

Courses

The Department offers courses in American literature and cultural studies, including introductory courses, lectures, special topics courses, surveys and period courses, and Master Research Seminars. Together with the Center for the Studies of the Americas, the Department recently hosted a lecture series.

>> www.uni-graz.at/amer1www/amer1www_studium.htm

European Master in English and American Studies

The English-taught Joint Degree program is a full-time program which is completed over 2 years with a total of 120 ECTS credits. The program offers specialized academic training in English and American Studies focusing on the core areas of literature, linguistics and cultural studies. After successful completion of the program students will be awarded the joint MA degree of the five core members of the consortium identifying the corresponding national equivalent.

>> *Partner Universities: Bamberg, City College NY, Graz, Pécs, Southampton, Venedig* >> www.jointdegree.eu/index.php?id=18&lng=1

Study Abroad

Our joint studies partners include:

- USA: Hendrix College, Conway, AK. Montclair College, Montclair, NJ. Rider College, Lawrenceville, NJ. Seattle University, Seattle, WA. State University of New York, Binghamton, NY. University of Arkansas at Little Rock, AK. University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK. University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, WI. Williams College, Williamstown, MA. University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, AK. University of New Mexico at Albuquerque, NM.
- Sokrates/Erasmus-Programs: Manchester Metropolitan University (UK), Universidad de La Laguna, Tenerife (E), Università degli Studi di Firenze (I), Università Salerno (I), Universität Thessaloniki (GR), Université Paris VII (F), Université Paris IV (Sorbonne, F), Syddansk Universitet, Odense (DK), University of Joensuu (Finland), Univerza v Maribor (SL), Universität Pecs (H), Universität Olomouc (CZ).

>> www.uni-graz.at/bibwww/bibwww_students/bibwww_s_outgoing.htm

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AMERICAN STUDIES



General Information

The Department of American Studies (Institut für Amerikanistik), together with the Department of English Studies (Institut für Anglistik), offers programs that either lead towards a B.A. (Bachelor of Arts), M.A. (Masters of Arts), Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) or a teaching degree (Lehramt). The department, which is one of two American Studies departments in Austria, is committed to a broad interdisciplinary approach and devotes its efforts in both teaching and research to the study of the overall cultural and social development of the U.S.A. All the courses at the Department of American Studies are held in English. The departmental library holds 24.500 volumes, 45 current journals and some 2.560 videos. The faculty covers broad areas in American Studies, and guest professors from international universities offer additional courses in related fields. The department also provides continuing education seminars for secondary school teachers.

The department has a standing tradition of student exchanges and teaching agreements with many international universities through programs such as Joint Degree, Fulbright and Erasmus. We encourage our students to take advantage of the ample study abroad programs with our European and American partner universities. Our department members are active in a variety of national and international scholarly associations including the Austrian Association of American Studies (AAAS), the American Studies Association (ASA), the European Association of American Studies (EAAS). In terms of academic outreach, the department has organized many national and international conferences as well as public lectures to and film viewings with the community.

Contemporary American Literature and Film, Applied Literary Theory and Cultural Studies, Postmodern Theory, Literature and Political Rhetoric, Aging Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Urban Studies, Multi-Ethnic Studies.

Literature and War, Mother-Daughter Relationships, American City Novel, US-Icons, Documentary Film, 9/11.



Literature and War

This project conducts a systematic analysis of the literary discourses in U.S. War Literature ranging from WWII to the Iraq War. In particular, the project discusses the following contemporary authors: John Briley, John Del Vecchio, Susan Fromberg-Schaefer, John Hawkes, Joseph Heller, Norman Mailer, Bobbie Anne Mason, Robin Moore, Tim O'Brien, Kurt Vonnegut.

>> *Research: Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Walter Hölbling*

Ethnic Stereotypes

Socio-cultural investigation of prevalent conceptions of North-American-Indian cultures among 14-17 year-olds in Austria and the U.S. in cooperation with ten high-schools in both countries. Methodological approaches include surveys, interviews and field notes.

>> *Research: Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Walter Hölbling*

US-Icons

There are images we all know: Mickey Mouse, Madonna, the lonesome cowboy or the falling twin towers. Such are the icons that millions of people associate with the U.S., in other words, they are the images that managed to stick out of the mass media overflow of data. These images are embedded in national and global discourses and power relations. At the same time, they appeal to a broad and heterogeneous audience. These images have multiple meanings, meanings that are constantly shifting. Thus, they epitomize social realities, including conflicts and contradictions.

>> *Research: Ao.Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Klaus Rieser*

Aging Studies

The question of how age is mediated in our culture is related to a semantics of form. The 'narrative turn' has affected the theoretical foundations of both the humanities and the life sciences. History, story-telling and images of aging are linked by narrative genres that are invested with cultural meanings. Focusing on the individual life story the question is how the aging process, memory and the experience of time are incorporated into cultural narratives of aging. Furthermore, the construction of cultural images of age will be explored in the representations of both narrative and visual media: in literature, film and television, in advertising, photography, sculpture or the graphic arts. A gendered perspective promises insights into the different ways of perceiving and narrating age in history.

>> *Research: Ao.Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Roberta Maierhofer*

Transnational Feminism

The term transnational is one of the biggest buzzwords of the 21st century. As umbrella term for the global linkages and the diversity and contradictions of these exchanges, it describes the degree to which people increasingly live in more than one nation and the ease with which travel of persons, goods and knowledge has been made available. Transnational feminism investigates these exchanges and proposes ways in which borders and boundaries of nation, culture, race and gender need to be reconceptualized, confused, challenged and, potentially, eliminated. Such is also the main intent of this project which analyzes the representations of these tensions in the works of a variety of Asian American, Mexican American, Latina and Caribbean authors. >> *Research: Mag. Dr. Silvia Schultermandl*

The City in Postmodern Literature

"The city as we imagine it, the soft city of illusion, myth, aspiration, and nightmare," Jonathan Raban says, "is as real, maybe more real than the hard city one can locate on maps, statistics, monographs on urban sociology, demography and architecture." This study looks at literary representations of the American (post)metropolis and, in particular, at how processes of transformation, such as globalization and the emergence of new information and communication technologies, have changed the ways the city has been constructed in the cultural imagination. In essence, this project considers the fictional accounts of the metropolis as testimony to the ongoing conversation about what American culture is. Writers discussed include Paul Auster, Toni Morrison, Frank O'Hara, Jay McInerney, Ralph Ellison and Don DeLillo. >> *Research: Mag. Petra Eckhard*

Academic Networking – AYA

AYA (Austrian Young Americanists) is a Graz-based student organization that provides information about the current research projects of post-graduate students at Austrian universities. This network is part of an initiative by the European Association of American Studies to make post-grad facilities across Europe more transparent and more effectively structured beyond the national reach. Through their website with features short profiles of the current doctoral candidates in Austria, a discussion forum, and postings of the current job and grant opportunities, AYA serves both as an interactive newsletter to students and as an additional form of academic mentorship. With its annual organization of the AYA Retreat which brings together post-graduates and Fulbright scholars, and thus helps establish future relations with American scholars across the discipline of American Studies. >> *Coordinators: Mag. Dr. Silvia Schultermandl, Mag. Petra Eckhard, Mag. Michael Fuchs*
>> www.uni-graz.at/aya

