



Universidad
de Alcalá

GUÍA DOCENTE

**La cultura británica moderna:
orígenes y evolución //**

**The making of modern British
culture**

Universidad de Alcalá

Curso Académico 2021-2022

Transversal -1^o Cuatrimestre

GUÍA DOCENTE

Nombre de la asignatura:	La cultura británica moderna: Orígenes y evolución. // The making of modern British culture.
Código:	100268
Departamento y Área de Conocimiento:	Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Carácter:	Transversal
Créditos ECTS:	4
Cuatrimestre:	Primer cuatrimestre
Profesorado:	Daniel Migueláñez Munilla daniel.miguelanez@uah.es
Horario de Tutoría:	Por determinar
Idioma en el que se imparte:	Inglés

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Culture is a subject of enormous breadth that runs parallel to several other disciplines. Scholars who have tried to pin it down have found that culture could be a logical construct, a statistical fiction, or an abstraction from behaviour. The approach that is taken to examine a culture of a specific society or period determines the kind of findings one might encounter and the assumptions one might take about those. This course provides an introduction to modern British culture, with attention to how its peculiarities have contributed not only to the making of a national identity, but also, in many cases, to the way in which individual and collective experiences are perceived and constructed in western societies. Synchronic and diachronic approaches to documents—primary sources, in most cases—will be used to relate characteristics of what is conventionally understood as high culture (historical events, literature, economy, politics, art and music), with the lifestyle of everyday people in modern and contemporary Britain. Accordingly, sources will range from instances of popular culture to serious academic reflection.

Prerequisites and recommendations

Since all activities will be conducted in English, students are expected to have at least a B2 level in the language within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Students are reminded that at the end of the second semester, they are expected to have a level of B2.2 (CEFR).

Course summary

This course introduces modern British culture from the 15th century to the present. While a significant part of the course focuses on the ideas, figures and events during the early and late modern period, we will also discuss how these have influenced contemporary British culture and society. Beginning with the distinction between continental rationalism and British empiricism, we will draw on the notion of paradigm shift to see how British culture have influenced—and have been reflected on—issues of philosophy, literature, economy, politics, language, and religion. We will evaluate some of the implications of the emergence of utilitarianism, liberalism, or environmental determinism in the culture and society of the late 20th century and early 21st century in Britain and in western societies. Finally, we will also explore popular culture and behaviour culture, the rise and fall of British popular music, the links between a sense of national identity and the media, the characteristics of British sexual culture, and the peculiarities of British humour.

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Generic competences:

1. To develop analytical and argumentative skills, as well as critical thinking, with regards cultural manifestations of a country or a period in history.
2. To improve the ability to understand all sorts of texts at the B2 level of the CEFR, both orally and in writing.
3. To demonstrate the ability to defend one's ideas, both orally and in writing, clearly and correctly.
4. To use bibliographic and specialized resources efficiently and accurately.
5. To get acquainted with the use of computer tools and on-line resources.
6. To develop the capacities for self-monitoring, self-improvement, and self-assessment.

Specific competences:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Bring together a wide range of arguments connected to the issues discussed in class.
2. Relate their own assumptions about the making of modern western culture and the peculiarities of modern British culture.
3. Demonstrate a knowledge of key issues discussed in class that have contributed to the formation of British culture in the period since 1500 to the present day.

4. Interpret how certain instances of the construction of British culture in fields such as philosophy, literature, or science, have influenced contributions in music, economy, or politics, to generate the characteristics that British contemporary culture is built around.
5. Explore the relationships between popular culture, high culture, and lifestyles.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

Tentative class schedule

This schedule is subject to change. A more accurate schedule will be provided by the instructor at the beginning of the course.

units	topics	date
What is culture?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions of culture 	Week 1
What makes us British?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British national identity • Stereotypes and facts 	Week 2
The making of the western modern culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British empiricism and continental rationalism • Utilitarianism • Individualism and society • The garden of liberal culture • Politics and the English language 	Weeks 3,4,5
Popular culture and music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Swinging sixties • Cool Britannia • the 21st century revival 	Weeks 6,7
High culture and folklore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between folk and lore 	Week 8
British media in the 20 th century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British identity and the media 	Weeks 9,10
Behaviour culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British sexual culture • British humour 	Weeks 11,12,13

4. METHODOLOGY AND CLASS ACTIVITIES

The course consists of a 2-hour, weekly whole-class session, as well as one ECTS tutorial plus two one-hour workshops. Tutorial and workshops dates will be evenly spaced over the term.

The contents of the course will be introduced mostly through practice. Brief explanations will be preceded and followed by practical exercises. Students will have previously read the materials that will be uploaded in blackboard.

Students will be asked to do further individual research into the topics of the syllabus, as part of their independent learning time. Classes will consist of a mixture of lectures, seminars, critical readings, and critical writings.

Students will be asked to make use of the platform Blackboard to access the materials for the course, for class communication, as a tool for self-study and revision.

4.1. Student workload: 100 hours

Class contact hours: 31	Lectures and seminars 1 hour ECTS tutorial; two 1-hour workshops; a two-hour exam
Independent study hours: 69	Reading articles Writing of assignments

4.2. Learning activities, materials and resources

Face to face sessions	Lectures and seminars ECTS tutorial Workshops (written work and oral presentations)
Autonomous work	Readings Oral and written activities Preparation of assignments Preparation of exam
Tutorials	One ECTS tutorial plus individual tutorials on demand

Materials and resources	Weekly compulsory readings for the seminars will be provided by the instructor. With regards to the recommended books, it is highly advisable to use them, but there is no penalty for the use of alternative sources.
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5. ASSESSMENT

Students will be graded through ongoing assessment of their activity in accordance with the following criteria:

Assessment criteria

Assessment will rely on the degree of achievement of the target competences.

Student shows:

- A critical understanding of the issues studied in class.
- A thorough knowledge of the key milestones and figures that have contributed to the making of modern British culture.

- An appreciation of the impact of high culture on behaviour culture and vice versa.
- A capacity to relate their own assumptions about the construction of reality with given stereotypes of the British.
- An apparent willingness to participate in class discussions.
- Has grasped strategies to unveil underlying sound and prosodies patterns.

In oral presentations, fluency and accuracy in pronunciation will be equally considered together with the ability to discuss ideas convincingly in English.

Since students are expected to have at least a B2 level, activities will be graded progressively and tests will be adapted to this level. The amount of vocabulary used in presentations, its appropriateness and the rate of delivery will also be assessed.

In all the activities, both oral and written, overall language performance (i.e. spelling, lexis, grammar, style and register) will be taken into account.

Students will then be assessed through a combination of:

- Level of achievement in exercises and assignments.
- Participation in class discussions and practice.
- Level and style of written assignments plus oral presentations on key points.
- Results of the mid-term and final examinations.

Grading descriptors

Overall marks for the course will be assigned as follows:

mark	percent	description
MATRÍCULA DE HONOR (outstanding)	96% and higher	Students display an outstanding grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been fulfilled to an exceptionally high level. The written assignments show that students have read and thought at a level well beyond what is expected in the module. Students attend lectures and are always well-prepared for discussion in seminars.
SOBRESALIENTE (excellent)	90% and higher	Students display an excellent grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been fulfilled to a very high standard and most at an exceptionally high level. The written assignments show all or most of the appropriate characteristics expected for this type of work. Students attend lectures are practically always well-prepared for discussion in seminars, with almost no absences.

NOTABLE (very good)	70-89%	Students display a very good grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been met fully and many have been fulfilled at a good or very good standard. The written assignments show a good knowledge of the primary texts and the relevant context; they have a good foundation in the prescribed reading and build on ideas put forward in lectures and seminars. Students attend lectures and seminars, with few absences, and have done most of the preparation.
APROBADO (satisfactory)	50-69%	Students show a satisfactory grasp of the aims and contents of the module. All assessment criteria have been met, but some barely exceed the threshold standard to pass the module. The written assignments show some of the appropriate characteristics in relation to content, illustration, organisation and expression. Students are present in lectures and seminars, with few absences, and occasionally contribute to discussions.
SUSPENSO (fail)	49% and lower	Students show an unsatisfactory grasp of the aims and contents of the module. Some assessment criteria do not reach the threshold standard to pass the module. The written assignments show limited understanding of the primary texts and/or minimal research. Students have multiple absences and when they come, they are often not prepared, or they do not say much.

Assessment procedures and assessment instruments

In the ordinary examination session students will be graded on the basis of a weighted average of their continuous assessment, and a final exam (or a presentation, for those students who opt for it).

Self-practice will be assessed through the students' learning diary.

According to the instructions contained in the "*Normativa reguladora de los procesos de evaluación de los aprendizajes (aprobada en Consejo de Gobierno de 5 de mayo de 2016)*", there will also be one final summative exam of the material covered in the course for those students who have requested exemption from the continuous evaluation process and have been thus authorized. This summative exam is similar to the final exam for the students who opt for continuous evaluation process (explained in the paragraph above).

Likewise, in the extraordinary examination session (June) students will be graded by means of a summative exam similar to the final exam.

Structure of assessment

The overall mark for the course is produced from the average of the two assignments, the presentation or exam (depending on the student's choice), and their participation in class.

– Learning diary	40%
– Exam or presentation	40%
– Participation in class	20%
Total	100%

Learning diary (5 entries of c. 500 words), due every other week from week 2, on the topics seen in class.

Exam or presentation: You will be asked to decide whether you prefer to do a multiple-choice exam or a presentation; both are due the last 2 weeks of the course. If you decide to do the **exam**, bear in mind that there will be a nongraded mock exam (for the whole class), to familiarise with the format and the content, and that some questions in the actual exam will be similar. If you decide to do the **presentation** (5-7 minutes), you will be free either to expand one of your submitted journal entries into a longer, oral presentation, or prepare a new one related to any of the topics we will discuss in class.

Participation in class will be weekly assessed, on the basis of whether you contribute or not in class, and to what extent your contributions, questions, or discussions are relevant and meaningful.

Those students who request exemption from the continuous evaluation process will be assessed by means of a summative exam whose results will make up 100% of the final mark.

Likewise, in the extraordinary examination session, students will be graded by means of a summative exam weighing 100% of the final mark.

Plagiarism

The use of materials taken from another author without acknowledgement is a serious offense and will be taken seriously. Should you have any doubts about whether you are plagiarising, or the possible consequences of submitting a work that has been partly or totally plagiarised, please ask your instructor or consult the legislation at the university that you can find in the following link:

http://www3.uah.es/bibliotecaformacion/BECO/plagio/5_legislacin_contra_el_plagio.html

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basic bibliography:

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Christopher, David. *British Culture: An Introduction*. (3rd edition). Oxon,

Routledge, 2015.

Higgins, M., Smith, C., and Storey, J. (eds.) *The Cambridge companion to Modern British culture*. Cambridge, CUP, 2010.

O'Driscoll. *Britain: The Country and Its People: An Introduction for Learners of English*. Oxford UP, 1999.

Storry, Mike, Childs, Peter (eds.) *British Cultural Identities* (2nd edition). London, 2003.

Additional bibliography:

Jones, Harriet. (ed.) *A Companion to Contemporary Britain: 1939-2000*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

Jones, Harriet and Clapson, Mark (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Britain in the Twentieth Century*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Miller, David, ed. *Rethinking Northern Ireland Culture, Ideology and Colonialism*. London & New York: Longman, 1988.

Oakland, John. *British Civilization: An Introduction* (9th ed). London: Routledge, 2020.