Courses in English
Course Description

Department 13 General and Interdisciplinary Studies

Course title American humor, British humour

Hours per week (SWS) 2

Number of ECTS credits 2

Course objective Not only do Americans and British spell the word “humor” differently, most claim that American humor and British humour are quite different in nature. In this class we'll take a look at what humor is. Through analysis of movie clips, comics, sitcoms and other media, students should gain an insight into American and British humor as well as taking your language skills to a new level (maybe to create your own joke at the end!). There will be a lot to learn and plenty to laugh about.

Prerequisites none

Recommended reading

Teaching methods Although the course is in part lecture, all students will be expected to participate in task-group discussions. Out of class reading in English can be expected each week. There is an exam at the end of the semester. The mark will be based primarily on the exam, however class participation will play a role in raising the exam mark to some extent

Assessment methods written final exam

Language of instruction English

Name of lecturer Nicholas Sinn

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Link

Course content Understanding humor or a joke in a foreign language can be tricky, consider the following joke.
A: why do cemeteries have fences around them?
B: I don't know, why?
A: because people are dying to get in!!!
B: hahaha

If you get this joke, congratulations!!! If not, don’t worry. It simply illustrates the fact that in order to understand a joke in a foreign language, there is more to just speaking the language. In the joke above, for instance, you’ll need to know that “dying to do something” means having a strong desire to do something: in this case having a strong desire to get in the cemetery and be buried, which can hardly be the case for most people. It is a play on words (to die and dying to do something) that makes it funny. In other cases, you’ll also need cultural, political and social understanding to fully appreciate and laugh about a joke.

Remarks -