

SOC365 Popular Culture

Level: 3

Credit Units: 5 Credit Units

Language: ENGLISH

Presentation Pattern: EVERY JULY

Synopsis:

SOC365 Popular Culture is an advanced-level module which teaches a wide range of theoretical perspectives for understanding the complexities of popular culture and associated social processes. Students will learn the different interpretations that are associated with different schools of thought, and have the opportunity to apply these theoretical insights to empirical examples and case studies from around the world. Popular culture will be studied as a set of artefacts with significant social and political effects and functions. Relevant themes or topics of discussion that will be introduced include globalization, technological advancements, capitalism, consumption, gender, and socio-cultural change in general. SOC365 aims to impart a sophisticated understanding of 'popular culture' as a social phenomenon. This means moving away from lay conceptions of popular culture and avoiding an overly celebratory, pessimistic, or one-sided account. In the process of studying this subject, students will be exposed to insights from several other disciplines such as cultural studies, literary theory, linguistics, organization studies, and media and communication studies. Students will also gain an appreciation of some of the key themes within the fields of Sociology of Culture and Sociology of Consumption in general.

Topics:

- Introduction to Popular Culture; and popular culture as an aspect of culture
- The Mass Culture Debate
- The Production of Popular Culture, Capitalism, and Ideology
- Feminist analysis of Popular Culture; Popular Culture and Racial Representations
- Structuralism, post-structuralism and Popular Culture
- Postmodernist Analysis of Popular Culture; The politics of Popular Culture, and Conclusion

Textbooks:

Storey, John: Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader. (5th Edition). Taylor and Francis
ISBN-13: 9780815393542

Learning Outcome:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the key debates, themes, and theories in the sociology of popular culture;
- Examine the trends, patterns, and socio-political effects associated with popular culture;
- Analyse popular culture in relation to the media and communications industries;
- Discuss popular culture in Asia and in broader contexts around the world.
- Construct the concept of "popular culture" in a much more sophisticated way, having been informed by a wide range of theoretical debates and empirical examples and studies.
- Construct empirically-supported analyses of popular culture (and related industries) by applying theoretical knowledge
- Develop academic essays that display abilities of skilful argumentation and critical thinking

Assessment Strategies (Evening Class):

Components	Description	Weightage Allocation (%)
Overall Continuous Assessment	TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT 1	25
	TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT 2	25
Overall Examinable Components	Written Exam	50
Total		100