COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Introduction into Baltic Studies (Baltistikos įvadas)	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: Lect. Giedrė Junčytė **Other:** Prof. Dr. Habil. Bonifacas Stundžia	Department of Baltic Studies, Institute for the Languages and Cultures of the Baltic, Faculty of Philology, Vilnius University, Universiteto 5

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First	Mandatory

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Face-to-face	2nd semester (Spring)	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: English level B2	**Co-requisites (if relevant):** none

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	130	32	98

Purpose of the course unit

The purpose of this course is: to introduce the roots and the main features of ancient and Christianised Baltic peoples' (Lithuanian, Latvian, Latgalian, and Prussian) cultures, reconstructed on the basis both of their languages, as well as contacts with neighbouring languages; to develop ability to use critical thinking and collaborative work for the investigation of cultures and analysis of distinctive cultural phenomena (not as isolated instances, but in a broader socio- and ethno-cultural context).

Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will be able to describe major periods and facts in the development of culture.	Lectures, seminars, discussions, academic literature review.	Participation in discussions during seminars, examination (test), group presentations.
Students will be able to interpret the relation between culture and language and the role of language contacts in the development of culture, as well as critically examine how major cultural values are encoded in language.	Lectures, seminars, discussions, analysis of cultural phenomena.	
Students will understand the basic values, beliefs, interests and behavioural norms of Lithuanian culture and the historical reasons that have shaped it, and be able to analyse and critically evaluate different cultural contexts on the basis of this knowledge.		
Students will critically engage with academic material, carry out individual	Group work, academic literature review, group	

research and combine it with that of others in a presentation on a selected phenomenon of Lithuanian and Latvian culture.	discussions.	
Students will be able to discuss and cooperate with colleagues considering topics on cultural identity.	Group work, discussions, academic literature review.	

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. The origin and the meaning of the term 'Baltic'. The territory of ancient Balts based on the analysis of European hydronyms. The significance of the Indo-European and non-Indo-European cultures for the formation of Balts.	2						**2**	**6**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 46-60; Bojtar, p. 6-12; 80-84; Sabaliauskas, p. 20-37.
2. Pagan religion as an important component of the identity of the Balts: data from languages and chronicles. Cultural differences between Baltic peoples. Amber and The Amber Road.	2						**2**	**6**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 275-282; Biezajs, p. 1-10; Gimbutas, p. 85-94; Bojtar, p. 278-304; Vėlius, 1983, p. 273-278 (English summary).
3. The significance of the outcomes of language contacts for the interpretation of cultural identity of peoples. Outline of the ancient Baltic culture based on the data from contacts with Finnic, Slavic and Germanic languages.	2						**2**	**6**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 192-238, Zinkevičius, p. 1-14; Sabaliauskas, p. 12-20, 37-50; Bojtar, p. 23-35.
4. The process of Christianising Prussians, Lithuanians, and Latvians: the influence of East Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Protestantism. The variety of languages and cultures in the Baltic area, and the place of Baltic languages and cultures among them.	2						**2**	**6**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 283-287, 374-391; Zinkevičius, p. 70-84; Stundžia, p. 36-41; Draviņa, p. 25-27.
5. The first Prussian, Lithuanian, Latvian and Latgalian texts, the beginning of printing and the formation of literary languages. The importance of cultural centres in Prague, Königsberg, Vilnius, and Dorpat (Tartu) for the development of Prussian, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Latgalian cultures (14th-18th c.).			4				**4**	**13**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 397-410, 467-473, Zinkevičius, p. 227-230, 241-246, 256-258; Stundžia, p. 44-52; Ross, Vanags,

									p. 173-192; Draviņa, p. 28-30. Preparation for the presentation.
6. The Lithuanian, Latvian and Latgalian cultures in the 19th c. and in the Independent Republics (1918-1939). The ban of Lithuanian and Latgalian publications printed in the Latin alphabet. The standardisation of Lithuanian, Latvian, and Latgalian.			4				**4**	**13**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 473-490, Zinkevičius, p. 259-264, 276-285; Stundžia, p. 52-59; Kuizinienė, p. 11-50; Ross, Vanags, p. 180-192, 222-230. Preparation for the presentation.
7. The Sovietisation of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Latgalian cultures. Changes in the ethno-social situation. Interference with Russian.			4				**4**	**13**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 496-505, Zinkevičius, p. 312-323; Stundžia, p. 59-63; Šilbajoris, p. 74-104. Preparation for the presentations
8. The Lithuanian and Latvian cultures during the new independence. The revival of the Latgalian language and culture. The Lithuanian, Latvian, and Latgalian cultures in emigration.			4				**4**	**13**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Dini, p. 506-517, 533-543; Zinkevičius, p. 326-332. Preparation for the presentation.
9. Calendar and song festivals of the Balts.			8				**8**	**22**	Study of academic literature, reading of specified passages: Vaicekauskas, p. 21-45, 55-71, 89-107, 115-128; 141-154; Latvia and Latvians, Vol I, p. 451-459. Preparation for the presentation.
Total	**8**		**24**				**32**	**98**	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Presentations during the seminars	30	During the semester, starting week 4	During the semester students will prepare and deliver a presentation on a chosen topic. The main presentation will require a combination of critical evaluation of the seminar material (academic literature), as well as individual research and examples on the topic. *PowerPoint* slides are mandatory. Assessment: **3 points**: the seminar material has been critically evaluated, visual examples are supplied, students are able to develop a discussion and answer questions. **2 points:** the seminar material has not been critically evaluated by students, visual examples are supplied minimally, students lack the ability to develop a discussion and answer questions.

			1 point: the seminar material has been presented superficially, no visual examples are provided, students are not able to develop a discussion and/ or answer questions. **0 points**: the seminar material was not presented.
Participation in discussions during seminars	20	Regularly during the semester, starting week 2	Seminar attendance is a mandatory component of the course. Students are expected to attend the seminars and participate actively in seminar activities and discussions. Assessment: **2 points:** The student demonstrates thorough preparation, engages critically with the assigned readings, and makes substantive contributions to seminar discussions. **1 point:** The student is present and prepared for the seminar but participates only to a limited extent in discussions and activities. **0 points:** The student is not prepared for discussions during the seminar or does not participate in it.
Exam (test)	50	During the exam session	The test consists of open and closed type questions based on material covered throughout the course. **10 (excellent).** Excellent, exceptional knowledge of the roots and features of Baltic peoples' culture, excellent abilities to interpret cultural phenomena which are encoded in Baltic languages. 95-100% of questions answered correctly. **9 (very good).** Very good knowledge of the roots and features of the culture of the Baltic peoples, very good abilities to interpret cultural phenomena which are encoded in Baltic languages. 85-94% of questions answered correctly. **8 (good).** Knowledge and abilities are above average. 75-84% of questions answered correctly. **7 (average).** Average knowledge and abilities; there are a few not essential mistakes. 65-74% of questions answered correctly. **6 (satisfactory).** Knowledge and abilities are below average; there are mistakes. 55-64% of questions answered correctly. **5 (weak).** Knowledge and abilities meet the minimum requirements. 51-54% of questions answered correctly. **4, 3, 2, 1**. Minimum requirements are not met. 10 points correspond to 50% of the final grade
In the preparation of presentations and/or written assignments, the principles of academic integrity and the ethical use of GenAI apply (Vilnius University Faculty of Philology guidelines on the use of generative artificial intelligence). If a student has used GenAI in preparing a presentation and/or a written assignment, they must clearly indicate in the submitted work and/or during the presentation how and for what purposes GenAI was used. When assessing a presentation and/or a written assignment, the instructor reserves the right to verify the authorship of the student's work orally and/or in writing. If a student is unable to explain the content of their presentation or written assignment, or is unable to answer specific questions related to the submitted presentation or text, the work may be considered to have been prepared in violation of the principles of academic integrity.			

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
Required reading				
Dini, Pietro U.	2014	*Foundations of Baltic Languages*		Vilnius: Eugrimas http://www.esparama.lt/es_parama_pletra/failai/ESFproduktai/2014_Foundations_of_Baltic_Languages.pdf
Bojtár, Endre	1999	*Foreword to the Past. A Cultural History of the Baltic People*		Budapest: Central European University Press https://books.google.lt/books?id=Er1_CwA

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Zinkevičius, Zigmas	1996; 1998	*The History of the Lithuanian Language*		Vilnius: Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla
Sabaliauskas, Algirdas	1993	*We, the Balts*		Vilnius: Science and Encyclopaedia Publishers
Vaicekauskas, Arūnas	2014	*Ancient Lithuanian Calendar Festivals*		Vilnius: Versus Aureus
Stundžia, Bonifacas	2014	*The Lithuanian Language: Distinctive Features, Past and Present*		Vilnius: Science and Encyclopaedia Publishing Centre
Kuizinienė, Dalia (ed.)	2014	*History of Lithuanian Culture*		Vilnius: Versus Aureus
Šilbajoris, Rimvydas (ed.)	1983	*Mind Against the Wall: Essays on Lithuanian Culture under Soviet Occupation*		Chicago: Institute of Lithuanian Studies Press
Draviņa, Rūķe	1977	*The Standardization Process in Latvian. 16 th Century to the Present*		Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.
Ross, Kristiina, Vanags, Pēteris (eds.).	2008	*Common roots of the Latvian and Estonian literary languages*		Frankfurt am Main, Berlin: Peter Lang
Biezais, Harolds	2000	*Baltic Religion. In: Encyclopaedia Britannica*		Encyclopaedia Britannica entry: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Baltic-religion 6
Vėlius, Norbertas	1989 1983	*World Outlook of Ancient Balts* *Senovės baltų pasaulėžiūra*		Vilnius: Mintis Vilnius: Mintis
Gimbutas, Marija	1963	*The Balts*		London: Frederick A. Praeger https://archive.org/details/GimbutasMarijaTheBaltsEN1963237P./mode/2up
Gimbutienė, Marija	1985	*Baltai priešistoriniais laikais*		Vilnius: Mokslas

	2018	*Latvia and Latvians. Collection of scholarly articles*	Vol. 1, Vol. 2	Riga, Academy of Sciences
Recommended reading				
Anthony, David	2007/ 2010	*The Horse, the Wheel, and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes Shaped the Modern World*		Princeton University Press
Manco, Jean	2016	*Ancestral Journeys: The Peopling of Europe from the First Venturers to the Vikings (Revised and Updated Edition)*		London: Thames & Hudson.
Dini, Pietro U.	2014	*Prelude to Baltic Linguistics. Earliest Theories about Baltic Languages (16th century)*		Rodopi
Rimantienė, Rimutė	2016	*Nida. A Bay Coast Culture Settlement on the Curonian Lagoon*		Vilnius: Academy of Arts Press
Butrimas, Adomas	2018	*Amber Discs with Cross Decoration in the South Eastern Baltic*		Vilnius: Academy of Arts Press

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