



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Ukraine in Images and Symbols: From Origins to the Present /Ukraina vaizduose ir simboliuose: nuo ištakų iki dabarties	

Lecturer(s)		Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered	
Coordinator: Dr. Olena Chepurna		Department of Slavic Studies, VU Faculty of Philology	
Study cycle		Type of the course unit (module)	
first		Optional	
Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction	
Lectures and seminars	Autumn or spring term, according to the possibilities of the department	English	
Requirements for students			
Prerequisites: B2 level of English according to CEFRL		Additional requirements (if any):	
Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	130	32	98
Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed			
The aims of the course are to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of Ukraine's cultural and historical identity through the study of its images and symbols in literature, art, cinema, and historical narratives. The module aims to develop an appreciation for the role of national symbols in shaping collective identity and fostering dialogue with global cultures, while also encouraging critical reflection on Ukraine's postcolonial experience and its cultural evolution. Develop the ability to analyze and interpret cultural symbols and their role in national identity formation. Gain a nuanced understanding of Ukraine's cultural heritage in its historical and global contexts. Combine knowledge from history, literature, art, and film studies to create a holistic view of Ukraine's cultural evolution. Explore connections between national traditions and global cultural trends.			
Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)		Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods

<p>Students will acquire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the ability to plan time and observe deadlines (complete assignments on time); <p>Identify key historical events and processes that have shaped Ukraine's cultural identity;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- explain the role of geography and history in the formation of Ukraine’s national symbols and traditions;- interpret and critically assess the use of Ukrainian images and symbols in literature, art, and cinema;- understand the transformation of national symbols across different historical periods, including their role in postcolonial discourse;- analyze literary texts, artworks, and films to understand their cultural and symbolic significance;- examine how Ukrainian creators represent national identity, historical memory, and cultural traumas in their works.	<p>Interactive lectures and seminar discussions; analysis of theoretical texts and empirical material, oral presentations, practical exercises.</p>						<p>Cumulative evaluation: constructive participation in seminars, oral presentation, examination (could be split into midterm and final) and an essay project.</p>		
Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours						Individual work: time and assignments		
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshop	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
1. Geography as destiny: Ukraine at the Crossroads of Civilisations. Regni Russiae. The origins of state-building on the territory of modern Ukraine. Knightly heritage of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the historical and cultural landscape. The ‘aristocracy of the saber’ - the Cossack tradition. Ukrainian lands as part of empires. Cherishing traditions. Postcolonial achievements.	4		4				8	12	1. Reading and analysing texts related to the topic. 2. Preparation of a presentation on a chosen topic.
2. Ukraine in literary images and symbols. National myth: heroes and archetypes.	4		4				8	12	

<p>Tragedies and struggles: the Holodomor, wars, repressions. depiction of national traumas in the literature of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.</p> <p>Postcolonial dimension and decolonisation of culture.</p> <p>Literature of contemporary Ukraine: challenges and prospects. Translations, international recognition, dialogue with other cultures.</p>								
<p>3. National fine arts of Ukraine in the world context.</p> <p>Traditional symbols in folk art.</p> <p>Sacred art. Ukrainian icon.</p> <p>Classical and contemporary Ukrainian art.</p>		4		4				8 12
<p>4. Ukrainian cinema: history, present, prospects.</p> <p>The birth of Ukrainian cinema: from the beginnings to the classics.</p> <p>Ukrainian cinema of the Soviet era: between art and propaganda.</p> <p>The revival of national cinema: independent Ukraine.</p> <p>Contemporary Ukrainian cinema: challenges and prospects.</p>		4		4				8 12
Individual essay project								50
Total		16		16				32 98
Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline		Assessment criteria				
Cumulative evaluation:								
Participation in seminars	10 %	during the semester		Ability to ask ‘why’ questions and participate in a meaningful discussion. Students must attend at least 65 % of the seminars.				
Presentation on a chosen topic	40 %	during the semester when the relevant topic is discussed		Ability to present relevant well-structured information, ability to apply the selected theory, to keep the audience’s attention and deal with questions.				

Examination (could be split into mid-term and final)	50%	during the examination session	Assessment according to a 10-point scale: 10 (excellent). Excellent, exceptional knowledge and abilities. 95-100% of questions answered
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			correctly. 9 (very good). Very good knowledge and abilities. 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.

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
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Compulsory reading

Ivshyna L.	2014	Ukraine incognita Top 25		Private JSC Ukrainian Press Group, Kyiv
Shevchenko T.	2014	Кобзар. The Essential Poetry of Taras Shevchenko		Piramida Publishing, Lviv
Kazimirova K.	2022	Voices of Freedom. Contemporary Writing From Ukraine		8 th and Atlas Publishing, Winston-Salem
Lozhkina A.	2024			Thames & Hudson, Australia

		The Art of Ukraine (World of Art)		
Joshua First	2015	Ukrainian Cinema: Belonging and		Bloomsbury Publishing, London

		Identity during the Soviet Thaw (KINO - The Russian and Soviet Cinema)		
Recommended reading				
Івшина Л.	2017	Корона або Спадщина Королівства Руського		ТОВ “Українська прес-група”, Київ
Мусієнко О.	2009	Українське кіно: тести і контекст		Глобус-Прес, Вінниця

Updated March 25, 2025.