

COURSE DETAIL

UTOPIAN IMAGINATION

Country

Netherlands

Host Institution

Utrecht University

Program(s)

Utrecht University

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

English Comparative Literature

UCEAP Course Number

104

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

UTOPIAN IMAGINATION

UCEAP Transcript Title

UTOPIAN IMAGINATION

UCEAP Quarter Units

6.00

UCEAP Semester Units

4.00

Course Description

This course studies utopian and speculative literature as narrative tools to imagine the future. Students learn that these utopian texts reflect a historical setting and mind set. The course studies the function and meaning of utopian texts at two turning points in history: the age of colonialism and the scientific revolution (sixteenth through eighteenth century) and the social-economic tensions and changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Central in these two periods is the focus on the interplay between the European and non-European visions on possible futures. In the early modern period, utopian writers and thinkers have to adapt to a broader geographical (The New World) and philosophical (a New World view) perspective. They have to deal with their role as colonizers (cultural superiority vs. cultural relativism) and scientists (positivism vs. skepticism). In the second period, utopian writing itself is becoming a global endeavor, and often takes the shape of a literary dialogue between former colonizing and colonized countries. In both periods the role of utopias and dystopias in social and political constellations is addressed. Students consider how literature intervenes in conflicts and debates on science, religion, and politics; how utopian optimism or irony can develop into pessimism and (dystopian) skepticism.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

LI3V17103

Host Institution Course Title

UTOPIAN IMAGINATION

Host Institution Campus

Utrecht University

Host Institution Faculty

Humanities

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

Languages, Literature, and Communication

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