

ÇANKAYA UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
2026-2027 FALL

ELL 237 Concepts in Culture

Class hours: Fri. 09:20-12:10

Office Hours: Mon. 10:20-11:10, Thurs. 13:20-16:10, Fri. 14:20-15:10

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.

Requirements: Course activities will be based on group discussions. For each class, students are expected to read the assigned texts for the week and to bring a hard copy of the text to class. Otherwise, their work will be considered unsatisfactory.

Additionally, please follow the rules of common courtesy during class: do not be late, store away your phone so you do not distract yourself or others, and wait until break times to leave the classroom.

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

There will 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.**

Students can make use of generative AI tools in developing their academic skills but unethical use of AI technology will be treated as plagiarism and will be subject to academic penalties.

Midterm Exam 35%

Final Exam 40%

Cultural group presentation 15%

Class assignments 10%

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	02.10.2026	Definition of a Sign Chapter One "Definition"
Week 2	09.10.2026	Chapter Two – How Signs Work Chapter Three - Signs, Symbols, and Signals
Week 3	16.10.2026	Chapter Four – Metaphor: Communication by Analogy Chapter Five – Metonymy: Communicating by Using Associations Class assignment
Week 4	23.10.2026	Chapter Eight – Forms of Signs Chapter Nine - Visual Aspects of Signs Class assignment
Week 5	30.10.2026	Psychoanalytic Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 6	06.11.2026	Psychoanalytic Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 7	13.11.2026	Midterm Examination
Week 8	20.11.2026	Sociological Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 9	27.11.2026	Sociological Theory and Cultural Criticism
Week 10	04.12.2026	Student Presentations
Week 11	11.12.2026	Student Presentations
Week 12	18.12.2026	Marxism and Cultural Criticism
Week 13	25.12.2026	Marxism and Cultural Criticism
Week 14	01.01.2027	HAPPY NEW YEAR