

THE EXPORTED AMERICA: THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICANIZATION IN THE WORLD

**Máster Universitario en Estudios
Norteamericanos**

Academic year 2024/2025
2nd Term

SYLLABUS

Course:	The Exported American: The Social History of Americanization in the World
Code:	202335
MA Degree:	MA in American Studies
Department and Area:	Filología Moderna. Filología Inglesa Ciencias de la Computación Instituto Universitario Benjamin Franklin
Type of subject:	Mandatory
ECTS credits:	5
Course and semester:	2024-2025 Second semester
Lecturers:	Kiko Sáez de Adana <kiko.saez@uah.es> María Jesús Fernández Gil <mj.fernandezg@uah.es> Luisa Juárez Hervás <luisa.juarez@uah.es> Pedro Rodríguez <pedrojer@ucm.es>
Office hours:	To be announced at the beginning of the semester
Language of instruction:	English

1.a PRESENTATION

El fenómeno que se ha denominado “americanización”, es decir, la influencia internacional de los Estados Unidos empezó a ganar presencia en Europa a partir de las primeras décadas del siglo XX con un impacto más claro en los ámbitos económico, científico y cultural. Distintas empresas e inversores estadounidenses, instituciones, universidades, la industria cinematográfica y fundaciones filantrópicas fueron convirtiendo en exponentes del “American Way of Life”. El Gobierno norteamericano participó de manera directa en este proceso y su colaboración con el sector privado se intensificó a partir de finales de los años treinta, en parte como respuesta a la crisis europea y al ascenso del fascismo. Tras la Segunda Guerra Mundial, Estados Unidos diseñó e implementó un sistema de seguridad occidental, inicialmente centrado en Europa, para contener el expansionismo soviético, que pronto se extendió a Asia y otras regiones del planeta. Como parte de este diseño estratégico, la participación de Estados Unidos en la reconstrucción económica de posguerra fue esencial y abarcó otros campos además del militar y armamentístico. Entre otros, los Estados Unidos exportaban sus métodos de gestión y organización empresarial; promovían transferencias culturales y científicas; establecían circuitos de formación de capital humano; y servían de modelo para la expansión de la sociedad de consumo y la cultura de los medios de comunicación de masas. Desde sus orígenes, el liderazgo estadounidense tuvo que hacer frente a la movilización de sectores críticos con sus efectos e influencia, nutriendo las filas del

antiamericanismo cultural y político. A partir de mediados de los años sesenta, la guerra de Vietnam y las fracturas de la sociedad norteamericana erosionaron la imagen internacional del país que, pese a todo, ha mantenido hasta hoy un papel protagonista en la evolución del mundo más allá del fin de la Guerra Fría, hasta el punto de entender la Globalización como una variante de la Americanización.

A través del análisis de este fenómeno, este curso introducirá a los alumnos en algunas de las cuestiones clave del mundo actual como la política polarizada y las *fake news*, la cultura popular, el consumismo, el conocimiento científico y tecnológico, y los medios de comunicación de masas, entre otros. Para ello, se hará un breve repaso histórico de los factores que impulsaron la presencia internacional de Estados Unidos, su supervivencia y su transformación a lo largo del siglo XX. También se concienciará a los alumnos de la presencia polifacética de este fenómeno, dándoles a conocer los efectos de la americanización en la ciencia y la tecnología, las artes, la cultura popular, los medios de comunicación de masas y las redes sociales. Además, el fenómeno se examinará a través de un caso de estudio: la conmemoración y representación del Holocausto, cuyo carácter transnacional se considerará analizando su impacto en España.

El curso hará hincapié en una enseñanza participativa, buscando siempre la participación de los estudiantes tanto en los debates de las sesiones como a través de actividades de refuerzo de contenidos: exposiciones orales, comentario de textos y de material gráfico, visionado de documentales y películas, y otras que fuesen relevantes para el contenido de la asignatura.

1.b PRESENTATION (in English)

The international influence of the United States, a phenomenon sometimes called Americanization, started to gain momentum in the first decades of the 20th century in Europe, with a clearer impact in the economic, scientific, and cultural fields. Several American companies and investors, associations, universities, the film industry, and philanthropic foundations became exponents for the American Way of Life. The decisive intervention of the Government in this process and its collaboration with the private sector became more intense from the end of the 1930s onwards, partly in response to the European crisis and the rise of fascism. After World War II, the United States was the architect of a Western security system designed to contain Soviet expansionism, initially centered in Europe but later extended to Asia and other regions of the planet. Linked to this strategic design, the United States was essential in Post-war economic reconstruction, while at the same time propagating its methods of business management and organization; promoting cultural and scientific transfers; establishing human capital formation circuits; and serving as a model for the expansion of the consumer society and mass media culture. From its origins, American leadership had to face the mobilization of sectors critical of its effects and influence, which nourished the ranks of cultural and political anti-Americanism. From the mid-1960s onwards, the Vietnam War and the fractures in American society eroded the country's international image which, despite everything, has maintained to this day a leading role in the evolution of the world beyond the end of the Cold War, to the point of identifying Globalization as a variant of Americanization.

Through the analysis of this phenomenon, students will be introduced to some of key issues

of today's world such as polarized politics and fake news, popular culture, consumerism, scientific and technological knowledge, and mass media, among others. To this end, a brief historical review will be made of the factors that drove the international presence of the United States, its survival, and its transformation throughout the 20th century. Students will also be made aware of the multifaceted presence of this phenomenon by giving them insight into the effects of Americanization in science and technology, the arts, popular culture, mass media and social networks. In addition to this, the phenomenon will be examined through a study case: the commemoration and representation of the Holocaust, whose transnational nature will be considered by analyzing its impact in Spain.

The course will emphasize participatory teaching, seeking the intervention of students both in the debates in the sessions and through content reinforcement activities: oral presentations, comments on texts and graphic material, viewing of documentaries and films, and others.

2. COMPETENCES and LEARNING OUTCOMES

Basic and general competences:

GC1.- Students will acquire deeper and more specific knowledge of the disciplines inherent in American Studies.

GC2 Students will be able to use the acquired preparation as a resource and reference model to adequately address theoretical and practical issues related to the different areas of specialization achieved through the suggested itineraries in this degree program.

GC3.- Students will be able to continuously, autonomously exercise self-directed learning, developing new approaches and analytical methods within American Studies.

GC4.- Students will become familiar with the most recent innovations in the field of American Studies.

GC5.- Students will acquire the necessary skills for carrying out research work.

GC6.- Students will apply theoretical and analytical contributions from different fields of knowledge towards a common scientific objective during their participation in sessions, through group work, written assignments, and their final master's thesis (TFM).

GC7.- Students will obtain knowledge that provides a basis or opportunity to be original in the development and/or application of ideas, often within a research context.

BC8.- Students will use their acquired knowledge and problem-solving abilities in new or unfamiliar environments within broader (or multidisciplinary) contexts related to their field of study.

BC9.- Students will integrate knowledge and deal with the complexity of formulating judgments based on information that, while incomplete or limited, includes reflections on the social and ethical responsibilities associated with the application of their knowledge and judgments.

BC10.- Students will communicate their conclusions and the underlying knowledge and reasons to specialized and non-specialized audiences clearly and unambiguously.

BC11.- Students will have learning skills that will enable them to continue studying in a largely self-directed or autonomous manner.

Transversal competences:

TC1.- Students will develop the ability to critically analyze texts, speeches, data, and events related to North America.

TC2.- Students will learn to integrate approaches and methods from various disciplines in the study of North America.

TC3.- Students will enhance their skills to communicate ideas clearly and persuasively, both in oral presentations and academic essays.

TC4.- Students will understand and appreciate cultural differences in North America, as well as power dynamics and intercultural relationships.

TC5.- Students will address complex problems related to North America creatively and originally, generating new ideas, innovative approaches, and creative solutions.

Specific competences:

SC1.- Students will be able to question the validity of assertions about the idiosyncrasy of American culture.

SC2 - Students will be able to discern the various milestones of North American political and cultural history, both diachronically and synchronically.

SC3.- Students will be able to conduct research with an appropriate structure, clear writing, solid argumentation, and adherence to all citation and source referencing standards typical of this type of work while assimilating theories or opinions presented in other studies on the topic.

SC4.- Students will have the ability to interpret and evaluate all types of current American texts (press, advertising, reports, communications, texts of a scientific or economic nature, ideological, historical, literary, etc.), uncovering their ideology, objectives, and function.

SC5.- Students will have a comprehensive understanding of transatlantic cultural, political, and historical relations from the creation of New England to the present day.

SC6.- Students will be able to make interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to American cultural constructs, regardless of their nature.

Learning outcomes:

LO1. Research and Analysis:

Students will be able to critically investigate and analyze the processes of Americanization, identifying their main characteristics and most outstanding actors, mechanism of diffusion and reception.

LO2. Debate and Discussion:

Students will be capable of actively participating in debates and discussions on relevant documentaries and films, visual arts and popular and high literature in the United States, articulating and defending evidence-based arguments.

LO3. Case Study:

Students will be capable of analyzing specific cases of Americanization, identifying patterns, trends, and lessons learned that contribute to a deeper understanding of the internal and external factors that propelled the American influence.

LO4. Comparative Research:

Students will be capable of comparing the phenomenon of Holocaust Americanization with the process of Holocaust Hispanicization, identifying similarities and differences as well as sociopolitical implications.

3. CONTENTS

Topic contents	Hours
Introduction	One session: 1 hour
Block I. The Idea of America	Four sessions: 12 hours face-to-face teaching
Block I. Lesson 1. These Truths. From colony to independence: Freedom & Liberty, Religion, Self-Government and Diversity.	
Block I. Lesson 2. Slavery and the African American Experience.	
Block I. Lesson 3. The American Populist Tradition.	
Block I. Lesson 4. The struggle for influence: Mass Media, Lobbyists and Think Tanks.	
Block II. Science and Technology	Two sessions: 6 hours face-to-face teaching
Block II. Lesson 1. The new scientific world order.	
Block II Lesson 2. World War II and the Birth of Big Science	

Block III. The Americanization of Popular Culture	Two sessions: 6 hours face-to-face teaching.
Block III. Lesson 1. Comic strips: An American art form.	
Block III. Lesson 2. Comic books: The globalization of an originally American format.	
Block IV. The Americanization of the Holocaust	Four sessions: 12 hours face-to-face teaching.
Block IV. Lesson 1. Introduction to the Americanization of the Holocaust.	
Block IV. Lesson 2. Popular culture and the Holocaust.	
Block IV. Lesson 3. High culture and the Holocaust.	
Block IV. Lesson 4. Case study: Reception of American artifacts and Hispanicization of the Holocaust.	

4. TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGIES - TRAINING ACTIVITIES

4.1. Distribution of credits

Training activities	Hours
Face-to-face or synchronous interactivity (theoretical and practical classes and formative assessment)	36 hours
Asynchronous learning guided by the teaching staff (online mode only): forums, case resolution, formative assessment, etc.).	5 hours
Self-directed learning by student	84 hours
Total hours	125 hours

4.2. Methodologies, materials and teaching resources

Methodology	Teaching materials and resources

Lectures	Explanations by the professor on the theoretical contents of the course, describing the main historical processes/events, defining concepts, presenting examples
Students' presentation and critical commentary	Presentation and critical commentary of the readings indicated for each session (scientific articles, archival documents, press, graphic resources...) by one or more students, who will act as "expert" speakers. The presentations will be made preferably in power-point and will also include a series of questions to initiate the debate.
Class debate	Discussion among all attendees of the arguments raised in the presentation.
Reinforcement activities	Documentaries, film excerpts, participation of guest lecturers, other texts on the subject.
Oral presentation of group project	The final part of the course will be dedicated to the oral presentation of individual or team work on issues related to the process of Americanization worldwide, or its impact on Spain. The preparation of the papers will involve the collection of information and reflection on what has been learned in the theoretical and practical classes. The teacher will supervise the students' projects to encourage the use of mechanisms for selective search of quality information, the systematization of the data collected, and the presentation of meaningful and structured reports.
Individual tutorial	The consultation of doubts will be carried out at the student's request and will expressly seek to solve specific problems and to provide help to encourage meaningful participation in the course activities.

5. ASSESSMENT: Procedures, assessment and marking criteria

Continuous assessment:

The entire assessment process will be based on the continuous assessment of the student, in such a way as to guarantee the acquisition of both the contents and the competences of the subject. The assessment is in accordance with the UAH learning assessment regulations.¹

- **Ordinary call**

Students should have attained the desired level in each of the competencies specified in the assessment criteria:

1. To understand and interpret the different processes of Americanization, identifying their main characteristics and most outstanding actors, mechanism of diffusion and reception.
2. To analyze specific cases of Americanization, identifying patterns, trends, and lessons learned that contribute to a deeper understanding of the internal and external factors that propelled the American influence.
3. To identify and compare the main principles and processes regarding the four blocks developed throughout the course.
4. To demonstrate high standards of analysis and presentation, written English, and oral English in all submitted coursework.

Students should have achieved the desired level in each of the competencies specified in the assessment criteria. Specific assessment criteria include the ability to differentiate between facts and abstract patterns emerging from them, which are elaborated on throughout the course. Also, the ability to memorize and utilize the most relevant facts and recognize these patterns in texts. Patterns encompass both specific cultural knowledge and meta-knowledge about their validity. Additionally, the term 'patterns' encompasses the acquisition and utilization of strategies for various text forms, such as statistics, maps, fictional texts, or informational texts. Another assessment criterion is the ability to write an essay in a methodologically and formally correct manner as well as to give a presentation.

Students are cautioned against plagiarism, which will not be tolerated. Any ideas from external sources, whether quoted, summarized, or paraphrased, must be adequately documented. According to Article 34 of the University's evaluation regulations, any plagiarism discovered in the final version of a paper will be penalized and could result in module failure. The instructor will provide assessment cover sheets for written assignments, verifying that the submitted work is either entirely original or appropriately referenced.

¹ UAH Learning Assessment Regulation (30 September 2021).
<https://www.uah.es/export/sites/uah/es/conoce-la-uah/organizacion-y-gobierno/.galleries/Galeria-Secretaria-General/Normativa-Evaluacion-Aprendizajes.pdf>

Students should familiarize themselves with the document that governs academic integrity at UAH, “Código ético de buenas prácticas en la investigación (Approved by the Governing Council of the University of Alcalá, on October 31, 2019)”.

Grading criteria

The final grade of the students will depend on their active and valuable participation in class and will be determined by the overall percentage mark you receive in each of the three blocks. The main assessment process in this course will be continuous. Therefore, students are required to attend at least 80% of the classes, including lectures, seminars, workshops, and ECTS tutorials.

Assessment procedures

Students must also complete and submit all the activities assigned to them, which include the following:

Block I. The Idea of America, students will be required to write an extended and thorough essay (approximately 2,500 words) critically evaluating the decline of democracy in the United States considering the issues discussed in our course.

Blocks II and III. Students must choose one of the topics from each of these blocks (science and technology or comics and popular culture) and write a short essay (2,000 words) on the implementation of the American scientific or cultural model (depending on the choice) in the rest of the world.

Block IV. The Americanization of the Holocaust.

Group presentation: 40%

Response paper (max. 800 words): 40%

Active and meaningful class participation: 20%

Active participation will not only be restricted to the seminars but also to lectures, which will also be conducted upon the comments and ideas posed by students.

Likewise, their final grade will be based on the following grading criteria:

- **Outstanding (MH):** Students display an outstanding grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been achieved at an exceptionally high level. Performance in all the tasks shows that students have read and thought at a level well beyond what is expected in the module. Students attend lectures and are always well-prepared for discussion in seminars. They obtain outstanding results in the exams.

- **Excellent (SB):** Students display an excellent grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been achieved at a very high standard and an exceptionally high level. Performance in all the tasks shows all or most of the appropriate characteristics expected for this type of work. Students attend lectures and are practically always well-prepared for discussion in seminars, with almost no absences. They obtain excellent results in the exams.

- **Very Good (N):** Students display a very good grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been met fully and many have been achieved at a good or very good standard. Performance in all the tasks shows a good knowledge of the syllabus contents. Students attend lectures and seminars, with few absences, and have done most of the preparation for them. They have a good foundation in the prescribed readings and build on ideas developed in lectures and seminars. They obtain very good results in the exams.

- **Satisfactory (A):** Students show a satisfactory grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been met, but some barely exceed the threshold standard to pass the module. Performance in all the tasks shows some of the appropriate characteristics concerning content, illustration, organization, and expression. Students are present in lectures and seminars, with few absences, and occasionally contribute to discussions. They obtain acceptable results in the exams.

- **Fail (S):** Students show an unsatisfactory grasp of the aims and contents of the module. Some assessment criteria do not reach the threshold standard to pass the module. Performance in all the tasks shows a limited understanding of essential concepts and/or minimal research. Students have multiple absences and when they come, they are often not prepared, or they do not say much. Their results in the exams are insufficient considering the requirements of the course.

- **Extraordinary call**

The same as in the ordinary call.

Final assessment:

Students may be eligible for the final assessment, notwithstanding the fact that the reasons for this may have to be assessed in each specific case, the completion of on-site internships, work obligations, family obligations, health reasons and disability. Pursuing studies on a part-time basis does not in itself confer the right to opt for the final assessment.

In order to take advantage of the final assessment, Master's degree students must apply in writing to the director of the Master's degree within the first two weeks of the course, explaining the reasons that prevent them from following the continuous assessment system. In the case of those students who, for justified reasons, have not formalised their enrolment on the starting date of the course or of the period in which the subject is taught, the period indicated will begin to be calculated from the date of their incorporation to the degree course. The director of the Master's degree must assess the circumstances presented by the student and make a reasoned decision. If 15 working days have passed without the student having received an express written reply to his or her request, it will be understood that the request has been accepted.

In the case of being eligible for final assessment students must complete and submit all the activities assigned to them, which include the following:

Block I. The Idea of America, students will be required to write an extended and thorough essay (approximately 2,500 words) critically evaluating the decline of democracy in the United States considering the issues discussed in our course.

Blocks II and III. Students must choose one of the topics from each of these blocks (science and technology or comics and popular culture) and write a short essay (2,000 words) on the implementation of the American scientific or cultural model (depending on the choice) in the rest of the world.

Exceptionally, if the characteristics of the subject make it advisable for there to be no final assessment method, this must be expressly stated and the reason for this must be explained.

While the assessment tests are in progress, the guidelines set out in the Regulations establishing the Rules of Coexistence of the University of Alcalá must be followed, as well as the possible implications of any irregularities committed during these tests, including the consequences of committing academic fraud according to the Disciplinary Regulations of the Student Body of the University of Alcalá.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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