university of groningen / faculty of arts

**Academic year 2025-2026**

# Assessment Plan

## Bachelor American Studies

## 1 / Vision of teaching and assessment

The assessment policy of the programme is built on the UG policy on assessment[1] and follows from its student-oriented educational vision in which a learning environment focused on activating students is key. The programme's assessment policy is also directly linked to its intended learning outcomes (in particular the programme's focus on interdisciplinarity, critical and cultural theory, international orientation and inter-Americanness). The emphasis lies on what students should know, understand and be able to do in order to have the best possible preparation for meeting all learning outcomes. Students are thus endowed with a balanced combination of domain-specific and generic competences (knowledge, understanding, and skills, including English language skills) at Bachelor's level.

The various modes of assessment are considered tools that stimulate and guide our students' learning process while at the same time also helping instructors verify whether students have reached the intended learning outcomes. For this purpose, we use a well-balanced combination of formative and summative forms of assessment during the courses. Several courses entail weekly homework assignments to ensure that students spread the workload, and to prevent peak periods at the end of the semester. By receiving regular feedback during the courses (for instance on responses to discussion questions they have submitted or presentations they have given), students can identify in which areas they are strong and in which areas they can improve. Regular testing also gives the staff the opportunity to see if the students have understood the topics discussed in class, and to address (and possibly solve) any problems that students may be experiencing during the course.

The programme's assessment system is designed in such a way that the forms of assessment suit the programme's intended learning outcomes in the various phases of the degree. The assessment plan enables us to monitor that all intended learning outcomes are covered in the courses. In fact, the assessment matrix shows that most intended learning outcomes are covered more than once, with the focus shifting to higher levels in the second and third year of the programme.

Assessment takes a variety of forms, from exams using open questions and essay-type questions, to various modes of written assignments (including essays, self-reflection journal entries, position papers, responses to discussion questions, reviews, reports, op-eds, podcasts and portfolios), as well as digital testing and oral (individual and group) presentations. Forms of assessment are designed in such a way that they constitute a balanced mix throughout the programme, ranging from an evaluation of the students' ability to demonstrate knowledge and insights under time pressure (i.e. written exams), to longer sustained engagements with a topic (essays), continuous formative learning processes throughout a course unit (journals, portfolios, responses to discussion questions), or group work (presentations). All course syllabi contain details about the modes of assessment, the criteria of evaluation, the relative weight of the various components of the aggregate grade, and the dates of the exam and re-sit, as well as deadlines for written assignments. In keeping with the programme's educational vision of providing a student-activating learning environment, all forms of assessment (including exams) avoid a merely reproductive design and ask students to critically engage with specific questions or materials. Given the programme's strong emphasis on endowing students with a high level of academic English, in-class participation is part of the assessment for many course modules, and

[1] *See* Assessment Policy and Assessment at the UG: Aiming for quality and study progress, 2014.

the production of written work is important throughout the programme. All course syllabi are made available to students on Brightspace before the start of classes.

In each course module, the programme uses grading guidelines with clearly specified criteria to mark assignments such as presentations, essays, or exams. These guidelines, which are either incorporated into the course syllabus or posted separately on Brightspace, guarantee a consistent and transparent assessment throughout course units. In *all* team-taught courses, exams and essay assignments are collaboratively designed, and it is standard procedure for instructors to swap sets of exam or essay scripts of students in their own sections with the exam or essay scripts of students in sections taught by a colleague to ensure consistency and transparency across the different sections of a course. Narrow fails are routinely double-graded.

Individualized feedback is given to students on all modes of assessment, either in written format (on essays, position papers, and exams), or orally (for presentations and during exam inspections) to facilitate their active learning process. To help consolidate essay-writing skills, check lists are routinely used in the "American Studies in Practice" courses.

The assessment of the achieved exit level occurs primarily during the final semester of the programme by means of the Bachelor's Thesis. Given that the Bachelor's Thesis testifies to what students have learned throughout the programme, it assesses many of the programme learning outcomes at end level. Programme learning outcomes that are more focused on knowledge acquisition and understanding are often achieved at end level earlier in the programme, depending on the learning trajectory concerned. The Bachelor's Thesis is assessed on the basis of a clearly defined list of criteria that are outlined in the Thesis Guidelines. At the beginning of the thesis process, group meetings offer a workshop on advanced level writings skills and a forum for the initial discussion of topics. Thereafter, students submit a proposal and receive feedback on methodological, theoretical, and content-specific issues. During the writing process, all students supervised by the same instructor meet regularly in small groups. They submit their work in stages, and receive written and oral feedback on sections and the final version. After the final version has been submitted, each thesis is graded independently by two staff members to ensure consistency and transparency. Students receive a copy of the Bachelor's Thesis Report (Appendix 4) on their work.

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| 2 / | How to follow the assessment cycle (from design to evaluation and optimization) |
| | The programme complies with the faculty's guidelines for the design and evaluation of tests, which are shown schematically in the figure below. |




## 3 / Assessment dossier

### a. The assessment dossier

The requirements of the assessment dossier are set out in §4 of the 'Protocol for Quality Assurance in the Assessment of Course Units' drawn up by the Board of Examiners.

When requested the examiner of the programme provides the Board of Examiners with an 'assessment dossier' containing the following:

a) the syllabus
b) the list of marks, comprising all marks that count towards the final mark
c) - for assessments in the narrower sense of the word (i.e. tests): the test that was set, incl. model answers/key
   - for written assignments: the formulation of the assignment, information about the assessment method (assessment criteria and standards) if this is not listed in the syllabus, and a selection of completed assessment forms
d) the assessment blueprint, minutes of peer-support meetings, evaluations and self-evaluations of course units, etc., if available.

### b. Parties involved

In 'Rules and responsibilities for the assessment of the Faculty of Arts', laid down by the Faculty Board of Arts on 28 May 2019 (modified on 13-02-2020), all parties involved in fulfilling duties related to the assessment are described.

With regard to the assessment dossier, the following guidelines and responsibilities are relevant.

If a course is part of the periodic evaluation of Board of Examiners, the lecturer (or course coordinator) is requested to provide the information for the assessment dossier (upload on the Brightspace site of the course). If, as a result of the evaluation, shortcomings are found in the basic quality of the assessment, the Board of Examiners will draw up a recommendation to the Cluster Board. The Cluster

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| | Board is responsible for drawing up an improvement plan with concrete measures to improve the identified shortcomings. The Board of Examiners will automatically include the course in question in its next assessment round. |

## 4 / Assessment timetable

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| Overview of learning outcomes of the degree program + matrix | Appendix 1 |
| Schematic overview of time periods intended for assessment, modes of assessment used | Appendix 2 |
| Overview of the intended learning outcomes of the course units and their modes of assessment | Appendix 3 |
| Additional regulations for the graduation dossier (BA thesis evaluation forms) | Appendix 4 |

The objectives of the degree programme, set out in the learning outcomes of the degree programme (Appendix 1), form the guiding principles. All course units together fulfil a role in working towards these learning outcomes. This is reflected in a coherent curriculum with a transparent structure. The matrix of learning outcomes (Appendix 1) defines the course units that include summative assessments.

In parallel with the curriculum, the assessment programme (Appendix 2) offers an overview of modes of assessment and exam periods. In order to gain insight at the programme level into whether the chosen modes of assessment tie in with the learning outcomes of the course units and create a balanced mix in the run-up to the programme-level learning outcomes of the degree programme, the intended learning outcomes of the course units are related to their modes of assessment (Appendix 3).

Specific rules may apply to certain components of the graduation dossier (e.g. for the thesis: approval of the thesis proposal, amount of supervision, resit). These rules are set out in Appendix 4.

## 5 / Safeguarding of assessment quality by the Board of Examiners

The Board of Examiners is responsible for safeguarding the quality of assessment at both the degree programme level and the level of individual course units.

a. Safeguarding of assessment quality at degree programme level

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| | The Board of Examiners annually issues advice on each degree programme's draft assessment plan for the coming academic year.<br><br>b. Safeguarding of assessment quality at course unit level<br><br>The board of Examiners has a procedure for the assessments of all course units in a degree programme, bearing in mind the position of the course unit in the curriculum and in a specific learning pathway. In addition, a substantiated selection of theses is evaluated. |

## 6 / Archiving

Archiving of course material including assessments is carried out in accordance with faculty policy.

## 7 / List of documents relevant to assessment

**Faculty vision of teaching and assessment** – see

https://myuniversity.rug.nl/infonet/medewerkers/let/onderwijs/vision-for-education.

**Rules and Regulations** – the internal regulations of the Board of Examiners.
**Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER = OER; *Onderwijs- en examenregeling*)** – a legally binding document that applies to the entire cohort of students who start a degree programme in a certain academic year. The TER may also contain transitional arrangements for previous cohorts.

**Matrix of learning outcomes** – an appendix to the Assessment Plan that specifies the course units with *summative* assessment leading up to or at the level specified in the programme-level learning outcomes and the course units with formative assessment.
**Placement manual** – a manual for the placement course unit.

**Syllabus** – a document that sets out the details of the TER and the Assessment Plan at course unit level in accordance with the information in Ocasys.

**Assessment programme** – the implementation of the TER, Part A, Art. 8.5

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# Appendix 1. Overview of learning outcomes of the degree program + matrix

| *Dublin Descriptors for BA Level* | *Learning Outcomes for the BA programme in American Studies articulated in Key Competences*<br><br>A Bachelor Degree in American Studies is awarded to students who demonstrate: |
|---|---|
| **Acquiring Knowledge and Understanding**<br><br>Students have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon their general secondary education, and is typically at a level that, whilst supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study. | 1a. broad, interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding of major themes and developments in history and culture of the American continents, from the late fifteenth century to the present.<br><br>1b. understanding of methodologies within the discipline of American Studies (especially "close reading" and "contextualization"), as well as familiarity with theories relevant to the analysis of culture, politics, society, and media in the Americas. |
| **Applying Knowledge and Understanding**<br><br>Students can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to their work or vocation, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study. | 2a. the ability to close-read a wide variety of texts, and contextualize them within broader events and developments in the Americas.<br><br>2b. the ability to work constructively with others to accomplish specific goals.<br><br>2c. the ability to plan and complete appropriate coursework in the form of argument-driven essays. |

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| | 2d. the ability to organize and carry out a substantial research project (i.e. a 8,000-word thesis) within an established time frame.<br><br>2e. awareness of and commitment to scholarly standards in terms of accuracy, ethical behavior, and breadth of sources used and cited in assignments and in the final BA thesis. |
| **Making Informed Judgments and Choices**<br><br>Students have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues. | 3a. the ability to conduct guided and semi-independent research, as well as to gather, select, and critically evaluate relevant information from print and electronic resources.<br><br>3b. the ability to select relevant insights from a range of disciplines to critically examine contemporary sociopolitical challenges facing multicultural societies.<br><br>3c. the ability to form well-grounded opinions about U.S. politics, culture, and media, taking into account historical specificities and power relations. |
| **Communicating Knowledge and Understanding**<br><br>Students can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences. | 4 a. the ability to communicate effectively the results of one's research to both academic and non-specialist audiences, in both written and oral presentations.<br><br>4b. the ability to communicate effectively in an international and intercultural context.<br><br>4c. proficiency in the target language of English at C2 level (near native) in the areas of listening and reading, and at C1 level (proficient) in written and spoken production (based on the CEFR). |
| **Capacities to Continue Learning**<br><br>Students have developed those learning skills that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a high degree of autonomy. | 5a. domain-specific and general knowledge, understanding, and skills to undertake independent research in academic (second-cycle degree programs requiring BA-level domain specific knowledge) or workplace contexts.<br><br>5b. the requisite intercultural awareness and skills to successfully work in an international employment and/or academic context. |

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## Matrix learning outcomes Bachelor degree programme American Studies

| Course Module | 1. Acquiring Knowledge and understanding | | 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding | | | | | 3. Making informed judgement and choices | | | 4. Communicating Knowledge and understanding | | | | 5. Capacities to continue learning | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1a | 1b | 2a | 2b | 2c | 2d | 2e | 3a | 3b | 3c | 4a | 4b [E] | 4b [S]* | 4c | 5a | 5b |
| Theories of Culture Ia | X | | X | | | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| Theories of Culture Ib | X | X | X | | | | | X | X | X | | | | | | |
| The Americas I | X | | X | | X | | | | X | X | | | | | | |
| North & South Americas I | X | | X | X | | | | X | X | X | | X | X | | | |
| North & South Americas II | X | | X | X | | | | X | X | X | | X | X | | | |
| American Studies in Practice Ia | | X | X | | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| American Studies in Practice Ib | | X | X | X | | | X | X | | | X | | | | | |
| The Americas IIa | X | X | X | | X | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| The Americas IIb | X | X | X | | X | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| American Politics I | X | | X | | X | | | | X | X | | | | | | |
| American Politics II | | | X | X | X | | | | X | X | | | | | | |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The Americas III | X | X | X | | X | | | X | | X | | | | | | |
| American Studies in Practice II | | X | X | | X | | X | X | | | X | | | | | |
| Theories of Culture II: Political Theory | | X | X | | X | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| Theories of Culture II: Media Theory | | X | X | | | | | X | | X | | | | | | |
| Special Topics [varies] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Global USA | X | | X | | X | | | | X | X | | | | | | |
| Cultural Analysis in American Studies | | | X | | X | | | X | X | X | X | X | | | | |
| Study Abroad or alternative designated minor | | | | | | | | | | | | X | X | | | X |
| Theories of Culture III | | X | | | | | | | X | X | | | | | | |
| Research Seminar | X | X | X | X | | | | X | X | X | X | | | | X | |
| BA Thesis | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | | | X | | | X | X | |
| BA Internship | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | | | X |

# Appendix 2: Schematic overview of time periods intended for assessment

| **YEAR 1 semester 1** | | | | | | **Language of Instruction** | Block 1 | | Resits | Block 2 | | Resits |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Module** | **Code** | **ECTS** | **M/O** | **Teaching method** | **Hours p/w** | | **week 1-6** | **week 7 assessment** | **week 21** | **week 9-14** | **week 15 assessment** | **week 21** |
| | | | | | | | | | resits block 1 | | | resits block 2 |
| | | | | | | | **Modes of assessment** | | | | | |
| Theories of Culture Ia | LAX039P05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **4** | **English** | Test (80%)<br><br>Intercultural Awareness Journal, formative assignment (20%) | n.a. | Test | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Theories of Culture Ib | LAX041P05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + Seminar** | **4** | **English** | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | Test (60%)<br>Class Participation (20%)<br>Intercultural Awareness Journal, formative assignment (20%) | n.a. | Test, Intercultural Awareness Journal |
| The Americas I | NEW CODE | 10 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **4** | **English** | n.a. | PSA (essay) (30%) | Essay | n.a. | Exam (70%) | exam |
| American Studies in Practice Ia | LAX048P05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + Seminar** | **3** | **English** | Participation and Assignments (30%) | Essay (70%) | Essay | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| American Studies in Practice Ib | LAX049P05 | 5 | M | Lecture + Seminar | 3 | **English** | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | Participation and Assignments (30%) | Essay (70%) | Essay |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total ECTS tested | | 30 | | | | | | | | | |

| **YEAR 1 semester 2** | | | | | | **Language of Instruction** | Block 3 | | Resits | Block 4 | | Resits |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Module** | | **ECTS** | **M/O** | **Teaching method** | **Hours p/w** | | **week 1-6** | **week 7 assessment** | **week 23** | **week 9-15** | **week 16 assessment** | **week 19** |
| | | | | | | | | | resits block 3 | | | resits block 4 |
| | | | | | | **Modes of assessment** | | | | | | |
| The Americas IIa | LAX032P05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **4** | **English** | Formative assignments (15%) | Exam (85%) | Exam | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| The Americas IIb | LAX033P05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **4** | **English** | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | Formative assignments (15%) | Exam (85%) | Exam |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| North and South Americans I | LAX043P05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + Seminar** | **4** | **English** | Participation (20%); 5 Discussion questions (50%), Presentation (30%) | n.a. | Essay (resit for discussion questions and/or presentation) | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| North and South Americans II | LAX044P05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + Seminar** | **4** | **English** | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | Participation (20%); 5 Discussion questions (50%), Presentation (30%) | n.a. | Essay (resit for discussion questions and/or presentation) |
| American Politics I | LAX060P05 | 5 | M | **Lecture + Seminar** | 4 | **English** | Mock court ( 30%) | Essay ( 70%) | Essay | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Politics II | LAX061P05 | 5 | M | **Lecture + Seminar** | 4 | **English** | | | n.a. | Essay ( 100%) | Essay |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **YEAR 2 semester 1** | | | | | | **Language of Instruction** | Block 1 | | Resits | Block 2 | | Resits |
| | | | | | | | | | resits block 1 | | | resits block 2 |
| | | | | | | | **Modes of assessment** | | | | | |
| The Americas III | L LAX087B10 | 10 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **3** | **English** | Formative assignments (15%) | Essay ( 30%) | Essay | Formative assignments (15%) | Exam (40%) | Exam |
| American Studies in Practice II | LAX088B10 | 10 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **3** | **English** | Formative Assignments (ungraded, feedback only) | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | Essay (90%) | Essay |

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| | | | | | | | Presentation ( 10%) | | | | | |
| Theories of Culture II: Political Theory | LAX045B05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **2** | **English** | | | | n.a. | Essay (100%) | Essay |
| Theories of Culture II: Media Theory | LAX048B05 | 5 | **M** | **Lecture + seminar** | **2** | **English** | Formative Assignments (20%) | Project (80%) | Project | | | |
| Total ECTS tested | | 30 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **YEAR 2 semester 2** | | | | | | **Language of** | Block 3 | | Resits | Block 4 | | Resits |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | **Instruction** | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | resits block 3 | | | resits block 4 |
| | | | | | | | **Modes of assessment** | | | | |
| Global USA | NEW CODE | 5 | **O** | **Seminar** | **2** | **English** | Participation and Assignments (20%) | Exam ( 80%) | Exam | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Cultural Analysis in American Studies | NEW CODE | 5 | **O** | **Seminar** | **2** | **English** | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | assignments (20%) | Essay (80%) | Essay |
| Special Topics [block 3] | varies | 5 | **O** | **Seminar** | **2** | **English** | Formative assignments (ungraded) | Essay (100%) | Essay | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Special Topics [block 4] | varies | 5 | **O** | **Seminar** | **2** | **English** | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | Formative assignments (ungraded) | Essay (100%) | Essay |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total ECTS tested | | 30 | | | | | | | | | |

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| **YEAR 3 semester 1** | | | | | | **Language of Instruction** | Block 1 | | Resits | Block 2 | | Resits |
| | | | | | | | | | resits block 1 | | | resits block 2 |
| | | | | | | | **Modes of assessment** | | | | | |
| Study Abroad | n.a. | 10 | **O** | **Seminar** | **varies** | varies | | varies | | varies | | |
| Study Abroad | n.a. | 10 | **O** | **Seminar** | **varies** | varies | | varies | | varies | | |
| Study Abroad | n.a. | 10 | **O** | **Seminar** | **varies** | varies | | varies | | varies | | |
| Students not studying abroad: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Minor | n.a. | 10 | **O** | **Seminar** | **varies** | varies | | varies | | varies | | |
| Minor | n.a. | 10 | **O** | **Seminar** | **varies** | varies | | varies | | varies | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minor | n.a. | 10 | **O** | **Seminar** | **varies** | varies | | varies | | varies | | | |
| Internship (optional) | | 10 | **O** | **n.a.** | **varies** | English | | | | Internship report (100%) | n.a. |
| Total ECTS tested | | 30 | | | | | | | | | |
| **YEAR 3 semester 2** | | | | | | Block 3 | | Resits | Block 4 | | Resits |
| | | | | | | | | resits block 3 | | | resits block 4 |
| | | | | | | **Modes of assessment** | | | | | |
| Theories of Culture III | LAX091 B10 | 10 | **M** | **Seminar** | **2** | **English** | Weekly assignments ( 30%) | Optional formative assignment | n.a. | n.a. | Essay test (70%) | Essay test |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research Seminar | LAX022 B10 | 10 | **M** | **Seminar** | **4 (weeks 1 - 7)** | **English** | Formative assignments (30%)<br><br>participation (10%) | Final essay (60%) | Final essay | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| BA Thesis | LAX999 B10 | 10 | **M** | **Individual tutoring** | **varies** | **English** | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | BA thesis (100%) | BA thesis |
| Total ECTS tested | | 30 | | | | | | | | | | |

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# Appendix 3: Overview of the intended learning outcomes of the course units

| Year 1, semester 1 | | | |
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| **Code** | **Course unit** | **Intended learning outcomes** | **Mode of assessment** |
| new | The Americas I: The American Century | At the end of this course, students will get a passing grade if they can:<br>1. Demonstrate a solid understanding of the key developments in U.S. politics and culture in a hemispheric and/or global context from the late nineteenth to the early twenty-first century<br>2. Have insight into the reasons for and the conflicting responses to the rise of the U.S. as a global superpower and its current role in the world;<br>3. Analyze and interpret historiographical and literary sources as well as cultural artefacts;<br>4. Make constructive contributions to class discussions and reproduce relevant material under exam conditions<br>5. Write a short, argumentative essays that offer a critical analysis of a primary source and explains the cultural, socio-political, and ideological work it performs | Essay (primary source analysis); Written exam |
| LAX039P05 | Theories of Culture Ia | Upon completion of this course, student should be able to: | Class participation, |

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| | | 1. Demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of the theories, preoccupations, and critical vocabulary of contemporary American class and gender studies<br>2. Contextualize and explain the political goals and difficulties inherent in different forms of identity politics<br>3. Communicate the cultural situatedness of case studies on class, gender, and sexuality | Test, Intercultural awareness journal |
| LAX048P05 | American Studies in Practice Ia | During this course, students are expected to acquire the following skills:<br>1. Interpret primary sources using American Studies methodologies including close reading, contextualization, and application of theoretical frameworks<br>2. Construct a critical conversation from assigned American Studies secondary sources<br>3. Revise an essay draft in response to critical feedback<br>4. Complete an argument-drive American Studies essay | Portfolio,<br>Essay |
| LAX041P05 | Theories of Culture Ib | Upon completion of this course, student should be able to:<br>1. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the theories, preoccupations, and critical vocabulary of contemporary American class and gender studies<br>2. Explain the key political goals and difficulties inherent in different forms of identity politics<br>3. Understand the cultural situatedness of their own perspectives on class, gender, and sexuality | Class participation,<br>Test, Intercultural awareness journal |

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| LAX049P05 | American Studies in Practice Ib | Upon completion of this course, student should be able to:<br>1. Demonstrate basic familiarity with American Studies research methods – including "close reading" and "contextualizing" primary sources<br>2. Conduct research using print and digital sources - including locating, evaluating, analyzing, and integrating sources<br>3. Present the results of their research in a well-organized argumentative essay<br>4. Deliver an oral presentation in appropriate English, making effective use of audio-visual equipment, and engaging in a group discussion fluently;<br>5. Evaluate their own work critically | Essay,<br>Group Presentation, short writing assignments |

| **Year 1, semester 2** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Course unit** | **Intended learning outcomes** | **Mode of assessment** |
| LAX032P05 | The Americas IIa: New Frontiers | Upon successful completion of the course unit, students are able to:<br>1. Demonstrate a solid understanding of key events, developments, as well as political, economic, and cultural interrelationships and interdependencies in the Americas during the nineteenth century<br>2. Analyze and interpret historiographical and literary sources as well as cultural artefacts | Formative Assignment,<br>Written exam |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | | 3. Make constructive contributions to class discussions and engage critically with relevant material under exam conditions | |
| LAX043P05 | North & South Americans I | At the end of this course, students are able to:<br>1. Understand the significance of the key figures in Latin American history and politics and their impact on the social, political, cultural, and economic development of the respective regions as well as their relation to the U.S.<br>2. Analyze and interpret historiographical, cultural, and literary documents and explain the socio-political and ideological work they perform<br>3. Make constructive contributions to class discussions and group projects<br>4. Conduct research and present the results in an academic format | Participation, Presentation,<br>Weekly assignments |
| LAX060P05 | American Politics I | Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to:<br>1. demonstrate an understanding of American politics and government, as well as its practical relevance for studying U.S. society.<br>2. evaluate critically the role of the U.S. Constitution and the governmental framework that developed based on it, particularly with regard to the Court system.<br>3. assess the ways in which the ideas that inform the U.S. constitutional and court system are disseminated and negotiated in American culture.<br>4. present cogent and informed analyses of the course material, both orally and in writing.<br>5. write a well-argued essay that engages the historical perspectives and theoretical approaches of the course material. | Mock Court,<br>Essay |

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| LAX033P05 | The Americas IIb: New Frontiers | Upon successful completion of the course unit, students are able to:<br>1. Demonstrate a solid understanding of key events, developments, as well as political, economic, and cultural interrelationships and interdependencies in the Americas during the nineteenth century<br>2. Analyze and interpret historiographical and literary sources as well as cultural artefacts<br>3. Make constructive contributions to class discussions and engage critically with relevant material under exam conditions | Formative assignments,<br>Exam |
| LAX044P05 | North & South Americans II | At the end of this course, students will:<br>1. Have acquired an in-depth understanding of the transnational complexity of the drug trade, the environment, eco-tourism, and colonial legacies in various Latin American nations and Canada;<br>2. Acquire an in-depth understanding of how colonialism and neo-colonialism operate in the Americas;<br>3. Learn to integrate interdisciplinary perspectives in order to engage critically with current socio-political and cultural issues. | Presentation,<br>Weekly assignments, Participation |
| LAX061P05 | American Politics II | Upon successful completion of the course, students are able to:<br>1. demonstrate an understanding of American politics and government, as well as its practical relevance for studying U.S. society.<br>2. evaluate critically the role of the U.S. Constitution and the governmental framework that developed based on it, particularly with regard to the legislative (Congress) and executive (President) branches. | Essay |

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| | | 3. assess the ways in which the ideas that inform the U.S. constitutional and governmental system are disseminated and negotiated in American culture.<br>4. present cogent and informed analyses of the course material, both orally and in writing.<br>write a well-argued essay that engages the historical perspectives and theoretical approaches of the course material. | |

| **Year 2, semester 1** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Course unit** | **Intended learning outcomes** | **Mode of assessment** |
| LAX045B05 | Theories of Culture II: Politic. Theory | Upon successful completion of the course unit, students are able to:<br>1. Demonstrate introductory-level knowledge of theories and theorists germane to the study of American political life in this course;<br>2. Demonstrate an adequate sense of the historical contexts out of which the theoretical perspectives covered in the course arose;<br>3. Articulate some of the ways in which such theoretical perspectives might inform interpretations of American politics and political life, both in the contemporary period or in earlier historical eras;<br>4. Write a theoretically-informed, well-argued essay that displays a basic understanding of both the political theories covered in the course and their relation to past and present political debates in the United States. | Essay,<br>in-class test |
| A<br>LAX087B10 | The Americas III | Upon successful completion of this course unit, students are able to:<br>1. Demonstrate a solid understanding of some key events, developments, as well as political, economic, and cultural interrelationships and interdependencies in the Americas from circa 1500 to 1800; | Formative assignments, essay, exam |

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| | | 2. Analyze and interpret historiographical and literary sources as well as cultural artifacts;<br>3. Make constructive contributions to class discussions and engage critically with relevant material under exam conditions.<br>4. Conduct guided research in American Studies: students should be able to find, assess, and incorporate relevant primary and secondary sources for their own research; write a well-informed and viable research proposal; and write an argument-driven analysis of the results of that research | |
| LAX088B 10 | American Studies in Practice II | At the end of this course, students can:<br>1. Demonstrate proficiency with methodologies within the discipline of American Studies as well as scholarly standards of citation in written assignments<br>2. Demonstrate their knowledge of the stylistic and formal requirements of writing an argumentative essay on a topic in the field of American studies, through a process of writing, peer commentary, and revision<br>3. Conduct independent research in American Studies: students should be able to find, assess, and incorporate relevant primary and secondary sources for their own research; write a well-informed and viable research proposal; and write an argument-driven analysis of the results of that research<br>4. Give a clear, well-structured presentation of a complex subject, and respond spontaneously and effortlessly to questions<br>5. Show sufficient command of written and spoken English that they are likely to achieve the following levels of the Common European Framework of Reference: C2 level (near native) in the areas of listening and reading, and at C1 level (proficient) in written and spoken production | Presentation, Formative assignments (proposal, mini papers, etc.), Essay (research paper) |

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| LAX048B05 | Theories of Culture II: Media Theory | Upon successful completion of the course, students are able to:<br>1. Demonstrate an understanding of the theories relevant to the analysis of media in the Americas read and discussed in this course.<br>2. Contextualize a wide variety of media case studies with respect to historical events and sociopolitical developments in the Americas.<br>3. Conduct research, as well as gather, select, and critically evaluate relevant sources about media in an American context.<br>4. Demonstrate the ability to form well-grounded opinions about U.S. media that take into account historical specificities and power relations. | Formative assignments, multi-modal project |

| Year 2, semester 2 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Course unit** | **Intended learning outcomes** | **Mode of assessment** |
| LAX0[71-76] B05 | Special Topics (5 EC courses) | Varies | Varies |
| new | Global USA | Upon successful completion of the course unit, students are able to:<br>1. demonstrate a competent grasp of the most significant developments in the history of global capitalism relevant to the United States since the Great Depression<br>2. be able to deal competently with both primary and secondary sources relevant to the course, exhibiting sensitivity to the differences between these forms of historical evidence<br>3. be able to offer informed contributions to class discussions on the topics outlined above | in-class test, formative assignment, final essay |
| new | Cultural Analysis in American Studies | Upon successful completion of the course unit, students are able to:<br>1. Develop insightful interpretations of cultural texts, orally and in writing, using concepts from the course readings and discussions<br>2. Select and historicize a text or artifact in relation to broader cultural contexts in the Americas (discourses, genres, institutions, formations, ideologies, etc.) | formative assignments, final essay |

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| | | 3. Devise a specific, original research question on a topic germane to the arts, media, and cultures of the Americas, and select appropriate methods for exploring that question<br>4. Write a well-argued essay that applies one or more of the interdisciplinary approaches discussed in the course to the elucidation of your research question | |

| **Year 3, semester 1** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Course unit** | **Intended learning outcomes** | **Mode of assessment** |
| | Minor | NA | |
| LAX056B15 | MINOR Placement American Studies | NA | (Internship) report |

| **Year 3, semester 2** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Course unit** | **Intended learning outcomes** | **Mode of assessment** |

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|---|---|---|---|
| LAX999B 10 | Bachelor's Thesis American Studies | At the end of this unit, students will be able to:<br>1. Demonstrate the ability to undertake a largely independent research project at the BA level, and produce an extended essay of an appropriate standard and thus the capacity to undertake an MA program;<br>2. Show familiarity with appropriate scholarly conventions and standards;<br>3. Demonstrate the ability to apply methods relevant to the field of American Studies;<br>4. Demonstrate a thorough and detailed understanding of the complexities inherent in a specific aspect (or specific aspects) of American culture in its (their) respective historical, socio-political, or other relevant context(s);<br>5. Engage in cross-disciplinary research, as relevant to their chosen topic;<br>6. Demonstrate effective communication and writing skills, and the ability to use appropriate electronic technologies. | Thesis |
| LAX022B 10 | Research Seminar | Varies | varies |
| A<br>LAX091B 10 | Theories of Culture III | Upon successful completion of the course unit, students are able to:<br>1. Accurately define key terms from the philosophy, sociology, and history of capitalism (as introduced by course readings), and illustrate their understanding using historical or contemporary examples<br>2. Compare and contrast features of U.S and European culture, in terms of economic realities and cultural values, in seminar discussion and online forum<br>3. A pply concepts from course readings to the analysis of examples from U.S. popular and literary culture | Weekly discussion questions; Essay |

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| | | 4. Write a clearly structured essay that advances an argument in response to a theoretical prompt | |

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# Appendix 4: Additional regulations for the graduation dossier

**Assessment procedure and report for Bachelor's theses (LAX999B10) in American Studies**

**Faculty of Arts, University of Groningen**

See BA Thesis course syllabus for detailed information about expectations, meetings, and deadlines.

**ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE OVERVIEW:**

Step 1 : Assign readers

At the beginning of the thesis trajectory, students submit a mini-proposal outlining their topic of interest. Based on the proposed topic, the supervisor is appointed based on expertise, availability, and, if possible, student preference. The BA thesis coordinator appoints a second reader, based on expertise and availability, taking care that combinations vary. All lecturers receive the overview.

Step 2 : Approve proposal

The student produces a 5-page proposal and preliminary bibliography, which must be approved by supervisor (March).

Step 3 : Assess thesis

After completion of the final version of the thesis by the student, supervisor and second reader separately assess the thesis and fill in assessment forms.

Step 4 : Determine final mark

Consultation of supervisor and second reader over the thesis assessment. After a final mark is agreed upon, the supervisor completes the cover sheet, which both readers sign.

In case that the supervisor and second reader cannot agree, they present the case to the EC and hand in this form & the dissertation. The EC asks a third opinion.

Step 5 : Compile and submit report

Supervisor compiles a PDF of the Ba thesis report, which consists of the following documents, in this order:

1. Cover sheet: final result (signed)
2. Supervisor assessment form
3. Second reader assessment form
4. (Third reader assessment form, if needed)
5. Programme-level learning outcomes

The supervisor submits one copy of the completed report to the Secretariat, and one copy to the student.

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1. COVER SHEET: FINAL RESULT

Assessment form for Bachelor's theses (LAX999B10) in American Studies
Faculty of Arts, University of Groningen

| | |
|---|---|
| Date | |
| Name of student | |
| Student number | |
| Title of thesis | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of supervisor | |
| Name of second reader | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Final result | |
| Degree program | Bachelor's degree program in American Studies |

Signature of supervisor Signature of second reader

| |
|---|
| Explanation of the final mark: |

2. SUPERVISOR

Assessment form for Bachelor's theses (LAX999B10) in American Studies
Faculty of Arts, University of Groningen
Note: Not all of the questions under each heading have to be answered and assessed individually; some of them may be irrelevant in your situation. The questions should be seen as guidelines to help you draw up your assessment. In other words, you should follow the spirit rather than the letter of this form.

| | |
|---|---|
| Date | |
| Name of student | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of supervisor | |
| Degree program | Bachelor's degree program in American Studies |

| 1. Identifying a topic and assessing the scholarly conversation |
|---|
| Has the author identified a clear and interesting topic for the thesis that is relevant to the interdisciplinary study of American culture and society? Is the author aware of the relevant scholarly literature on the topic? Has the author been able to reflect on the scholarly debate critically and analytically?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 1a, 2a |

| 2. Defining a clear and relevant research problem/question |
|---|
| Has the author defined a clear research problem or question based on thorough and accurate assessment of the scholarly conversation around the topic? Is the topic of appropriate scope and ambition for a BA thesis? Does the thesis stay on topic throughout all sections?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 2d, 3a |

| 3. Selection and implementation of methodology and relevant theoretical concepts |
|---|

Has the author selected theory, methods, and techniques of research well suited to exploring the research problem/question? Have core concepts been clearly and accurately defined? Have relevant primary sources been used? Have the chosen methods and techniques been correctly applied when analysing the sources?

Program learning outcome 1b

| 4. Argument and analysis: clarity, structure, originality, insight |
| --- |
| Does the essay advance an interesting and original argument? Does the structure of the thesis follow logically from the research question? Is the argument supported with sufficient evidence from primary sources? Is the analysis of sources/quotations convincing and relevant? Do the conclusions follow from the material presented, and do they answer the questions that were asked?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 2a, 5a |

| 5. Readability and technical precision |
| --- |
| Does the language of the thesis maintain an appropriate academic register and level of English fluency? Are primary and secondary sources adequately introduced and quoted? Are clear citations and references included and edited in accordance with the required style sheet (MLA or Chicago)? Has the author adhered to the length requirements for the thesis? Has the thesis been carefully formatted and is it well presented, free of typos and grammatical errors?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 2e, 4a, 4c |

| General assessment: |
| --- |
| |

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This form serves as the basis for the discussion between supervisor and second reader. Once a final mark is agreed upon, then the supervisor fills in the cover sheet, which both instructors sign. The supervisor compiles and makes a PDF of the thesis report (cover sheet, assessment forms, programme learning outcomes) and submits copies to the Secretariat and the student.

3. SECOND READER (or third reader if necessary)

Assessment form for Bachelor's theses (LAX999B10) in American Studies

Faculty of Arts, University of Groningen

Note: Not all of the questions under each heading have to be answered and assessed individually; some of them may be irrelevant in your situation. The questions should be seen as guidelines to help you draw up your assessment. In other words, you should follow the spirit rather than the letter of this form.

| | |
|---|---|
| Date | |
| Name of student | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of second/third reader | |
| Degree program | Bachelor's degree program in American Studies |

| |
|---|
| 1. Identifying a topic and assessing the scholarly conversation |
| Has the author identified a clear and interesting topic for the thesis that is relevant to the interdisciplinary study of American culture and society? Is the author aware of the relevant scholarly literature on the topic? Has the author been able to reflect on the scholarly debate critically and analytically?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 1a, 2a |

| 2. Defining a clear and relevant research problem/question |
| --- |
| Has the author defined a clear research problem or question based on thorough and accurate assessment of the scholarly conversation around the topic? Is the topic of appropriate scope and ambition for a BA thesis? Does the thesis stay on topic throughout all sections?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 2d, 3a |

| 3. Selection and implementation of methodology and relevant theoretical concepts |
| --- |
| Has the author selected theory, methods, and techniques of research well suited to exploring the research problem/question? Have core concepts been clearly and accurately defined? Have relevant primary sources been used? Have the chosen methods and techniques been correctly applied when analysing the sources?<br><br>Program learning outcome 1b |

| 4. Argument and analysis: clarity, structure, originality, insight |
| --- |
| Does the essay advance an interesting and original argument? Does the structure of the thesis follow logically from the research question? Is the argument supported with sufficient evidence from primary sources? Is the analysis of sources/quotations convincing and relevant? Do the conclusions follow from the material presented, and do they answer the questions that were asked?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 2a, 5a |

| 5. Readability and technical precision |
| --- |
| Does the language of the thesis maintain an appropriate academic register and level of English fluency? Are primary and secondary sources adequately introduced and quoted? Are clear citations and references included and edited in accordance with the required style sheet (MLA or Chicago)? Has the author adhered to the length requirements for the thesis? Has the thesis been carefully formatted and is it well presented, free of typos and grammatical errors?<br><br>Program learning outcomes 2e, 4a, 4c |

General assessment:

This form serves as the basis for the discussion between supervisor and second reader. Once a final mark is agreed upon, then the supervisor fills in the cover sheet, which both instructors sign. The supervisor compiles and makes a PDF of the thesis report (cover sheet, assessment forms, programme learning outcomes) and submits copies to the Secretariat and the student.

4. PROGRAMME-LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES

[see above]