

Summer Course Descriptions

Contemporary Czech Art, Culture, Music and Literature: Urban Semiotics

Course
Code CUFA SOC 345

Instructor [Blanka Maderová](#)

Description The course will acquaint students with the contemporary Czech art scene, its “roots” and transformations from three different perspectives. First, the course will pursue how Czech art and music are connected with activism, minority groups and mainstream culture. Second, focus will be placed on how to “read” contemporary urban performances, literature and works of art. How and why do performances address and fascinate their readers? What value-hierarchies and culture-changing signs do they produce? Third, the course will familiarize students with the notions of performance art, digital media, counterculture, mass culture and show their impact on Czech individuals and society.

The course will elucidate the transitions in the Czech art scene after 1989, together with their socio-historical context. It will explore different understandings of post-communist movements as represented in the performances by Czech artists. Czech art perspectives will be confronted with

Western literary and cultural criticism.

Art Photography and Genius Loci

Course
Code CUFA ART 321

Instructor [Jan Starý](#)

Description An experimental course that will combine some theoretical aspects of photography and its aesthetic and cognitive value as a unique art form with practical exercises and authentic experiential outdoor activities. Not primarily conceived as a course in the history of Czech Photography, the course will provide a basic orientation in the Czech photographic art of the 20th century. The focus is not so much on the techniques, but rather on the styles and how photography as an exquisite artistic medium expresses (or at times suppresses) the individual bias, aesthetics, period style, and the societal and cultural boundaries. The course will also marginally examine the age-old debate about the documentary value versus the artistic value of photography, and similarly the argument on the nude photography versus pornography.

Czech Language for Everyday Use I.

Course
Code CUFA CZE 102

Instructor [Zdena Řeháková](#)

Description The course is designed to teach students the basics of Czech language and at the same time to extend their knowledge of Czech culture and everyday life. The communicative approach and everyday vocabulary are emphasized. Students are supposed to communicate in various situations of everyday life (introducing oneself, asking about direction, shopping, restaurant, daily routine, likes and dislikes). Various linguistic skills should be developed in balance: knowledge of grammar, comprehension, speaking, and writing.

Czech and European Art and Architecture

Course
Code CUFA ART 301

Instructor [Josef Záruba](#)

Description The course provides a general overview of the Fine Arts development in Europe with a special focus on Central Europe and monuments in Prague. The course covers the Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods, up to Modernism and the Contemporary art scene. Special attention will be paid to the unique characteristics and developments of art (e.g. Prague Castle, Baroque churches, Czech cubism), and to the most glorious periods in the history of Czech Lands (era of Charles IV, Rudolf II).

Certain particular pieces of art that represent the époque or style will be presented and we will analyze the details, historical context, iconography and formal qualities that represent the individual style. The course will also focus on selective facts on important artists and movements that illustrate typical features of a certain time period. By studying detailed information about a particular piece, the student will obtain a good insight to the history of Fine Arts as an academic discipline.

The class is divided into two parts; a lecture in the classroom and a field trip to a local museum or other monuments or buildings in Prague. Students will be encouraged to apply their knowledge – e.g. date the piece; describe the iconography, discover important details, guess the original purpose of the object, and recognize its modifications and later additions.

Economic Affairs: European Union and Asia

Course
Code CUFA ECON 310

Instructor [Barbora Hronešová \(Fialová\)](#), [Ondřej Sankot](#)

Description The class aims at current stage and basic trends within the development of the world economy with a special emphasis on the comparison of economic systems in Europe and Asia. It makes students familiar with principal actors of the global economic system (i.e. states, international organizations, transnational corporations, regional integration agreements and sovereign wealth funds) as well as with their mutual interconnections. Brief description of the European integration and its main attributes is also provided. The crucial part of the course is dedicated to introduction of the European and Asian economic systems and discussion about related problems.

Jewish Art and Architecture

Course
Code CUFA ART 305

Instructor [Kateřina Průšová](#)

Description The Jewish nation is spread over centuries in multiple parts of the world. Therefore, it is uneasy to talk of specifically Jewish art. Only a synagogue developed into a typical Jewish form of architecture. In the Middle-Ages, Jews were often inspired by existing architecture that they adapted to their needs and thus a specific form was created. The Jews of the Eastern Europe developed their own architectural concepts especially between the 16th and the 18th centuries.

The course examines architecture of synagogues in the Ancient world, the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque period as well as in the contemporary era, alongside with the introduction into the Jewish history, tradition and beliefs. Students learn about the specific features characterizing different architecture styles over centuries and symbolism of architecture used in Jewish prayer rooms.

Classroom lectures are combined with regular field trips and two one-day trips. There is the oldest functioning synagogue in Europe dating from 1200's in Prague. Rich collections of the Jewish museum in Prague house a number of synagogue curtains, silverware and other liturgical objects esp. from the baroque era and the 19th century.

Jewish Images in Central European Cinema

Course
Code CUFA F 380

Instructor [Kevin Johnson](#)

Description This course examines the portrayal of Jews and Jewish themes in the cinemas of Central Europe from the 1920s until the present. It considers not only depictions of Jews made by gentiles (sometimes with anti-Semitic undertones), but also looks at productions made by Jewish filmmakers aimed at a primarily Jewish audience. The selection of films is representative of the broader region where Czech, Slovak, Polish, Hungarian, Ruthenian, Ukranian, German, and Yiddish are (or were historically) spoken. Although attention will be given to the national-political context in which the films were made, most of the films by their very nature defy easy classification according to strict categories of statehood—this is particularly true for the pre-World War II Yiddish-language films. For this reason, the films will also be examined with an eye toward broader, transnational connections and global networks of people and ideas. Primary emphasis will be placed on two areas: (1) films that depict and document pre-Holocaust Jewish society in Central Europe, and (2) post-War films that seek to come terms with the Holocaust and the nearly absolute destruction of Jewish culture and tradition in the region. Weekly film screenings will be supplemented by theoretical readings related to the films or to concepts associated with them. In addition to close examinations of the film scheduled for each week, class sessions will include viewing and discussion of clips from other, related films. Discussion will touch on issues of ethnic representation, agency, and memory.

Literature of Central European Cafés

Course
Code CUFA LIT 324

Instructor [Martina Moravcová](#)

Description This course aims to introduce students to the coffee house culture and related literary and artistic life in three cities – Budapest, Prague and Vienna. At the end of the 19th, and beginning of the 20th century, coffee houses and literary modernism grew into an inseparable entity. Under specific social and economical conditions, coffee houses became places of meeting and intellectual exchange.

Modern Czech Politics across Various Political Regimes: Never-ending Transformation

Course Code CUFA POL 316

Instructor [Jiří Koubek](#)

Description The transformation of Czechoslovakia (and later of the Czech Republic) from a communist satellite state into a European Union member state is an exciting story, but it is also an intellectual challenge. It encompassed a profound change of political, social, cultural and economic structures while at the same time meant a radical change in people's lives. Without understanding some deeper historical conditions of this transformation this intellectual challenge cannot probably be met. The course will start with a short introduction to Czech pre-communist politics and regimes. Then a survey of communist rule follows, concentrating on the role of the party, propaganda and political life, looking also at the daily life under communism. Next two radical political changes will be discussed: The Velvet Revolution of 1989 and the "Velvet Divorce" of 1992-1993; these will be taken as models of change with much larger implications for the whole Central and Eastern Europe. The focus will be on the discussion of key political institutions and parties in comparative perspective.

Picturing the Nation: National Filmmaking and Visual Culture in 20th Century Central Europe

Course Code CUFA F 370

Instructor [Nicholas Hudáč](#)

Description The growth and development of cinema as an art form during the 20th century led to the creation of the concept of "national cinemas", where films produced in a given country represent an essential part of a nation's culture.

This course will focus on three of the main "national" cinemas which have been influential in Central Europe: Czechoslovak, Czech, and Slovak. There will also be a final series of lectures devoted to how these national cinemas changed in the course of dramatic upheavals of national boundaries in the late 20th century such as the dissolution of Czechoslovakia. In the course of the semester, we will examine approaches to the concept of national cinemas, how to read national cinemas in terms of nationalism and ethnic identity, and how to navigate the problems with this approach. In addition to watching films, we will also be discussing sociological and cinema theory and approaches to "reading" films, not only as movies, but also as multi-faceted cultural artifacts with an emphasis on the social and theoretical implications. To this end, our readings will contain primary source materials on cinema history, historical research, film theory, and literature intended to broaden our understanding of national cinematic cultures.

Reading Prague: Literature, Architecture, and Cultural History

Course
Code CUFA LIT 314

Instructor [Hynek Zykmund](#)

Description The course will survey Prague's history, focusing on the lives and aspirations of its multinational inhabitants as they metamorphosed in the course of the last twelve centuries.

It proposes to read the city as a text and to treat literature and architecture as both expressions and symptoms of its evolution. Throughout the course, literature and architecture will be explored through a critical reading of the motivations, techniques and achievements which are at play therein.

Selected Topics in Social Psychology: Soft Skills

Course
Code CUFA SOC 355

Instructor [Jan Froněk](#)

Description **Important note** – This course doesn't take place on 5th and 6th July, **make-up days** are Fridays 24th June and 1st July from 9-11.45 am.

Soft skills have got a great impact on our success and satisfaction in life. The concept of soft skills consists of both intra-personal and inter-personal aspects. This course presents a well-balanced practical overview of the soft skills world.

The content will be adapted according to the students, possible topics are:

- Social perception, stereotyping, prejudices.
- Effective communication principles.
- Coaching. - Self-management.
- Presentation skills. - Assertiveness and manipulation recognition.
- Resolving conflicts. - Teamwork, group problem solving.
- Stress management. - Authenticity, values.
- Creativity.

Self experience is one of the most important outcomes of this seminar and therefore active learning methods will be used in every session (discussion, role-play, simulations, exercises, art, reflective journal, peer counselling, etc.). The whole class is more practice-oriented than theory oriented.

Shaping Central Europe - The historical forces which defined Central European History

Course
Code CUFA HIST 205

Instructor [Gaelle Vassogne](#)

Description The course will focus on the history of Central Europe through the study of the major phenomena that shaped it. The main themes studied in the course will be the impact of the Habsburg dynasty on the region's politics and culture, the rise of nationalism in the 19th century and its consequences for post-WWI Central Europe. We will then analyze the impact of World War II on the region, the disappearance of Central Europe as a political and cultural entity under Communist rule and its rebirth at the end of the 20th century. We will also explore the significance for the region of its specific Jewish history. Each theme will be illustrated by a field trip and/or a documentary.