975.

Kourany, Janet A., James P. Sterba, and Rosemary Tong, eds. *Feminist Philosophies: Problems, Theories and Applications*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999.

Leitch, Vincent B., ed. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. New York: Norton, 2001.

Maddox, Lucy, ed. *Locating American Studies: The Evolution of a Discipline*. Baltimore: Johns

Hopkins UP, 1999.

Nadel, Alan. *Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age*. New Americanists. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.

*New American Studies* book series of Duke UP. (Some included here, e.g., Giles, Nadel, Pease, Wald.)

*Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism, The*. Ed. Vincent B. Leitch.

Nye, David. *Contemporary American Society*. Akademisk Vorlag (Denmark), 1990.

Országh László. *Bevezetés az amerikanisztikába*. Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1972.

Pease, Donald E., ed. "National Identities, Postmodern Artifacts, and Postnational Narratives." *National Identities and Post-Americanist Narratives*. New Americanists. Durham: Duke UP, 1999. 1-13.

Pease, Donald E., and Robyn Wiegman, eds. *The Futures of American Studies*. New Americanists. Durham: Duke UP, 2002.

Pells, Richard. *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II*. New York: Basic, 1997.

Reed, Ishmael, ed. *MultiAmerica: Essays on Cultural Wars and Cultural Peace*. New York: Penguin, 1998.

Singh, Amritjit, Max J. Skidmore, and Isaac Sequeira, eds. *American Studies Today: An Introduction to Methods and Perspectives*. New Delhi: Creative, 1995.

Sollors, Werner, ed. *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader*. New York: New York UP, 1996.

Van Elteren, Mel. *Americanism and Americanization: A Critical History of Domestic and Global Influence*. Jefferson NC: McFarland, 2006.

Wald, Priscilla. *Constituting Americans: Cultural Anxiety and Narrative Form*. New Americanists. Durham: Duke UP, 1995.

Walker, Robert, ed. *American Studies: Topics and Sources*.

Wonham, Henry B., ed. *Criticism and the Color Line: Desegregating American Literary Studies*. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1996.