

History and Culture of the English-speaking World (A005754)

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

Credits 4.0 **Study time 120 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 2) English Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

de Groote, Brecht	LW22	lecturer-in-charge
Sharp, Tristan	LW03	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - English)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, French)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, German)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Italian)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Language Technology)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Russian)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Spanish)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Turkish)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - German)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Greek)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Italian)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Latin)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Spanish)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English - Swedish)	4	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - English)	4	A
Exchange Programme Applied Language Studies	4	A
Exchange Programme Critical Perspectives on Culture	4	A
Exchange Programme Cultures and Languages in Context	4	A
Exchange Programme History	4	A
Exchange Programme in Political and Social Sciences	4	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	4	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in Multilingual Communication: a combination of at least two languages	4	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in Translation: a combination of at least two languages	4	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject English)	4	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Interpreting: a combination of at least two languages	4	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Multilingual Communication: a combination of at least two languages	4	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Translation: a combination of at least two languages	4	A
Elective Set Critical Perspectives on Culture	4	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

English-speaking world, history, culture, cultural history, United Kingdom, British Isles, British Empire, United States

Position of the course

This introductory and foundational course situates English-language cultures within a broader historical and social context. Its purpose is to offer students a broad overview of political, social, economic and cultural developments throughout the history of the English-speaking world, with a particular focus on the British Isles, the historical British Empire, and the English-speaking states and areas which evolved from the latter: with regard to the latter, the United States is a particular focus.

This class prepares students for the programme in Linguistics and Literature (Taal- en Letterkunde) and Applied Language Studies (Toegepaste Taalkunde), and particularly for classes pertaining to cultural and literary topics, in that it offers both an introduction to cultural specificities and intercultural differences, and a historical frame in which to situate and understand these. No prior knowledge of Dutch is required for this module. Exchange students can enrol for this course provided they meet the language requirements.

Contents

History and Culture of the English-Speaking World covers the origins, evolution and imagination of the English-speaking world, with the present as the end point. Classes are structured on a roughly geographic and chronological basis around important historical periods and themes; within and across these, key concepts are brought forward that situate, explain, and potentially complicate or contest historical and contemporary cultural practices.

The course divides into three main parts: (1) history of the British Isles from the pre-Roman period; (2) the British Empire and the states and areas which arise following the colonial period; and (3) the United States from the pre-Columbian period. Each of these parts takes up roughly a third of the class.

Classes are taught with an eye to the present and the historical roots of ongoing discussions. Topical questions of particular prominence will be integrated where appropriate. Classes will draw on primary sources and materials where appropriate; some of these may be offered as preparatory reading.

Initial competences

To master English at the initial level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR — [click here for a more detailed description](#)), i.e. B2.1 (First-stage “Vantage”/“Upper intermediate”/“Independent” proficiency).

Final competences

- 1 Have a wide-ranging and detailed knowledge about the history and society of the English-speaking world, particularly with regard to the UK and the US. They will also have detailed knowledge regarding intercultural relations and differences, and will be able to apply these in the interpretation and production of written and oral text. [B.1.5, assessed]
- 2 Possess a stronger language awareness in English and develop a sensitivity to the similarities, differences and interactions between cultures. [B.3.1, assessed]
- 3 Be able to interpret, analyse, assess and interpret texts that touch on British and American cultural history. They will possess the same kind of background knowledge that a generally well-educated native draws upon when encountering texts produced with a native public in mind. [B.6.1, assessed]

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

A limited amount of preparatory reading may be assigned. Recordings will be made available only to students who cannot class due to medical or work-related reasons, or students who have officially been granted a relevant accommodation ("faciliteiten").

Study material

Type: Slides

Name: History and Culture of the English-Speaking World

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Oldest Usable Edition : 2025

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : No

Type: Reader

Name: Preparatory or supporting reading or A/V materials

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

References

Course content-related study coaching

- Possibility of feedback and questions, preferably during, before or after lectures; or via email or during office hours.
- Pointer exam questions and a trial MCQ quiz will be provided in the course of the term.

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

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

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions, Written assessment with open-ended questions

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

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions, Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

End-of-term written exam with (1) two essay questions, potentially with supporting materials which are to be interpreted; and (2) multiple choice questions. Sample questions will be made available in class and/or on Ufora. Closed book.

Calculation of the examination mark

The final mark for this class is fully determined by the end-of-term exam.

Facilities for Working Students

1. Student attendance during educational activities is not required.
2. Rescheduling of the examination to a different time is not possible.
3. Possibility of questions and feedback, preferably during, before or after lectures; or via email or during office hours.