

ÇANKAYA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
2025-2026 FALL

ELL 237 Concepts in Culture

Class hours: Mon. 13:20-16:10

Office Hours: Tues. 14:20-16:10, Fri. 10:20-11:10

This course looks at patterns of social and intellectual development that fall under the general rubric of culture (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, economic and social status, history, geography, language), and it explores how sign systems operate, as well as the ideologies and structures of power that underlie different kinds of rituals and representation, from words, gestures, graffiti and advertisements, to art, music, fashion, food, and sports. Selected examples from literature and/or the media—film, television, newspapers and magazines, the Internet—will be studied, in order to understand not only their logic and organization, but also how audience sensibilities but also the ways in which audience sensibilities shape or are shaped by desires and cultural assumptions. Texts may include primary and critical or theoretical works, films and videos, music, and cultural artifacts; topics may range from historical concepts to current issues such as environmental concerns, demographic changes, social problems, or the effects of technology.

Assessment: There will be one midterm and one final examination.

There may also be 1-2 short assignments given throughout the term to be graded as quizzes, as well as a presentation on cultural groups (more information about this will be given after add-drops). **Any form of plagiarism or cheating in general in any of these assignments will get you a direct F from the assignment, and an F for the course if it happens twice.**

Midterm Exam 35%

Final Exam 40%

Cultural group presentation 10%

Class assignments 15%

Textbook: The primary textbook for the course will be Arthur Asa Berger's *Signs in Contemporary Culture: An Introduction to Semiotics*. Additional material will also be provided. All texts will be made available to you in Pdf format, and you are required to do the reading for the relevant texts each week, and to bring the print outs to class.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1	29.09.2025	Definition of a Sign Chapter One “Definition”
Week 2	6.10.2025	Chapter Two – How Signs Work Chapter Three - Signs, Symbols, and Signals
Week 3	13.10.2025	Chapter Four – Metaphor: Communication by Analogy Chapter Five – Metonymy: Communicating by Using Associations Class assignment
Week 4	20.10.2025	Chapter Eight – Forms of Signs Chapter Nine - Visual Aspects of Signs Class assignment
Week 5	27.10.2025	Psychoanalytic Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 6	03.11.2025	Psychoanalytic Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 7	10.11.2025	Midterm Examination
Week 8	17.11.2025	Sociological Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 9	24.11.2025	Sociological Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 10	01.12.2025	Student Presentations
Week 11	08.12.2025	Student Presentations
Week 12	15.12.2025	Marxism and Cultural Criticism Case Study: J. Marc Schmidt, “Socio-Political Themes in <i>The Smurfs</i> ”
Week 13	22.12.2025	Marxism and Cultural Criticism
Week 14	29.12.2025	Literary Theory and Cultural Criticism