Title of Course
Trends in Contemporary American Culture/Society
NMB_AM125G5; LMB_AM125G5

Classes per week: 2    Credit value: 2    Type: seminar

Prerequisites:

Course description:

The seminar explores a wide array of exciting trends in contemporary American society, from ethnic and regional diversity, physical and social mobility, the shifting image of urban and rural America, suburbanization and the shifting notion of home and the changing patterns of family through the priority of good education and job, materialism and new spiritualism, to gender issues and overall population changes as well as the changing global role of the U.S.

Apart from such positive tendencies as fight for equality in all walks of life, affluence, prosperity and better healthcare shared by greater rate of people, or to mention the eco-conscious way of thinking that fosters sustainability and local food and resources, certain negative tendencies keep posing burning issues for politicians as well as other responsible thinkers, for instance discrimination, xenophobia, the crisis of traditional family, supersizing and obesity and environmental waste. We discuss those of the above areas that we can address effectively based on the available resources and students’ earlier courses and experiences.

Instructor: Attila Takács
Language of instruction: English
Semester:

Readings:

1. Introduction and selecting topics/individual student assignments for the term
2. Follow up reading:
   http://www.nowandnext.com/?action=top_trend/list_trends&sectorId=1
   http://qideas.org/articles/ten-most-significant-cultural-trends-of-the-last-decade/
   http://www.prb.org/pdf10/65.1unitedstates.pdf
   http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/topics/
2 positive trends (e.g. fight for equality in all walks of life, affluence, prosperity and better healthcare shared by greater rate of people, or to mention the eco-conscious way of thinking that fosters sustainability and local food and resources)

3 negative trends (e.g. discrimination, xenophobia, the crisis of traditional family, supersizing and obesity and environmental waste)

4 end-term paper, student presentations (ppt), evaluation

Please watch

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eqr9xsUn-ks

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nD_DSYr7OvQ

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wh_A_U7a27I

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XB0CORT1k9w

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=219YybX66MY

Suggested Readings


**Requirements and grading:**

**Attendance and active class participation**

As this is a discussion-based class, attendance is mandatory. Moreover, it is imperative that you are prepared for class discussions and have completed all your readings. Should it become necessary over the course of the semester, unannounced plot quizzes may be used to test whether you have done your reading. Lack of preparation will be counted as an absence for that class period. If there is an urgent reason for why you could not prepare for class, please contact me beforehand, and we can try to arrange an alternative solution.

**Further Rules**

If you must miss a class, please let me know, and make arrangements to complete any work missed. Students are kindly requested to contact their tutor at least a day before class if they are to make a presentation but cannot attend. If you do not turn up on occasions when course assignments (presentation, quizzes) are due and you fail to notify the tutor you will lose all the credit points on the particular assignment.

There is no excuse not to come to class when the end-term is due.

**Academic dishonesty and plagiarism**

(Failure to acknowledge and note the use of another writer’s words and ideas) is **both unethical and illegal** and will result in a failure of the course. If you have a compelling reason for arriving late or leaving early, speak with your instructor about the problem. If you regularly cut the beginning and/or the end of class sessions, it can add up to unexcused full-class-time absences.

**Plagiarism policy:** There will be absolutely no tolerance for any kind of plagiarism or academic
dishonesty. All forms of plagiarism will result in an automatic failure of the class.

Possible Presentation, essay topics: (two presentations: 15-10 minutes)

You can find some hint here (just hints - further research must be done)

Top 25 trends


or (mentioned above)

- fight for equality in all walks of life,
- affluence,
- prosperity and better healthcare shared by greater rate of people,
- the eco-conscious way of thinking that fosters sustainability and local food and resources
- discrimination,
- xenophobia,
- the crisis of traditional family,
- supersizing and obesity,
- environmental waste