

From the earliest settlements of the American continent to the Declaration of Independence, from the landing of the first slave ship on the coast of Virginia to the abolitionist movement, from the violent resettlement during the Trail of Tears to the poetics of ecocriticism, from the philosophical national empowerment of the so-called American Renaissance to the fight for equality and justice in Black Lives Matter movement, this lecture course will provide students with a survey of U.S. cultural history against the backdrop of the nation's unabated struggle with its histories of settler colonialism, indigenous displacement, the transatlantic slave trade, civil rights, and systemic racism. In chronological order, each lecture will highlight and discuss central political, social and cultural events and figures, while analyzing paradigmatic works of literature, art, visual, and digital culture. We will investigate crucial theoretical frameworks and current debates in the study of American literature and culture, and explore a vast spectrum of canonical and non-canonical responses to the civilizational crises of colonial settlement, slavery, and their still prevalent legacies.

Requirements: Regular attendance and participation in discussion. Students in the Master of Education are required to submit a short research paper (2-3 pp., Times New Roman 12, 1.5 line spacing) based on material of their choice discussed in the lecture course (deadline: 30 September 2024).