



SELF PROGRAM 2025/2026

Debating matters in the context of the Culture Wars

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Course information

Number of credits : 6 credits

Contact hours : 30 hours

Hours taught per week : 2,5 hours

Teaching period : Fall Semester 2025

Course description :

This course explores the Culture Wars which are ideological fights over domestic issues in a given country. Through several case studies and practical exercises we will see who the cultural warriors are as well as the arguments and worldviews that divide them. We will analyse the origins, development, and meanings of those cultural conflict and how they are

exported from one country to the next. The course examines current debates, different ways to make a coherent and persuasive argument.

Prerequisites :

Basic knowledge of current social debates.

Course objectives:

The main objective of this course is to learn how to persuade, organize your arguments and provide relevant examples. We will study the technics used to persuade in a very polarized political environment: the types of arguments used and those which are the most effective. We will work on the different themes of the Culture Wars.

Assessment: [at least 2 marks, one for the final written exam in class and one for a mid-term/oral presentation ...]

30%: Mid-term written exam

70%: group presentation and group dossier at the end of the semester

Attendance:

In order to participate, students must be present. Nevertheless, a maximum of 2 (two) unexcused absences will be allowed; otherwise no mark will be given. An unexcused absence at a test (final test or continuous assessment) means no credits for the course.

Bibliography:

Bonnet, Alma-Pierre, Denis Jamet-Coupé and Cédric Passard (eds) "The Words of "Cultural Wars". Between Discursive Issues and Argumentative Aims" in *Mots, Les langages du politique* 2024/3 No 136.

Gates, Henry Louis Jr. *Loose Canons: Notes on the Culture Wars*. Oxford University Press, 1992.

Hartman, Andrew. *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars*. University of Chicago Press, 2015.

Thomson, Irene Taviss. *Culture Wars and Enduring American Dilemmas*. University of Michigan Press, 2010

Zimmerman, Jonathan. *Whose America?: Culture Wars in the Public Schools*. University of Chicago Press, 2022.