

COURSE DETAIL

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Country

Netherlands

Host Institution

Leiden University College

Program(s)

Leiden University College

UCEAP Course Level

Lower Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

Sociology Anthropology

UCEAP Course Number

61

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

WHAT IS CULTURE?

UCEAP Transcript Title

WHAT IS CULTURE

UCEAP Quarter Units

4.50

UCEAP Semester Units

3.00

Course Description

The aim of this course is emphatically not to answer the question of the definition of culture, nor is it to provide a history of the development of culture. Rather, the course starts from the notion that culture creates meaning and allows us to understand ourselves, others, and the world in specific, constructed ways. What may seem natural to us, might in fact just be cultural convention, imprinted on us from such an early age that we have come to understand it as natural. This course examines how traditional cultural views on the world, concerning the uses of language, processes of othering, gender etc., have been studied, taken apart and criticized over the last few decades. In doing so, the course deals with several of the major theorists concerned with this process of deconstruction. The course necessarily deals with a limited selection of perspectives and objects. From the many methods of studying culture (anthropological, archaeological, biological, art historical, sociological etc.) the course uses the framework of Cultural Studies, a relatively recent field of study within Humanities. Furthermore, in order to focus discussions, the course takes three case studies as a starting point in the discussion sessions: the novel FOE by J.M.Coetzee, the artwork EPISODE III: ENJOY POVERY by Renzo Martens, and the documentary PARIS IS BURNING. These are discussed in light of different theoretical frameworks, allowing the study the following topics, each tightly linked to major theories in studies on culture and each functioning as a context for the analysis of cultural phenomena: language as construction, knowledge/power, the death of the author, Postcolonialism, processes of "othering." gender, and cultural memory.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

5890LU055W

Host Institution Course Title

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Host Institution Campus

Leiden University College, The Hague

Host Institution Faculty**Host Institution Degree****Host Institution Department**

Culture, History & Society

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