



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Society and Culture in Lithuania's Neighboring Countries (20th and 21st Centuries)	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
Coordinating: doc. dr. Kinga Geben, asist. dr. Ernesta Kazakėnaitė Other:	Vilnius University Faculty of Philology, Institute of Baltic Languages and Cultures

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
BA	elective

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Contact and self-directed work	Autumn	English

Requisites	
Prerequisites: Knowledge of English at B2 level	Co-requisites (if relevant):

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

Purpose of the course unit

The aim of the module is to provide students with knowledge of contemporary cultural and social phenomena in Lithuania's neighboring countries — Latvia, and Poland — and to explore their relationship with Lithuanian culture and society.

Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
<p>Students will acquire knowledge of the most significant cultural and artistic phenomena, works, and key figures in Polish and Latvian culture and art of the 20th and 21st centuries. They will be able to critically analyse and evaluate these in the context of broader social processes.</p> <p>In addition, students will gain an understanding of various aspects of socio-cultural life in Lithuania and its neighboring countries—Lithuania's strategic partners: Latvia, and Poland. They will develop the ability to compare and assess these phenomena in relation to similar socio-cultural developments in their own country.</p> <p>The course also aims to develop students'</p>	<p>Problem-based instruction (problem-based discussion). Readings. Interactive lecture, seminars, group discussion.</p>	<p>Formative assessment – student's performance during seminars (participation and critical thinking)</p>

communicative and socio-cultural competences in a chosen foreign language, enabling them to apply these skills appropriately in intercultural contexts.		
<p>Students will be able to apply theoretical concepts and visual materials to explain the development of cultural, artistic, and social processes in the region during the 20th and 21st centuries.</p> <p>They will be able to analyse and critically evaluate works of art, including theatre and film.</p> <p>Students will be able to identify and articulate key issues emerging within cultural life, analyse and assess them, and propose well-reasoned, creative solutions.</p> <p>They will develop the ability to critically evaluate, interpret, and synthesise information from diverse sources.</p> <p>Students will be capable of generating original ideas, finding innovative solutions to problems, and demonstrating openness to change and innovation.</p>	Viewing, analysis, and presentation of visual material. Readings. Interactive lectures, seminars, group discussions, and case analysis.	Summative assessment – written exam
The student will develop public speaking skills and the ability to express ideas clearly and confidently in front of an audience. They will be able to work independently and responsibly, selecting appropriate methods of action and managing their time effectively. In addition, the student will be able to work collaboratively, taking personal responsibility as well as shared responsibility for group outcomes. They will be capable of proposing strategies and approaches to achieve common goals and contributing to effective time planning within a team.	Group discussions, preparation and presentation of a scholarly essay.	Summative assessment – one scholarly essay

Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
Topic: Poland in Europe – Key Features of Geography, Demography, and	2		2				2	10	Reading texts and critical literature,

<p>Historical Experience</p> <p>Collective and individual dimensions of Polish identity and self-awareness</p> <p>Regional differences in Poland: major cities, demographic trends, and political characteristics</p> <p>The historical legacy of World War II in Polish society</p> <p>Prominent political and cultural figures of the 20th and 21st centuries</p>								<p>viewing fragments of video materials available online.</p> <p>Video material: Chronicle of Polish Cinema (10 min), "Walesa: Man of Hope" (Wałęsa. Człowiek z Nadziei) dir. A. Wajda (1.5 hours).</p>	
<p>Topic: Polish Society and Culture. Polish Cinema</p> <p>Overview of major developments in contemporary Polish culture and the arts</p> <p>Polish self-perception and Christian values; shifts in worldview as reflected in K. Kiesłowski's <i>Decalogue I</i></p> <p>19th and 20th century Polish painting (case study)</p> <p>Notable Polish film directors and the work of Oscar winners (visual and thematic analysis)</p>	2		2				2	10	<p>Viewing and discussing fragments of video material.</p> <p>K. Kiesliowski "Decalogue I" (available online 35 min.)</p> <p>e.g. Z. Beksiński's painting motifs, his biography and creative features (available online)</p>
<p>Topic: Polish Literature, Music, and Theatre</p> <p>Nobel Prize laureates in Polish literature and selected analyses of their works</p> <p>Selected works by Polish composers, including K. Penderecki (with audio excerpts)</p> <p>Popular music in Poland: the <i>disco polo</i> phenomenon and its comparison with similar sociocultural trends in students' home countries</p> <p>Innovations in Polish theatre: the work of leading contemporary directors such as Tadeusz Kantor, Krystian Lupa, and Krzysztof Warlikowski.</p>	4		4				6	20	<p>Reading texts and critical literature, viewing fragments of video material.</p> <p>Tokarczuk, Olga, Flights, Vilnius 2019 (30 pages)</p> <p>Music recordings (~1 hour) are available online. Analysis of video material and presentation of creative biographies: Jerzy Grotowski and Tadeusz Kantor "The dead class" (Umarła klasa") (30 min.)</p>
<p>Topic: Latvia in Europe – main features of geographical location, demography and historical experience.</p> <p>- Latvian demography, migration, country regions and regional policy in the 21st century.</p> <p>- Collective and individual Latvian self-consciousness. Three Latvian revivals.</p>	2		2				2	10	<p>Reading texts and critical literature (text from Mara Kalnins' "Latvia. A short History"), viewing fragments of video material.</p>
<p>Topic: Latvian society and culture</p> <p>- Latvian society, self-perception and</p>	2		2				2	10	<p>Reading texts (Inara Leikuma "Latvian</p>

representation, perception of Latvians as introverts (<i>The Life of I*</i> (*an introvert Latvian writer)).								identity” (12 p.; available online), viewing video fragments ("Case study of the #iamintrovert campaign"; 3:11 min, available online).
- 20th century art (poster, sculpture, painting, avant-garde (<i>Hardijs Lediņš</i> and <i>Nebijušu Sajūtu Restaurēšanas Darbnīca</i>)). The most famous cultural figures.								
Topic: Latvian literature, music, theater and cinema	4		4				6	20
- Discussion of the most important authors, literary movements and trends, translation as a reflection of cultural development (fragment analysis).								
- Traditional and contemporary music trends, <i>Krišjānis Barons</i> and <i>Dainu skapis</i> , post-folklore (<i>Iļģi</i>) and song festival phenomena.								
- Discussion of the most important contemporary cultural and artistic events, the most famous directors and actors.								
- Latvian film chronicle (<i>Aleksandrs Stanke</i> , <i>Hercs Franks</i> , “ <i>Ten Minutes Older</i> ”, film awards and festivals (<i>Lielais Kristaps</i>), (fragments of recordings).								
Final seminar			2				2	18
Total	16		16				32	98

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Preparation and activity during seminars	20 percent	During the semester	Active participation in seminars and timely and high-quality completion of independent tasks are assessed: 100 percent of completed tasks – 20 percent, 70 percent of tasks completed – 10 percent, if less than 50 percent of tasks are completed – 0 percent.
Scientific essay	30 percent	During the semester	Volume 6000 characters. Clear logical structure of the work (introduction, main part, conclusions, list of sources used). Critical reflection. Ability to use methodological literature. It is assessed on a scale of 1–10, in accordance with the VU Study Results Assessment Procedure.
Final exam (written)	40 percent	During the exam period	It is assessed on a scale of 1–10, according to the VU Study Results Assessment Procedure: 10 (excellent). Excellent, exceptional knowledge and skills. 95–100 percent of questions answered correctly. 9 (very good). Solid, good knowledge and skills. 85–94 percent of questions answered correctly. 8 (good). Better than average knowledge and skills. 75–84 percent of questions answered correctly. 7 (average). Average knowledge and skills, there are minor errors. 65–74 percent of questions answered correctly. 6 (satisfactory). Knowledge and skills are worse than average, there are mistakes. 55–64 percent of the questions were answered correctly.

			5 (weak). Knowledge and skills meet the minimum requirements. 51–54 percent of questions answered correctly. 4, 3, 2, 1. Minimum requirements not met.
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Author	Year of publication	Name	Periodical No. or volume of publication	Place of publication and publisher or web link
Required reading				
Mara Kalninis	2015	Latvia: A Short History		C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd
Alvydas Butkus	1995	Latviai		Kaunas: Aesti
Rita Repšienė, Odeta Žukauskienė	2016	Lietuvos kultūros tyrimai 7. Dainų šventė – tapatybės savastis ir modernybės trajektorijos		Vilnius: Lietuvos kultūros tyrimų institutas
Tokarczuk, Olga	2019	Flights		https://readandlaugh.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/flights - olga_tokarczuk.pdf
Kieślowski, Krzysztof		An Interview with Krzysztof Kieślowski		https://przekroj.org/en/art-stories/master-of-the-emotional-trap-an-interview-with-krzysztof-kieslowski/
Paavo Matsin	2020	Gogol's Disco		Dalkey Archive Press
Ausma Cimdiņa, Deniss Hanovs	2010	Latvia and Latvians: A People and a State in Ideas, Images and Symbols		Rīga: Zinātne
		Performing arts; cinema; literature		https://culture.pl/en , https://culture.pl/en/artist/jan-matejko http://www.pinakoteka.zaschienen.pl/Malczewski_J/Malczewski_J_5.htm https://beks.pl/beksinski-obrazy/
Grotowski, Jerzy	2002	Towards a poor Theatre		https://monoskop.org/images/e/e2/Grotowski_Jerzy_Towards_a_Poor_Theatre_2002.pdf

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