COURSE DETAIL

IMAGES OF THE MARSHALL PLAN AND US INFLUENCE IN WESTERN EUROPE AFTER WORLD WAR II

Country
Germany

Host Institution
Free University of Berlin

Program(s)
Free University Berlin

UCEAP Course Level
Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)
History American Studies

UCEAP Course Number
109

UCEAP Course Suffix

UCEAP Official Title
IMAGES OF THE MARSHALL PLAN AND US INFLUENCE IN WESTERN EUROPE AFTER WORLD WAR II

UCEAP Transcript Title
MARSHALL PLAN: W EU

UCEAP Quarter Units
4.50

UCEAP Semester Units
3.00

Course Description

The so-called “Marshall Plan” was only a four-year-program, and yet, it looms large in public memory, especially in Western Europe. This is not a coincidence: The influence that the US government had on the reconstruction of Western Europe after World War II came not only in the form of financial investments or material aid. The European Recovery Program (ERP) has also been considered ‘the largest single propaganda operation… ever seen in peacetime’ (Ellwood 2010, 113). This seminar is centered around questions like: What is the image that the US wanted to project during the Marshall Plan years, and why? What did these images, of the US, of Europe, and of the other, look like and how were they perceived? The seminar will be divided into two parts. Part I provides a historical and conceptual frame: It examines the motives behind Marshall Plan ‘aid' and traces the image of the US as ‘a benevolent nation’ (McCrisken and Pepper 2005, 89). Further, it introduces students to historical debates and perceptions of Americanization, and contrasts different conceptualizations of influence, ranging from cultural imperialism to ‘cultural transfer’ (Gienow-Hecht (2000), ‘Westernization’ (Nehring 2004), or ‘soft power’ (Nye 2004). Part II of the seminar will be dedicated to the actual (graphic) images that the US produced during the Marshall Plan years, especially propaganda films. Building on concepts and methods developed in the field of Visual Culture, students will learn to “read” images as primary sources and interpret them within the historical frame of the early Cold War.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
32403

Host Institution Course Title
IMAGES OF THE MARSHALL PLAN AND US INFLUENCE IN WESTERN EUROPE AFTER WORLD WAR II

Host Institution Course Details
https://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/en/lv/795652?query=Marshall&sm=682860

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department
John-F.-Kennedy-Institut für Nordamerikastudien

Course Last Reviewed
2022-2023

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