



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Introduction to Hungarian Culture / vadas vengr kult r	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: lect. Márton Zsolnai	Faculty of Philology, Centre for Scandinavian Studies

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
first	Open elective for Individual studies, General university studies and incoming Erasmus students of all faculties

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Face to face seminars	Spring semester	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: English (B2 or higher)	Co-requisites (if relevant): None

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	150	32	118

Purpose of the course unit		
The main goal of the course is to lead in students to Hungarian culture through written and audiovisual texts.		
Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
<p>By the end of the course, students will be able to identify key periods and events in Hungarian history and explain their cultural significance.</p> <p>They will be able to describe the main features of Hungarian geography, language, and national identity. Students will recognise major works and figures in Hungarian literature, music, visual arts, and film. They will be able to discuss traditional and contemporary aspects of Hungarian folk culture, customs, and cuisine.</p> <p>Students will critically reflect on Hungary's cultural development in the European and global context. They will demonstrate intercultural awareness by connecting Hungarian cultural heritage with broader international perspectives.</p>	<p>The course combines lectures, discussions, and interactive activities to introduce students to key aspects of Hungarian culture.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multimedia presentations, films, and musical excerpts are used to illustrate cultural and historical topics. <p>Students participate in small-group tasks, debates, and short oral presentations to develop critical and intercultural understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading assignments and reflective writing tasks encourage independent study and personal engagement with the material. <p>Selected museum or cultural event visits (in person or virtual) may complement classroom learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active participation and curiosity are essential components of the learning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presentation - class participation - written assignment - exam at the end of the semester

Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
1. Introduction			2				2	8	Short homework related to the main topics. Exact tasks will be presented later in class.
2. Geography and Origins of the Hungarian People: <i>Hungary's geographical position, natural features, and the origins and migration of the Magyars leading to the conquest of the Carpathian Basin.</i>			2				2	8	
3. Historical Milestones: <i>From the medieval kingdom through the Ottoman and Habsburg periods to the Reform Era, 1848 Revolution, and the struggles for independence.</i>			2				2	8	
4. Twentieth-Century Transformations: <i>The Treaty of Trianon, the two World Wars, socialist period, and the democratic transition after 1989.</i>			2				2	8	
5. Hungarian Language and Identity: <i>The uniqueness and origins of the Hungarian language, its role in shaping national identity, and its presence in world literature through translations.</i>			2				2	8	
6. Folk Culture and Traditions: <i>Folk art, folk music, dance, and the preservation of cultural heritage in modern times.</i>			2				2	8	
7. Hungarian Literature: <i>From classical authors (Petőfi, Arany, Jókai) to modern and contemporary writers (Kosztolányi, Márai, Esterházy, Krasznahorkai)</i>			2				2	8	
8. Visual Arts and Architecture: <i>Key trends in Hungarian painting, sculpture, and architecture from the medieval to the contemporary period.</i>			2				2	8	
9. Music and Performing Arts: <i>The legacy of Liszt, Bartók, and Kodály; Hungarian operetta, popular and alternative music scenes.</i>			2				2	8	
10. Film and Theatre: <i>The development of Hungarian cinema and theatre, major directors, and cultural institutions.</i>			2				2	8	
11. Hungarian Cuisine and Gastronomy: <i>Traditional dishes, regional specialities, and the role of food in social and festive life.</i>			2				2	8	
12. Customs, Holidays, and Everyday Culture: <i>Family and social customs (name days, weddings, hospitality) and major religious and national holidays.</i>			2				2	8	
13. Contemporary Hungary and the European Context: <i>Cultural and social changes after 1989, Hungary's place in the European Union, and current artistic and media trends.</i>			2				2	8	
14. Hungarians Abroad and International Cultural Relations: <i>The Hungarian diaspora, cultural institutes, and global promotion of Hungarian culture.</i>			2				2	8	
15. Revision, presentations			4				4	6	
Total			32				32	118	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Presentation	10	semester	structure (2 points), content (4 points), delivery (2 points), layout (2 points)
Class participation	20	semester	active participation: students attend the classes, take part in the group discussions, do the weekly homework
Written assignment	30	semester end	structure (2 points), content (4 points), delivery (2 points), layout (2 points)
Oral exam	40	exam session	structure (3 points), content (7 points)

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Lóránt Czigány	1982	A History of Hungarian Literature From the Earliest Times to the mid-1970's		Oxford, Clarendon Press https://mek.oszk.hu/02000/02042/html/index.htm
Terry Black, Selina Tso (directors)	2021	Europe from above: Hungary	season 2, episode 5	National Geography
Károly Kocsis	2018	National Atlas of Hungary – Natural Environment		MTA CSFK Geographical Institute
Steve Fallon, Anna Kaminski	2017	Budapest & Hungary	8 th edition	Lonely Planet
© UNESCO World Heritage Centre	1992-2024	Hungary - UNESCO World Heritage Convention		https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/hu
Recommended reading				
Raimonda Ragauskienė, Aivas Ragauskas	2018	Tolimos bet artimos: Lietuvos ir vengrijos istoriniai ryšiai		https://www.flf.vu.lt/dokumentai/TOLIMOS_BET_ARTIMOS_LIETUVOS_IR_VENGRIJOS_ISTORINIAI_RYSIAI%202019.12.pdf
Gábor Gyáni	2021	A Nation Divided by History and Memory. Hungary in the Twentieth Century and Beyond		Routledge
László Kósa	2000	A Cultural History of Hungary in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries		Corvina
Paul Lendvai (translated by Ann Major)	2003	The Hungarians: A Thousand Years of Victory in Defeat		Princeton University Press
Further literary pieces and articles provided by the lecturer				

Last updated: 20-10-2025