

## Popular Culture & Diversity (A005528)

Due to Covid 19, the education and assessment methods may vary from the information displayed in the schedules and course details. Any changes will be communicated on Ufora.

**Course size** *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

**Credits 6.0**

**Study time 168 h**

**Contact hrs**

45.0h

**Course offerings in academic year 2021-2022**

A (semester 1)

English

Gent

**Lecturers in academic year 2021-2022**

Wasserbauer, Marion

UA

lecturer-in-charge

**Offered in the following programmes in 2021-2022**

[Master of Arts in Gender and Diversity](#)

**crdts**

**offering**

6

A

**Teaching languages**

English

**Keywords**

media studies; popular culture; diversity; production; representation; audience; identity; sexuality

**Position of the course**

This is an optional course, applying insights on diversity to media and popular culture.

Exchange students may take up this course unit, for which no prior knowledge of Dutch is required.

This course is offered within the inter university master in gender and diversity and is taught at UAntwerp. This also presupposes a (free) guest registration at UAntwerp. See [mastergenderendiversiteit.be](https://mastergenderendiversiteit.be) for more practical information. If you wish to select this course as an elective course within a different study program than the Master's program in Gender and Diversity, please contact the responsible lecturer.

If you wish, however, to follow this course within a credit contract, you have register directly at UAntwerp.

**Contents**

This course deals with theories and practices of contemporary popular (media) culture, focusing on issues of diversity. As a theoretical foundation, we situate the concept of popular culture in the broader cultural field and we discuss cultural hierarchies and notions of quality. Then, we take a closer look at the tradition of Cultural Studies, where much research on popular culture can be situated. We discuss the history of this tradition and the themes it addresses. Based on the model of the 'circuit of culture', we subsequently analyse three aspects of popular culture. First, we take a look at production: its industrial and commercial nature, convergence and globalisation, and issues of diversity in production contexts. Second, we analyse media 'texts' and their characteristics. A central concept here is representation, the creation of meaning by the use of images and signs. Among other things, we look at the representation of diversity, in terms of ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

Third, we discuss reception, in particular the qualitative 'ethnographic' research tradition within the Cultural Studies approach. Again, diversity is a key issue here: how do different (minority) audiences deal with popular culture? All of this is illustrated with examples and concrete cases from different media and fields of popular culture.

**Initial competences**

This course is taught in English and is based on a set of English-language texts, so a good knowledge of English is essential to be able to take this course.

### **Final competences**

- 1 After this course you should be familiar with theories and research approaches to popular media culture.
- 2 You should be sensitive to issues of diversity in popular media, in relation to media production, representations and audiences.
- 3 You should be able to read and discuss original texts and situate them within the field of research on popular media culture.
- 4 You should be able to independently analyse a case of popular media culture, based on the theoretical insights and examples presented in class.

### **Conditions for credit contract**

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

### **Conditions for exam contract**

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

### **Teaching methods**

Group work, Lecture, Self-reliant study activities

### **Extra information on the teaching methods**

- After a general introduction in the first class, from the second week each class focuses on a particular theme.
- You are expected to read a text before class. On Blackboard, you get instructions about which text to read and what to focus on.
- The first part of each class is more theoretical. At the beginning of the class, you are divided in small groups to discuss the text, answering a number of questions. After the group discussion we collectively discuss the text, representatives of each group reporting on their answers. Then, a theoretical lecture is given, further elaborating on the theme of the text, illustrating and discussing it.
- In the last class, all students give a short presentation in groups of three. Focusing on one of the topics in the course, you look for a short video clip (max. 2 minutes) and discuss it for a maximum of 5 minutes, applying the concepts and insights treated in class. The presentations will not be marked, but if you don't present, two points will be deducted from your final score for this class.

### **Learning materials and price**

All course material is available online.

### **References**

### **Course content-related study coaching**

No fixed office hours, please contact the teacher using email: marion.wasserbauer@uantwerpen.be

### **Assessment moments**

end-of-term and continuous assessment

### **Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period**

Written examination with open questions

### **Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period**

Written examination with open questions

### **Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**

Assignment

### **Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

examination during the second examination period is possible

### **Extra information on the examination methods**

#### **a. Paper (10 points)**

- You select a concrete case or product of contemporary popular media culture: a television programme, music album, film, game, ...
- You search for academic literature (articles, books) about it and about the medium and genre it belongs to.

- You write a **3500-word** (maximum, excluding references) essay on this case, drawing on the literature you found and on your own analysis. In this paper, you should pay attention to the production, text and reception of your case, focussing on issues of diversity.
- Your own analysis should constitute the central part of the paper, not the information found elsewhere. Don't just sum up information, but integrate it into a coherent analysis of your case.

**b. Written exam (10 points)**

- You will get open, 'essay' questions on the course material, both on the texts and on the lectures.
- Some questions will test your knowledge of theories and concepts, asking you to explain and/or illustrate them.
- Other questions will test your understanding of the texts.

**Calculation of the examination mark**

Paper: 10/20

Exam: 10/20

**Facilities for Working Students**

No fixed office hours, please contact the teacher using email: marion.wasserbauer@uantwerpen.be