

Subject Code	ENGL597
Subject Title	Aspects of English-speaking Cultures
Credit Value	3
Level	5
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	N/A
Objectives	The subject aims at developing students' awareness and understanding of some of the key factors that shape contemporary life across the English-speaking world, with the focus on American and British cultures. The subject will examine and critically evaluate features of the socio-cultural, economic and political organisation of the selected societies. It will also compare and contrast these features with their counterparts in Hong Kong. In so doing, the subject will serve to sharpen students' perceptions of their own society.
Intended Learning Outcomes	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate an informed understanding of central socio-cultural features of American and British societies; reflect critically on the beliefs and values underpinning these features; understand life style variation as a reflection of cultural values; understand differences in the American and British approaches to the arts, the media, education, politics and individual life styles; evaluate critically key values of American and British cultures; compare and contrast these values and relate them to their own cultural background.
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus	<p>Students will explore these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationality and ethnicity: aspects of 'national characters', customs and traditions, dealing with foreigners/immigrants; Education and employment: attitudes towards education, school and university life, vocational training; Life styles and identities: gender relations, family life, worship, work and leisure; Government and politics: types of government, party systems, other forms of political participation; The media: ownership, political orientation, programming policies.

Teaching/Learning Methodology	Interactive lectures and seminars will be provided in addition to the use of WebCT for the enhancement of learning and teaching. Teaching will aim to familiarize students with the relevant academic as well as professional concepts and perspectives, and to enable them to work out their own positions amid competing value-orientations.																																																					
Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="416 376 759 555" rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th data-bbox="759 376 935 555" rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="6" data-bbox="935 376 1474 488">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed</th> </tr> <tr> <th data-bbox="935 488 1023 555">a</th> <th data-bbox="1023 488 1110 555">b</th> <th data-bbox="1110 488 1198 555">c</th> <th data-bbox="1198 488 1286 555">d</th> <th data-bbox="1286 488 1374 555">e</th> <th data-bbox="1374 488 1474 555">f</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 555 759 667">1. Seminar presentation</td> <td data-bbox="759 555 935 667">25%</td> <td data-bbox="935 555 1023 667">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1023 555 1110 667">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1110 555 1198 667">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1198 555 1286 667">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1286 555 1374 667">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1374 555 1474 667">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 667 759 734">2. Term paper</td> <td data-bbox="759 667 935 734">40%</td> <td data-bbox="935 667 1023 734">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1023 667 1110 734">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1110 667 1198 734"></td> <td data-bbox="1198 667 1286 734">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1286 667 1374 734">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1374 667 1474 734">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 734 759 808">3. Quiz</td> <td data-bbox="759 734 935 808">35%</td> <td data-bbox="935 734 1023 808">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1023 734 1110 808"></td> <td data-bbox="1110 734 1198 808">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1198 734 1286 808">✓</td> <td data-bbox="1286 734 1374 808"></td> <td data-bbox="1374 734 1474 808"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="416 808 759 882">Total</td> <td data-bbox="759 808 935 882">100%</td> <td colspan="6" data-bbox="935 808 1474 882"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>								Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed						a	b	c	d	e	f	1. Seminar presentation	25%	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2. Term paper	40%	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	3. Quiz	35%	✓		✓	✓			Total	100%						
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Seminar presentations (Weeks 5-13) provide the format for interactive student-led group discussions on the analysis of aspects of culture identified by students themselves. The term paper (introduced in Week 1 and due in Week 9) provides the opportunity to explore in detail one of the aspects discussed in the seminars. The quiz (Week 13) provides the opportunity to assess the learning of content in Weeks 10-13.																																																						
Student Study Effort Required	Class contact:																																																					
	Lecture							39 Hrs.																																														
	Seminar							0 Hrs.																																														
	Other student study effort:																																																					
	Preparation for seminar presentation by studying on-line teacher-provided materials.							61 Hrs.																																														
	Other private study							20 Hrs.																																														
	Total student study effort							120 Hrs.																																														
Reading List and References	<p>Recommended reading</p> <p>Browning, G.K., Halcli, A. & Webster, F. (2006). <i>Understanding contemporary society: theories of the present</i>. California: Sage.</p> <p>Datesman, M., Crandell, J. & Kearny, E. (2005). <i>American Ways: an introduction to American culture</i>. New York: Pearson.</p> <p>Harrington, A. (2004). <i>Modern social theory: An introduction</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Hofstede, G. (2001). <i>Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations</i>. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.</p>																																																					

MacDowell, D. (2005). *Britain in close up*. Harlow: Longman.

Further reading

Ma, E. (1999). *Culture, politics and television in Hong Kong*. London: Routledge.

Mackay, H. (1997). *Consumption of everyday life*. London: Sage.

Merelmann, R.M. (1991) *Partial visions: culture and politics in Britain, Canada, and the United States*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press.

Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the discourses of colonialism*. London: Routledge.

Ritzer, G. (1996) *The McDonaldization of society: an investigation into the changing character of contemporary social life*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge Press.

Roberts, K. (1999) *Leisure in contemporary society*. Wallingford: Cabi Pub. *Twentieth-century British social trends* (2000) Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Rogers, M.F. (1999). *Barbie culture*. London: Sage.

Smart, B. (1999). *Resisting McDonaldization*. London: Sage.

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