



SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY “NEOFIT RILSKI”

**2700 Blagoevgrad, 66 Ivan Mihailov Str.
Tel. +359 /73/ 8855 01, Fax: +359 /73/ 8855 16
E-mail: info@swu.bg**

<http://www.swu.bg>

DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE AND ETHNOLOGY

MASTER’S PROGRAM: FOLKLORE STUDIES AND ETHNOGRAPHY

EDUCATIONAL AND QUALIFICATION DEGREE: MASTER

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION: MASTER OF FOLKLORE STUDIES, ETHNOGRAPHER

DURATION OF STUDY: 2 SEMESTERS

FORM OF STUDY: FULL-TIME

1. GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE MASTER’S PROGRAM

The Master’s program “Folkloristics and Ethnography” is designed for non-specialists, and therefore the program is structured over four semesters. This format ensures both the necessary foundational training and a high level of qualification in the fields of verbal folklore, ethnography, ethnomusicology, ethnochoreology, and museology. Graduates of the Master’s program in “Folkloristics and Ethnography” are awarded the educational and qualification degree Master of Philology – Philologist and Ethnographer.

The program includes activities of various types, unified by its primary goal and specialization:

Educational

Research

Other (administrative, organizational, etc.)

The program responds to the growing interest in traditional folklore culture (verbal, musical, dance, and material) among philology teachers as well as many community center workers across the country. It provides additional qualification in verbal folklore, ethnography, ethnomusicology, ethnochoreology, and museology.

In general, the Master’s program “Folkloristics and Ethnography” offers core courses in folkloristics and ethnography and, through its comprehensive approach, ensures a high level of professional training for its graduates.

2. GENERAL QUALIFICATION AND SPECIALIZATION OF THE PROGRAM

The Master’s program includes core courses in folkloristics and ethnography, such as:

- History of Bulgarian Folkloristics
- Ethnography of Bulgaria
- Introduction to Bulgarian Verbal Folklore
- Ethnomusicology
- Ethnochoreology
- Museology

These courses are offered with a sufficient number of lecture, seminar, and extracurricular hours, ensuring a high professional qualification for non-specialist students.

For each of the four semesters, students are also offered the opportunity to take one elective course in areas such as:

- Verbal Folklore
- Traditional Festive Systems
- Traditions and Cultural Heritage
- Visualization of Traditional Culture
- Media Representation of Culture

The availability of electives allows students to further develop and specialize their competencies according to their academic and educational interests.

Graduates receive the educational degree Master – Folklorist and Ethnographer in the professional field 2.1. Philology.

3. AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL REALIZATION

Graduates of the program are specifically trained to:

- a) Continue their education at the Doctoral level.
- b) Manage various cultural activities (museum, educational, publishing, dissemination, promotion, advertising, etc.).
- c) Conduct independent research work as well as independent teaching activities in different formats (courses, professional development programs, educational programs, etc.).

The Master's program in "Folkloristics and Ethnography" ensures (according to Art. 9, para. 1 of the Regulation on State Requirements for Higher Education for the educational and qualification degrees Bachelor, Master, and Specialist):

In-depth scientific-theoretical and specialized training in the field of study;
Advanced skills in fieldwork and research in folkloristics, ethnology, and ethnography;
Conditions for educational mobility, including international comparability of acquired knowledge and skills;

Development of adaptability skills in response to economic and technological changes.

Professions available to graduates (according to NKPD-2011):

Curator, Museum (26216004)

Branch Manager, Museum (26216008)

Chief Curator, Museum (26217001)

Ethnologist (26326007)

Cultural Tourism Specialist (26326016)

Folklorist (26528028)

СТРУКТУРА НА УЧЕБЕН ПЛАН

ОБЛАСТ НА ВИСШЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ: 2. ХУМАНИТАРНИ НАУКИ

ПРОФЕСИОНАЛНО НАПРАВЛЕНИЕ: 2.1. ФИЛОЛОГИЯ

СПЕЦИАЛНОСТ: ФОЛКЛОРИСТИКА И ЕТНОГРАФИЯ

ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛНО-КВАЛИФИКАЦИОННА СТЕПЕН: МАГИСТЪР

ФОРМА НА ОБУЧЕНИЕ: РЕДОВНА

First Year			
First Semester	ECTS Credits	Second Semester	ECTS Credits
History and Theory of Ethnology	6.0	Bulgarian Folklore	7.0
Introduction to Folkloristics	6.0	General Ethnology	7.0
Ethnography of Bulgaria	6.0	Ethnology of Kinship	6.0
Rituals and Ritual Folklore	6.0	Cultural Heritage and Ethnographic Museum	6.0
Elective Course (students choose courses until the required number of credits is accumulated)	6.0	Elective Course (students choose courses until the required number of credits is accumulated)	4.0
	Total 30		Total 30
Second year			
Third semester	ECTS Credits	Fourth semester	ECTS Credits

Ethnochoreology	7.0	Traditions and Cultural Heritage	3.0
Ethnomusicology	7.0	Culture and Subcultures	3.0
Bulgarian Folk Art	7.0	Traditional Material Culture	3.0
Ethnic and Religious Communities in Bulgaria	7.0	Museology	4.0
Elective Course (students choose courses until the required number of credits is accumulated)	2.0	Elective Course (students choose courses until the required number of credits is accumulated)	2.0
		State Exam in Folklore Studies and Ethnography or Thesis Defense	15.0
	Total 30		Total 30

TOTAL FOR 2 ACADEMIC YEARS: 120 CREDITS

ELECTIVE COURSES			
№	Course name	Semester	ECTS credits
	Ancient mythologies of the Balkans	I	2.0
	History of the Bulgarians	I	2.0
	Ethnology of the Bulgarian Renaissance city	I	2.0
	Roma in Bulgaria	II	2.0
	History of ethnic groups in the Bulgarian space	II	2.0
	Bulgarian diaspora	III	2.0
	Bulgarian folklore epic	III	2.0
	Traditions and modernization in Bulgarian culture	III	2.0
	Traditional and contemporary holidays	III	2.0
	Traditions and cultural heritage	IV	2.0
	Travelogues, travelers and tourism	IV	2.0
	Traditional culture and visualization	IV	2.0
	Media and traditional culture	IV	2.0
	Canonical and non-canonical religious formations in the Bulgarian traditional community	IV	2.0
	Traditional folk clothing	IV	2.0
	Traditional housing, furnishings and household goods	IV	2.0
	Food and nutrition	IV	2.0

COMPULSORY COURSES

HISTORY AND THEORY OF ETHNOLOGY (PART I)

ECTS credits: 6

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 9 independent hours

Assessment: continuous assessment

Course type: compulsory

Semester: I

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Iliya Nedin

Email: i_nedin@hotmail.com

Tel.: +359 879 172 888

Course description:

The course History and Theory of Ethnology (Part I) introduces students to the historical development of ethnological ideas from Antiquity to the end of the 19th century, as well as to the leading figures, schools, and trends in the discipline. The course focuses on ethnology as an independent field of study and as a scientific

synthesis necessary for understanding humans within their communities and for researching human and ethnic groups.

The course aims to provide basic knowledge of the bibliographic and conceptual framework of ethnology. Lectures have a theoretical focus, while seminar exercises involve discussions of specific authors and their works, as well as core issues in ethnological theory. This course is fundamental for students, as it establishes initial understanding of the development of ethnological paradigms and develops skills for working with the discipline's research tools.

Course content:

The course begins with an introduction to the subject and objectives of ethnology, as well as its place within the humanities. It examines the precursors of ethnological thought in ancient philosophy, ancient descriptions of foreign peoples, and medieval concepts of the "other."

It then traces the emergence and development of early ethnological ideas during the Renaissance and Enlightenment, when the first classification schemes of peoples, cultures, and customs were formed. Special attention is given to the 19th century as a period of institutionalization of ethnology, when major schools and trends emerged in Europe.

Students are introduced to key authors and their works, the discipline's conceptual apparatus, and major theoretical problems such as cultural universals, ethnic identity, and the role of tradition.

Teaching and assessment methods:

The course consists of lectures and seminars combined with independent work, including reading classical texts, preparing written assignments, participating in discussions, and text analysis. Extracurricular work includes consultations with the lecturer and working with bibliographic sources.

Assessment is based on continuous evaluation and a written exam, which tests:

Students' knowledge of the historical development of ethnological ideas

Their ability to analyze authors and schools

Their competence in using the conceptual apparatus of the discipline.

INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORISTICS

ECTS credits: 6

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 9 independent hours

Assessment: continuous assessment

Course type: compulsory

Semester: I

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov

Email: vbozhinov@abv.bg

Tel.: +359 896 964 353

Course description:

The course Introduction to Folkloristics aims to present the emergence and development of the main schools, trends, and theoretical concepts in folkloristics from the 19th to the 21st century, both in European and global contexts, as well as within the Bulgarian tradition. It covers key figures, methodologies, and significant studies, as well as the institutionalization of folkloristics. The course emphasizes the connection between historical schools and contemporary approaches, and the role of folklore in cultural policy, education, and tourism.

Course content:

The program begins with an introduction to folkloristic knowledge, folklore, and folkloristics, including their definitions and interpretations. It then explores the development of folkloristics in 19th-century Germany, focusing on the mythological school, the migratory school (including T. Benfey's theory of "migratory motifs"), and the contributions of the Scandinavian (Finnish) school in mapping fairy tale motifs.

The course continues with evolutionism and the anthropological school, through the works of Andrew Lang and Edward Tylor, as well as James Frazer's ritualism. Attention is also given to psychological theories, including Wilhelm Wundt, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung's archetypes, and Mircea Eliade's concept of the "myth of eternal return."

20th-century developments in folkloristics are discussed, including the historicism of Vsevolod Miller, Russian folkloristics, structuralism and morphology represented by Claude Lévi-Strauss and Vladimir Propp, and contributions of the Tartu semioticians.

A dedicated section covers Bulgarian folkloristics: the first recordings during the National Revival, contributions by Georgi Rakovski, Lyuben Karavelov, Petko Slaveykov, Ivan Bogorov, Nayden Gerov, Marin Drinov, and others. The collecting, popularizing, and research activities of the Miladinov Brothers are studied in detail.

The course also addresses the development of Bulgarian folkloristics after Liberation, including academic institutionalization, the work of Ivan Shishmanov, the Collection of Folk Creations, Science and Literature, and contributions by Dimitar Matov, Mihail Dragomanov, Anton Popstoylov, Kuzman Shapkarev, Yordan Ivanov, Stoyu Shishkov, Vasil Stoin, Dimitar Marinov, Mihail Arnaudov, Hristo Vakarelski, and others. Bulgarian folkloristics after World War II, including its methodology, institutions, and achievements, is also explored.

The program concludes with contemporary concepts, such as Todor Iv. Zhivkov's view of folklore as a "type of artistic culture," modern uses of folkloric culture, its role in local survival strategies, UNESCO's involvement, and world cultural heritage initiatives. Final topics address the role of cultural tourism for Bulgaria's development, its place in European tourist practices, and strategic positioning in the broader European cultural and tourism market.

Teaching and assessment methods:

The course combines lectures and seminars with independent work, including reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions. Extracurricular activities include consultations with the lecturer, work with primary sources and critical literature, and research tasks. Assessment is conducted through written and oral exams, testing students' knowledge of the history and theories of folkloristics, their ability to analyze specific schools and authors, and their competence in applying learned concepts to the interpretation of folkloric phenomena.

ETHNOGRAPHY OF BULGARIA

ECTS credits: 6

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 9 independent hours

Assessment: continuous assessment

Course type: compulsory

Semester: I

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva

Email: analuleva@gmail.com

Tel.: +359 888 714 608

Course description:

The course Ethnography of Bulgaria introduces students to the traditional (pre-industrial) culture of Bulgarians and other major ethnic communities in the country. It presents culture as a dynamic system operating within various social and historical contexts – traditional/pre-modern, modern, and postmodern/contemporary society.

The course emphasizes the development of ethnographic science and contemporary approaches to studying traditional culture. It focuses on understanding culture both holistically and through systematic knowledge of its main components: material, spiritual, and socio-normative culture.

Course content:

The course covers the traditional culture of Bulgarians and major ethnic groups in Bulgaria, divided into the following thematic areas:

Material culture: traditional livelihoods, settlements and dwellings, household furnishings, domestic activities and crafts, food and nutrition, clothing.

Spiritual and socio-normative culture: calendar, family, and local community holidays and customs.

Contemporary uses of tradition: processes of ideological framing, aestheticization, and transformation of traditional elements into cultural heritage.

A historical approach allows students to trace the dynamics of traditional culture and its transformations in the modern era and contemporary society. Students are introduced to key works related to the collection, documentation, and academic study of Bulgarian ethnography.

Expected outcomes:

Upon completion, students should be able to:

Understand the main concepts of Bulgarian traditional/pre-modern culture.

Recognize the main components and regional variants of Bulgarian ethnography.

Apply scientific terminology competently.

Discuss cultural phenomena, taking into account their historical dynamics and social mechanisms of construction.

Teaching and assessment methods:

Teaching combines lectures and seminars with independent work – reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments, working with ethnographic materials, and participating in discussions. Extracurricular activities include consultations, bibliographic research, and research tasks. Assessment is conducted through continuous assessment and written exams, evaluating students' theoretical knowledge, understanding of key elements and regional variants, and ability to analyze cultural processes.

RITUALS AND RITUAL FOLKLORE

ECTS credits: 6**Weekly workload:** 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 9 independent hours**Assessment:** continuous assessment**Course type:** compulsory**Semester:** I**Department:**

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov

Email: vbozhinov@abv.bg

Tel.: +359 896 964 353

Course description:

The course Rituals and Ritual Folklore introduces students to Bulgarian rituals – both calendar-based and related to the human life cycle – and their unity with ritual folklore. The course examines rituals as cultural practices and symbolic systems, their functions, and their connection with various folklore genres performed in ritual contexts. A primary focus is on Bulgarian rituals from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including later transformations and the emergence of political rituals.

Course content:

The program is organized into fifteen topics covering theoretical problems in the study of rituals and the relationship between specific rituals and ritual folklore. Key thematic areas include:

Theory of ritual: the essence of ritual, ritual as a means of overcoming life crises, socializing rituals (rites de passage), classical theories (Arnold van Gennep, Émile Durkheim, Victor Turner).

Life-cycle rituals: birth rituals as symbolic integration of the child into society; weddings as peak socialization; funeral rituals and ancestor cults.

Calendar rituals: types of calendar and rhythm of dangerous and auspicious periods; winter celebrations and fertility symbolism; Christmas rituals and the “unlucky days”; spring rituals (Easter, St. George’s Day) and their culmination; summer rituals and festive practices; autumn-to-winter transitions and symbolic neutralization of chthonic forces.

Contemporary transformations: emergence and development of political rituals; modern adaptations of the ritual calendar.

The course combines cognitive acquisition of knowledge with analysis of specific ritual texts and cycles in their regional diversity.

Expected outcomes:

Upon completion, students should be able to:

Understand main concepts and theories of ritual and its functions.

Recognize key rituals from the calendar and life cycle in Bulgarian traditional culture.

Connect rituals with their associated folklore genres and social functions.

Analyze ritual practices in their historical and cultural context.

Understand transformations of rituals in modern and contemporary culture.

Teaching and assessment methods:

The course combines lectures and seminars with independent work – reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments, participating in discussions, and analyzing ritual texts. Extracurricular work includes consultations, research tasks, and bibliographic work. Assessment is through continuous assessment and written exams, evaluating students' knowledge of theories and specific rituals, text and cultural analysis skills, and ability to place rituals in broader historical and social contexts.

BULGARIAN FOLKLORE

ECTS credits: 7

Assessment: continuous assessment

Semester: II

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 11 independent hours

Course type: compulsory

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov

Email: vbozhinov@abv.bg

Tel.: +359 896 964 353

Course description:

The course Bulgarian Folklore introduces students to the main branches of Bulgarian folklore culture, contemporary theories and methods for studying folklore, and its presence in contemporary cultural processes. The course emphasizes folklore as a cultural system, allowing discussion of its transmission mechanisms over time as well as cognitive aspects of its social and cultural nature. Folklore is presented as a value and worldview system, a form of knowledge, and a factor in shaping community identity. Emphasis is placed on verbal folklore, given the philological focus of the students.

Course content:

The course begins with an introduction to folklore theory, presenting the foundations for understanding folklore as a cultural system and outlining the main theoretical approaches.

Folk song culture: analysis of various functional song cycles.

Folk epic: typology, heroic epics, history of collection and research, connection between myth and epic, thematic cycles, characters, poetics, and functional characteristics; including historical, hajduk, and religious-legendary epics.

Calendar rituals and life-cycle folklore: Christmas, St. George's Day, Lazarus, and Easter cycles; family-observance song cycles; labor song cycles (harvest and gathering songs).

Folk storytelling: thematic and functional characteristics; history of collection and research; fairy tales (typology, mythic connections, structure of magical tales), animal tales, novella-type tales, and anecdotes.

Legends and folk narratives: spatial and textual aspects; importance for folklore history.

Folk demonology: beliefs and representations of the supernatural in traditional culture.

Teaching and assessment methods:

Teaching combines lectures and seminars with independent student work – reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions. Extracurricular work includes consultations, working with folklore texts, and research tasks. Assessment is through a written exam evaluating theoretical knowledge, analytical skills in reading folklore texts, and the ability to apply contemporary interpretive methods.

GENERAL ETHNOLOGY

ECTS credits: 7

Assessment: continuous assessment

Semester: II

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 11 independent hours

Course type: compulsory

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Iliya Nedin

Email: i_nedin@hotmail.com

Tel.: +359 879 172 888

Course description:

The course General Ethnology provides a systematic overview of classical topics in ethnological knowledge, including key concepts, terminology, and analytical approaches in ethnology. It aims to give students foundational knowledge about humans in their communal states and the specificity of different types of communities – ethnic, religious, linguistic, kinship, and others.

The course emphasizes the cultural basis for forming communal identities – language, religion, myth, ritual, clothing, food, medicine, and other manifestations of community culture. It also explores leading theories of ethnicity and nation, as well as the main social structures in which human communities function.

Course content:

The course introduces students to core concepts and analytical approaches in ethnology, gradually building understanding of the formation and construction of communal identities. It examines different types of human communities – ethnic, religious, linguistic, kinship – and their relationship with societal structures.

Special attention is given to the cultural foundations of identity formation: language, myth, religion, ritual, customs and traditions, and manifestations of communal culture such as clothing, food, medicine, and locality. Classical and contemporary theories of ethnicity, society, and nation are analyzed in connection with forms of social organization and community dynamics.

Teaching and assessment methods:

Teaching combines lectures and seminars with independent work – reading specialized literature, analyzing texts, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions. Extracurricular activities include consultations, bibliographic research, and research tasks. Assessment is through continuous assessment and a written exam, evaluating students' knowledge of terminology and concepts, understanding of different community types and cultural characteristics, and skills in analytical reading and interpretation of communal forms and identities.

KINSHIP ETHNOLOGY

ECTS credits: 6

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 9 independent hours

Assessment: continuous assessment

Course type: compulsory

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Iliya Nedin

Email: i_nedin@hotmail.com

Tel.: +359 879 172 888

Course outline:

The course focuses on the study of kinship relations as a fundamental type of social relationship. Emphasis is placed on the various types of kinship in the Balkans. The primary aim of the discipline is to familiarize students with the principles of constructing social relations in different cultures. The contemporary debate regarding the nature of kinship in the Balkans is presented; the modernization transformations that occurred during the twentieth century are traced. By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to analyze certain social relationships and cultural phenomena through the lens of kinship and gender relations.

Course content:

The family, kinship, and kinship relations as research objects of ethnology. Kinship systems and institutions. Family and kinship. Typology of family forms. The discussion of the “European” and “Balkan” family. The zadruga: theses on its origin and nature; socio-cultural and political interpretations. Symbolic kinship. Marital and family models in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. The construction of genders: masculinity and femininity. Modernization and changes in family forms and relations between genders and generations. Marriage and family during the socialist period. Family and kinship in the post-socialist period. Non-marital cohabitation. Transnational families and parenthood.

Teaching and assessment:

The instruction is conducted in the form of lectures and extracurricular activities. The assessment of knowledge in the discipline is carried out through continuous assessment, based on both in-class and extracurricular participation. The final grade is determined based on the continuous assessment and is converted into letter grades

(A, B, C, D, E) according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System scale. All written works are retained and subject to control according to the university's regulations on educational activities.

identities.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUMS

ECTS credits: 6

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 9 independent hours

Assessment: continuous assessment

Course type: compulsory

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva

Email: analuleva@gmail.com

Tel.: +359 888 714 608

Course description:

The course Cultural Heritage and Ethnographic Museums focuses on theoretical and applied issues related to the construction, management, and social uses of cultural heritage. It introduces students to contemporary museology and its connection to ethnographic research and practices. The course traces the historical development of ideas about cultural heritage and the role of museums as institutions for its preservation and presentation.

Course content:

The course provides systematic knowledge of cultural heritage as a socially and culturally constructed category, and of ethnographic museums as spaces for its study and interpretation. Topics include: historical overview of the emergence and ideology of the first museums in Bulgaria and Europe, and the development of the museum institution in various social and cultural contexts.

Significant attention is given to traditional material culture as the subject of ethnographic research, from the origins of Bulgarian ethnography to the present. The course analyzes how elements of traditional culture have been selected, systematized, and transformed into cultural heritage.

Emphasis is placed on the construction of cultural heritage during the socialist and post-socialist periods, when heritage became an instrument of cultural policy, identity, and ideological legitimation. Contemporary critical approaches to cultural heritage are also examined, including consumption and authenticity of cultural values, museum communication strategies, and the construction of local identities through heritage.

Teaching and assessment methods:

Teaching combines lectures and seminars with independent work – reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments, participating in discussions, and working with museum exhibitions or archives. Extracurricular activities include consultations, bibliographic research, and practical tasks related to museum practice analysis. Assessment is conducted through continuous evaluation and a written exam, testing theoretical knowledge of cultural heritage and museology, interpretive skills in ethnographic and museum practices, and the ability to critically analyze the social uses of heritage.

ETHNOCHOREOLOGY

ECTS Credits: 7

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 11 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Exam

Course Status: Compulsory

Semester: I

Department:

Department of Choreography

Faculty of Arts

Lecturers:

Prof. Nikolay Tsvetkov, Department of Choreography

tsvetkov_n@swu.bg
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Georgi Garov, Department of Choreography
ggarov@swu.bg
Tel.: +359 73 588 501

Course Description:

The aim of the course is to introduce students to Bulgarian dance folklore from all ethnographic regions of Bulgaria, as well as to the history of its research, documentation, and systematization. Alongside theoretical training, students receive in-depth practical training in mastering representative dance patterns from all ethnographic regions of the country.

Course Content:

The lecture course covers topics in Bulgarian ethnochoreology. The discipline "Ethnochoreology" provides a general overview of Bulgarian dance folklore. Historical information about Bulgarian folk dances is presented. Folkloric dance patterns from all ethnographic regions are studied to familiarize students with the style and character of performance.

In practical sessions, students master various examples of Bulgarian dance folklore.

Detailed Content:

General overview of Bulgarian dance folklore

Introduction to dance patterns from the Northern Bulgarian (Severnyashka) folklore region

Historical information on Bulgarian folk dances

Introduction to dance patterns from the Shopluk (Shopska) folklore region

Dance as a form of social entertainment

Ritual dance culture:

Ritual dances from the calendar cycle

Ritual dances from the family cycle

Women's ritual dances, including maiden and women's ceremonial dances

Men's ritual dances

Teaching and Assessment Method:

The exam is written and consists of answering two questions from the provided course materials. All written works are retained for the period specified by the Regulations on Educational Activities and are subject to control by the relevant authorities.

ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

ECTS Credits: 7

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 11 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Exam

Course Status: Compulsory

Semester: I

Department:

Department of Choreography

Faculty of Arts

Lecturers:

Prof. Dr. Ivanka Vlaeva, Department of Music

vlaeva@swu.bg

Tel.: +359 73 588 501

Course Description:

The course "Ethnomusicology" aims to develop knowledge and practical skills regarding the contemporary state and development of musical art and culture in the 20th century on a global scale. It introduces students to the specifics of musical processes in various cultures, examining both regional music and global musical interactions. The acquired knowledge is essential for future careers in education, cultural management, media, and business.

The course supports students' professional growth by providing fundamental musical knowledge and skills necessary for building musicianship and competencies that meet contemporary labor market requirements.

Course Content:

The course provides students with systematic knowledge of ethnomusicology as a scientific discipline, including its history, methods, and main directions. It introduces classical and contemporary concepts of studying music as

a cultural phenomenon, with an emphasis on an interdisciplinary approach – the connections between music, ethnology, anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies.

Key Topics Include:

Historical Development of Ethnomusicology: emergence of the discipline, early methods of collecting and analyzing musical traditions, classical schools and their representatives.

Research Methods: fieldwork, sound recording, transcription, comparative analysis of musical systems, and new digital technologies for collecting and processing musical data.

Music and Culture: music as a social practice; connections between music, ritual, celebration, identity, and power; functions of music in different cultures and its role in constructing communal identities.

Regional Musical Traditions: study of music from the Balkans, Mediterranean, Africa, Asia, and Latin America, focusing on characteristic instruments, styles, performance practices, and links between traditional and contemporary music.

Globalization and Musical Interactions: processes of musical style transfer and fusion, world music, new genres, and commercial uses of traditional music.

Ethnomusicology and Contemporary Issues: critical perspectives on authenticity, cultural ownership, the music market, and the media's role in promoting musical traditions.

During the course, students acquire skills in analyzing musical works and practices within their cultural context, as well as applying theoretical knowledge to practical tasks and discussions.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

The course includes lectures and seminars, combined with practical exercises such as listening to and analyzing musical examples, working with sound recordings, transcription, and case study discussions. Independent study includes reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions.

Out-of-class activities include consultations, work with audio archives, field observations, and research tasks.

Assessment is conducted through continuous evaluation and a written exam, which tests:

Knowledge of the main concepts and methods of ethnomusicology

Skills in analyzing musical traditions and cultural processes

Ability to apply a critical approach to contemporary musical interactions and globalization

BULGARIAN FOLK ART

ECTS Credits: 7

Assessment Method: Exam

Semester: I

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 11 independent study hours

Course Status: Compulsory

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology

Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology

analuleva@gmail.com

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course introduces students to Bulgarian folk art, including its research, history, branches, and contemporary manifestations. Upon successful completion, students should:

- Know the main branches of folk art from pre-modern times
- Be able to identify works of folk art
- Understand the symbolism and use of folk objects
- Acquire knowledge enabling them to work in ethnographic museums or institutions related to the preservation and management of cultural heritage

Course Content:

The curriculum of Bulgarian Folk Art provides knowledge of a sector of traditional (pre-industrial) culture, connected to the aesthetic concepts and expressions of people in the pre-modern era. By viewing culture as a syncretic system expressing the worldview of people, the term “art” in this context has a specific meaning, different from contemporary art as part of “high” or popular culture.

Folk art includes various forms of artistic expression created and transmitted through generations within Bulgarian traditions. The course examines the main branches of Bulgarian folk art:

- Clothing

- Embroidery and needlework
- Woodcarving
- Ceramics and pottery
- Works of folk crafts and domestic activities

Bulgarian folk art is also studied as an important part of Bulgaria's cultural heritage.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

The exam is written and consists of answering two questions from the provided course materials. All written works are retained for the period specified by the Regulations on Educational Activities and are subject to control by the relevant authorities.

TRADITIONS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

ECTS Credits: 3

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 3 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Exam

Course Status: Compulsory

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology
analuleva@gmail.com
Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Traditions and Cultural Heritage" aims to introduce students to theoretical and applied issues related to the understanding and study of traditions, as well as the management and use of cultural heritage.

Course Content:

The program has both theoretical and practical-applied orientation, focusing on the construction, management, and uses of traditions and cultural heritage. The course deepens students' knowledge in ethnography and folklore studies by introducing them to two main thematic areas: the construction and functions of traditions and cultural heritage.

Upon successful completion, students should:

- Understand the main theoretical and applied issues related to the construction, management, and uses of traditions and cultural heritage
- Acquire knowledge enabling them to work in ethnographic museums or institutions related to the preservation and management of cultural heritage

Teaching and Assessment Method: The exam is written and consists of answering two questions from the provided course materials. All written works are retained for the period specified by the Regulations on Educational Activities and are subject to control by the relevant authorities.

HISTORY OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE BULGARIAN TERRITORY

ECTS credits: 2

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 4 independent hours

Assessment: exam

Course status: mandatory

Semester: II

Department:

History, Faculty of Law and History

Lecturers:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zhanna Pencheva, SWU, Department of History
E-mail: swu.lib@swu.bg
; jeana@abv.bg

Assist. Prof. Dr. Yanko Hristov, Department of History
E-mail: yanko.hristov@swu.bg

Course Description:

The course History of Ethnic Groups in the Bulgarian Territory aims to familiarize students with the historical development of the various ethnic communities inhabiting the territory of modern Bulgaria, as well as with the processes of their interaction, transformation, and integration. The course examines the ethnic structure, cultural, economic, and political characteristics of the main ethnic groups, including Bulgarians, Turks, Vlachs, Roma, Jews, and other communities, as well as the historical events that influenced the demographic and cultural dynamics of the region.

Course Content:

The course begins with an overview of the early history of ethnic groups in the Bulgarian lands, including settlement patterns, identity formation, and social organization. It then addresses the interaction between different ethnic communities during the Medieval and Ottoman periods, emphasizing cultural exchange, economic and political relations, and religious particularities. Topics include national liberation movements, the formation of the modern ethnic map of Bulgaria, and the role of migration and industrialization in shaping the ethnic structure. Students work with historical documents, ethnographic studies, and contemporary research publications, which allow them to analyze the causes and consequences of ethnic diversity and its impact on the cultural and social dynamics of the country.

Teaching and Assessment Methods:

The course is conducted through lectures and seminar sessions, including analysis of historical and ethnographic sources, discussions, and case studies. Independent work involves studying literature, preparing written assignments, analyzing documents, participating in discussions, and conducting field research in local communities. The emphasis is on developing analytical skills, critical thinking, and the ability to interpret processes of interaction and transformation among ethnic communities within the Bulgarian territory.

CULTURE AND SUBCULTURES

ECTS Credits: 3

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 3 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Compulsory

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov, Department of Literature and Ethnology

vbozhinov@abv.bg

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course aims to introduce students to the main theoretical and practical aspects of culture and subcultures. Emphasis is placed on the diversity of cultural forms, the emergence and development of subcultural phenomena, and their influence on identity and social processes. The course examines the connections between mass, popular, and elite culture, as well as the role of media, music, art, and digital technologies in the creation and dissemination of subcultures. It provides students with the ability to critically reflect on cultural diversity and contemporary social transformations.

Course Content:

The program introduces the subject, goals, and tasks of the course. Students are familiarized with basic definitions of culture, approaches to studying it, and the structure and functions of culture.

Students then study the opposition between mass and elite culture, as well as media influences on popular culture.

The second main thematic block focuses on subcultures, presenting theoretical frameworks and key concepts.

Topics include:

- Historical roots of youth subcultures
- The relationship between subcultures and identity

- Alternative and countercultures
- Emergence of digital subcultures on the Internet
- Musical subcultures: rock, punk, hip-hop, techno
- Globalization and transformation of subcultures, and the emergence of social conflicts and cultural clashes

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching is conducted through lectures and independent student work. Out-of-class activities include consultations, preparation of written assignments (coursework, essays), field research on subcultural communities, and participation in discussions. Assessment is based on ongoing evaluation, including student activity, written assignments, and final presentations on selected topics, as well as an exam on the course materials.

TRADITIONAL MATERIAL CULTURE

ECTS Credits: 5

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Exam

Course Status: Compulsory

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology
analuleva@gmail.com
Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Traditional Material Culture" introduces students to the traditional (pre-industrial) material culture of Bulgarians and other major ethnic communities in Bulgaria. Theoretically, the course provides knowledge of the development of the discipline and contemporary approaches to studying traditional material culture.

Course Content:

The course is based on the concept of culture as a dynamic system, examined within its social and historical context. Main thematic areas include:

Primary branches of material culture: traditional livelihoods, settlements, dwellings, household items, domestic activities, and traditional crafts

Food and nutrition

Clothing and ceremonial objects

Musealization and the transformation of material culture into cultural heritage

This perspective on traditional culture as a system is combined with a historical approach, showing its dynamics and changes in the modern era, as well as subsequent processes of ideologization, aestheticization, and transformation into cultural heritage.

The course aims to provide students with in-depth knowledge of different elements of traditional material culture, key regional variations, and competence in relevant terminology. Students study key works related to the collection and study of Bulgarian ethnography.

Upon completion, students should:

Understand the main concepts of Bulgarian traditional/pre-modern culture

Be familiar with Bulgarian ethnography in its main branches and regional variants

Be able to discuss cultural phenomena considering their historical dynamics and mechanisms of construction

Teaching and Assessment Method:

The course is taught through lectures and seminars, combined with independent student work: reading specialized literature, working with ethnographic sources, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions. Out-of-class activities include field observations, analysis of museum exhibitions, and projects related to documentary research of material culture.

Assessment is conducted through continuous evaluation and a final written exam. Continuous evaluation considers student activity during classes, quality of written assignments, and participation in practical exercises. The written exam tests theoretical knowledge, analytical skills in interpreting material culture phenomena, and the ability to apply scientific approaches in their analysis.

MUSEOLOGY

ECTS Credits: 4

Assessment Method: Exam

Semester: II

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 2 independent study hours

Course Status: Compulsory

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology
analuleva@gmail.com
Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Museology" introduces students to the fundamental concepts and applied issues of museology. The program emphasizes contemporary understanding of museology, methods, and the latest approaches for collecting, systematizing, preserving, scientifically cataloging, and arranging museum exhibitions, as well as their popularization.

Course Content:

The curriculum of Museology has a theoretical and practical-applied orientation, providing foundational knowledge of the history and structure of museums, their management, and contemporary functions. Major thematic blocks include:

Historical overview of the emergence and activity of the first museums in Bulgaria and Europe

Curatorial and exhibition work

Educational and public-oriented programs

Musealization of heritage

Museums and audiences

Contemporary issues in museology

The course aims to deepen students' knowledge in the history of ethnology and museology as a current research field. By deconstructing national cultural symbols (defined as cultural heritage), the course develops critical thinking and analytical skills.

Upon successful completion, students should:

Understand the main theoretical and applied issues related to museum work

Have basic competencies in contemporary museology

Be knowledgeable about ethnographic cultural heritage and the ethnographic museum as a primary institution for its presentation and construction

Acquire knowledge enabling them to work in ethnographic museums or institutions related to the preservation and management of cultural heritage

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching is conducted through lectures and seminar exercises, combined with independent student work: reading specialized literature, analyzing museum exhibitions, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions. Out-of-class activities include museum visits, working with museum catalogs and documents, and developing practical tasks related to exhibition and popularization activities.

Assessment is conducted through continuous evaluation and a final written exam. Continuous evaluation considers student activity during classes, quality of written assignments, and the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts. The written exam tests knowledge of the history and contemporary state of museology, understanding of fundamental museum principles, and skills in critically analyzing issues related to cultural heritage and museum practice.

ИЗБИРАЕМИ ДИСЦИПЛИНИ

ANCIENT MYTHOLOGIES OF THE BALKANS

ECTS credits: 2

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 4 independent student activities

Form of assessment: continuous assessment

Course status: elective

Semester: III

Department:

Department of Slavic and Balkan Studies
Faculty of Philology

Lecturers:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Silvia Georgieva, Department of Slavic and Balkan Studies
tel. +359 898629972, silvial@swu.bg

Annotation:

The course Ancient Mythologies of the Balkans is intended both for students majoring in English and Ethnology and for a wide range of students from the Faculty of Philology at SWU. The issues addressed require both a philological and a historical-cultural approach, and they presuppose (and accordingly contribute to) a high level of so-called general culture. The mythological systems of the Balkan Peninsula from antiquity are examined in a diachronic perspective, providing basic information about ancient Greek, Thracian, and Eastern gods and heroes, as well as various myth cycles. Alongside the inevitable narrative-informational element, a significant part of the lectures is dedicated to the periodization and characteristics of mythology in our lands, temples, priestly colleges, and cult practices in Antiquity. Another part focuses on ancient mythography and its legacy in Roman and medieval receptions of ancient myths. Special attention is given to the critique of myth and the types of allegoresis, from the Presocratics in ancient Greece to the rhetorical and rationalizing interpretations of myth in the 17th century. Lecture topics also analyze literary and iconographic sources of the most important cosmological, genealogical, and etiological myths of Greco-Roman antiquity (the myths of Pandora and Prometheus, the myth of Oedipus, the succession of the different metallic races, etc.). Special focus is placed on familiarizing students with Orphism, its development, and its various manifestations. The course also explores major contemporary interpretations and approaches to mythology (ritualist, psychoanalytic, structural-semiotic).

Course content:

The ancient myth. Literary sources for Greek myths. Homeric mythology and Panhellenic mythological cycles. Features of Greek cosmogonic and theogonic myths. Periodization of Greek mythology. Greek tragedy as a source for locally bound mythology, myths of origin, anthropogony, zoogony, and phytogony with local roots. Criticism of myth in ancient Greece. Allegorical interpretation of Homeric mythology. Views of myth among the Presocratics, Plato, and Aristotle. The concepts of myth, logos, and fabula in Antiquity. The origins of allegoresis. Types of myth interpretation: physical, euhemeristic, moral. Stoic views on myth.

Ancient mythography and early attempts at systematization and genealogies of gods. The role of late antique grammarians in the survival of myth. The first Vatican mythographers. Greek myth on Roman soil. The myth of Aeneas. Twin myths. Calendar myths. The Roman Heracles. Ancient myth and the Christian apologists. Ancient Greek religion and its sources. Religion of the Aegean era. The cult of heroes. Polis cults. Panhellenic cultic unity and the pantheon. Orphism. The cult of the dead in ancient Greece. Religion of the Hellenistic era. Priestly colleges and cult practices.

Teaching and assessment methods:

The course consists of lectures and students' independent work. Out-of-class activities include consultations with the lecturer, written assignments (course papers), fieldwork (collecting and processing material), and more. Assessment of students' knowledge in the discipline is carried out through continuous assessment, based on ongoing evaluation.

HISTORY OF THE BULGARIANS

ECTS credits: 2

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 4 independent hours

Assessment: exam

Course status: mandatory

Semester: I

Department:

History, Faculty of Law and History

Lecturers:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zhanna Pencheva, SWU, Department of History

E-mail: swu.lib@swu.bg

; jeana@abv.bg

Assist. Prof. Dr. Yanko Hristov, Department of History

E-mail: yanko.hristov@swu.bg

Course Description:

The course History of the Bulgarians aims to introduce students to the main events, personalities, and processes in Bulgarian history from the Early Middle Ages to the present day. The course examines political, social, cultural, and economic aspects of the development of the Bulgarian state and society, as well as interactions with other peoples and cultures of the Balkans. It combines a chronological and thematic approach, paying particular attention to the formation of national identity, cultural traditions, and historical memory.

Course Content:

The course begins with an overview of the early medieval Bulgarian states and key events from the period of the First and Second Bulgarian Empires, including governance, social structure, and religious processes. It continues with the study of Bulgarian culture, literature, and traditions in historical context, as well as interactions between Bulgarians and Byzantium, the Ottoman Empire, and other neighboring peoples. Topics include national liberation movements, cultural and political development in the 19th and 20th centuries, the formation of the modern Bulgarian state, and contemporary political, social, and cultural dynamics. Students work with key historical documents, sources, and modern research to analyze historical processes and their impact on the identity and cultural memory of the Bulgarian people.

Teaching and Assessment Methods:

The course is delivered through lectures and seminar sessions with active student participation, discussions of historical case studies, and document analysis. Independent work includes studying literature, preparing written assignments, analyzing historical texts, and participating in discussions. The emphasis is on developing analytical skills, critical thinking, and the ability to interpret historical events and processes.

ETHNOLOGY OF THE BULGARIAN REVIVAL TOWN

ECTS credits: 2

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent hours

Assessment: continuous assessment

Course type: elective

Semester: I

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturers:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Tacheva-Bumbarova

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Azmanova-Rudarska

Tel.: +359 73 588 528

Email: radoslavsonev@swu.bg

Course description:

The course aims to provide foundational knowledge about the history of Bulgarian Revival towns in the 18th and 19th centuries, analyzing urban culture in a cultural-historical context. The Bulgarian Revival town is interpreted as a formation with a long-standing tradition that survived numerous historical challenges, preserved traces of different eras, and underwent a transition to modern European times in the 19th century.

The course introduces a methodology for constructing the cultural paradigm of the Revival town, derived from the concept of the “theatricalization of culture” as a temporary state of heightened semiotic significance of cultural units. The “town-theater” model is materialized through universal theatrical categories such as audience, stage, actors, and scenarios. Additionally, the course provides tools for interpreting urban culture through religious diversity, the role of the arts (architecture, frescoes, visual arts, music) as forms of adaptation and transmission of

literary culture, as well as everyday and festive communication. Key cultural figures and institutions of the Bulgarian Revival are also discussed.

Special emphasis is placed on the urban centers of Southwestern Bulgaria, such as Melnik, Bansko, Dupnitsa, and Samokov, as case studies for examining the material and intangible heritage of the Revival town.

Course content:

The curriculum examines Revival urban culture in the context of 19th-century literary centrism, comparing it to medieval urban culture and rural traditions. Religious plurality is highlighted as a defining feature, reflecting the coexistence of different communities and their cultural practices. Social strata and relations between groups – young and old, Greek-oriented and patriotic, conservatives and liberals – are analyzed, along with psychotypes of groups such as merchants, guild members, and the intelligentsia.

Urban culture is presented as *sub specie ludi* (from the perspective of play), emphasizing the theatrical cosmos of the town – audience, stage, actors, and scenarios. Daily life and social spaces such as squares, markets, coffeehouses, baths, and homes are examined, along with the documentary value of travelogues, memoirs, letters, and periodicals.

The course also focuses on festive events as social and cultural phenomena, urban ceremonial practices, rituals, and the so-called Revival “theater.” The roles of foreign-educated individuals, teachers, traveling performers, foreigners, and modern citizens are discussed. The functions of urban folk songs within different cultural and religious communities, and foreign influences on them, are analyzed. Attention is given to Revival architecture and its role in shaping cultural identity, as well as the semiotics of artistic images in houses, churches, and architectural elements.

Special thematic units cover the Revival towns of Samokov, Dupnitsa, Melnik, and Bansko, analyzed through their material and intangible heritage within the modern urban ensemble. Students complete the course by preparing presentations and research projects, developing a bibliographic apparatus, and having their research assessed.

Teaching and assessment methods:

Teaching combines lectures and independent work. Extracurricular activities include consultations with the lecturers, preparing written assignments and research papers, and working with bibliographic sources. Assessment is based on continuous evaluation and ongoing monitoring of student performance.

THE ROMA IN BULGARIA

ECTS credits: 2

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent hours

Assessment: exam

Course type: compulsory

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology, Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Email: vbozhinov@abv.bg

Course description:

The course “The Roma in Bulgaria” introduces students to the main debates about the development of Roma communities in Bulgaria, their cultural specificity, and contemporary situation. It provides knowledge of the complexity of Roma culture, balancing adaptability and conservatism. Key topics include socio-economic conditions, identity formation processes, and challenges to social integration. The course also aims to deconstruct negative stereotypes by presenting the heterogeneous nature of Roma groups and their internal social stratification.

Course content:

The curriculum covers several thematic blocks: the origin and migrations of Roma groups, formation of Roma identity, linguistic identities, hierarchical and social differences within the community. Traditional and contested cultural practices are analyzed, including nomadism (real or imagined), early marriages, the institution of the “Gypsy king” and “meshereto,” and the role of Roma music (myths and reality). Changes in religious identity, with emphasis on the evangelization of Roma in Bulgaria, are also discussed.

Teaching and assessment methods:

Teaching combines lectures and seminars with independent work such as reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions. Extracurricular activities include consultations and working

with ethnographic materials. Assessment is based on participation, submitted assignments, and a final written exam evaluating students' knowledge and analytical skills.

HISTORY OF ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE BULGARIAN SPACE

ECTS credits: 3

Teaching language: Bulgarian

Semester: II

Weekly workload: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent hours

Assessment: written exam

Department:

Department of History, Faculty of Law and History

Lecturers:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zhanna Pencheva – SWU, Department of History

Email: swu.lib@swu.bg; jeana@abv.bg

Assist. Prof. Dr. Yanko Hristov – Department of History

Email: yanko.hristov@swu.bg

Course description:

The course introduces students to various aspects of the history of ethnic groups in Southeastern Europe, particularly in regions where Bulgarians are the majority or dominant culturally, linguistically, and politically. Emphasis is placed on ethnic, religious, and minority issues from late antiquity to the present. Topics include migration of ethnic groups, formation of medieval peoples, and the genesis and development of modern Balkan nations. The course examines nation- and state-building processes, national programs and policies, as well as the evolution and current status of dominant ethnic and religious communities and minority issues. The influence of external and extra-regional factors on the region is also analyzed.

Course content:

The curriculum covers:

Studies of Bulgarian history from early Middle Ages to the first centuries of Ottoman rule;

Establishment of Ottoman rule and mechanisms of governance in Bulgarian lands (15th–17th centuries);

Economic life in Bulgarian villages;

Agrarian relations and changes in the timar system;

Cities as administrative and commercial centers;

Anti-Ottoman resistance;

Demographic and ethno-religious development;

Bulgarian culture during the 15th–17th centuries.

Teaching and assessment methods:

The course includes lectures and seminar exercises. Students prepare one multimedia presentation on lecture topics to present during seminars. On the exam day, students write a response to one question from the course outline.

BULGARIAN DIASPORA

ECTS Credits: 2

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Semester: I

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Course Status: Elective

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology

Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov, Department of Literature and Ethnology

vbozhinov@abv.bg

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Bulgarian Diaspora" examines the historical and contemporary dimensions of Bulgarian communities outside Bulgaria. It aims to familiarize students with major migration waves, the cultural and social presence of Bulgarians abroad, and the role of the diaspora in Bulgaria's economic and cultural development. Emphasis is placed on language and identity maintenance, institutional and cultural forms of community life, and challenges and prospects for new generations of Bulgarians living abroad.

Course Content:

The course introduces the concept of "diaspora," offering definitions and distinctions. Students study historical roots of Bulgarian communities, including medieval migrations, Bulgarian communities in the Ottoman Empire, and post-Liberation communities in Edirne Thrace, Macedonia, Banat, and Bessarabia. Key focus is on 20th-century emigration waves: economic and political migration, as well as new Bulgarian migration after 1989. The program also addresses issues concerning Bulgarian communities in the Balkans (Banat, Bessarabia, Serbia, North Macedonia, Greece) and introduces Bulgarians in Western Europe, the Americas, and Australia, along with their institutions and cultural organizations. Lectures cover language, culture, identity, schools, media, and cultural centers abroad. The course concludes with the diaspora's influence on Bulgaria, including its impact on the country's economy and politics.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching includes lectures and independent student work. Out-of-class activities involve reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments (coursework, essays), participating in discussions and presentations. Assessment is based on ongoing evaluation, reflecting theoretical knowledge and the student's ability to analyze historical and contemporary processes related to the Bulgarian diaspora.

BULGARIAN FOLKLORIC EPIC

ECTS Credits: 2**Weekly Hours:** 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours**Assessment Method:** Ongoing assessment**Course Status:** Elective**Semester:** I**Department:**

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov, Department of Literature and Ethnology
vbozhinov@abv.bg
Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Folkloric Epic" aims to introduce students to the portion of Bulgarian folklore literature in which the epic element is fundamental. The program is based on the leading contemporary folkloristics concept of folklore as a type of artistic culture. This approach studies the Bulgarian epic in the context of ritual, where it functions as a primary verbal construct. It highlights both the functioning of the folkloric epic as a type of folklore history and its role as an ethnostructuring element.

Course Content:

The program covers key theoretical issues related to the folkloric epic:

Definition of "folkloric epic"

Classical and folkloric epic

Bulgarian epic in the context of South Slavic epic tradition

Heroic epics in Bulgarian song tradition

Mythical songs and the epic principle

Historical songs as a form of folkloric epic

Hajduk songs as a form of folkloric epic

Religious-legendary epic

Epic features of the folk ballad

Epic elements in folk fairy tales

Non-fairy tale prose genres as a form of epic

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching includes lectures and independent student work. Out-of-class activities involve reading specialized literature, preparing written assignments (coursework, essays), and participating in discussions and presentations. Assessment is based on ongoing evaluation, reflecting theoretical knowledge, understanding of epic folklore genres, the role of the folkloric epic in shaping and maintaining the ethnic group's values and worldview, and appreciation of artistic aspects and diversity of epic folklore.

TRADITIONS AND MODERNIZATION IN BULGARIAN CULTURE

ECTS Credits: 2

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Elective

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ventsislav Bozhinov, Department of Literature and Ethnology
vbozhinov@abv.bg
Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Traditions and Modernization in Bulgarian Culture" aims to familiarize students with the dynamic interaction between Bulgaria's historical cultural heritage and contemporary modernization processes. The course explores key elements of Bulgarian culture—folklore, customs, literature, music, theater, cinema, architecture, religion, and gastronomy—tracing their development, transformation, and preservation in the modern world. Students will gain skills in analyzing and critically reflecting on traditions and their modern interpretations, assessing the impact of globalization and digital environments on cultural identity, and developing competencies for communicating cultural knowledge in various formats.

Course Content:

The course examines Bulgaria's cultural identity as a product of the combination of traditions and modern influences. Students study folk customs and holidays such as Christmas, Simi Zagovezni, Easter, Kukeri, and regional practices like the Survakari rituals in Pernik and nestinarstvo in the village of Bulgari. Special attention is given to how these traditions adapt to contemporary conditions while preserving their identity.

The program covers the development of traditional crafts and arts, and their integration into modern artistic forms. Literature is traced from folk fairy tales and non-fairy tale genres to modern Bulgarian literature, discussing contemporary writers and new themes reflecting social and cultural changes.

Music and dance are studied as living carriers of cultural heritage, including folk festivals and modern musical genres using traditional motifs. The course includes theater and cinema studies, analyzing the presence of folk motifs in theatrical tradition and contemporary Bulgarian cinema. Religion and spiritual practices are explored as key elements of cultural identity, with a focus on Orthodoxy, folk beliefs, clericalism, and contemporary forms of religiosity.

Architecture and urban culture are studied through traditional houses, churches, and modern urban planning, emphasizing the preservation of cultural heritage. Gastronomy is examined as a cultural symbol, including traditional recipes, festive dishes, and modern restaurants combining tradition and innovation.

The course analyzes globalization's influence on cultural identity and how modern festivals, media, and digital technologies—such as the Winter Festival of Traditions in Sofia or YouTube channels on Bulgarian crafts—affect the perception of traditions. Particular attention is paid to new generations and their approach to cultural heritage in the digital era.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching is conducted through a combination of lectures, seminars, discussions, and project assignments. Lectures provide theoretical frameworks, while seminars allow students to analyze specific examples from Bulgarian culture, compare traditional and modern forms, and discuss contemporary interpretations. Assessment is conducted through ongoing evaluation based on continuous monitoring of student participation and project work.

TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY HOLIDAYS

ECTS Credits: 2

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Elective

Semester: III

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology

Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology

analuleva@gmail.com

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Traditional and Contemporary Holidays" aims to introduce students to holiday culture as a specific cultural-historical and social phenomenon. It examines both traditional Bulgarian calendar and family holidays, as well as their transformation and adaptation in modern and postmodern society. The course emphasizes the connections between ritual, celebration, and identity, and the role of holidays in social integration and cultural dynamics.

Course Content:

The program introduces students to the theoretical foundations of holidays as a cultural system, clarifying their structure, functions, and social dimensions. Lectures and seminars cover traditional Bulgarian calendar holidays—Christmas, Lazarovden, St. George's Day, Easter, Enyovden, etc.—as well as family celebrations such as weddings, baptisms, and funerals. Students analyze the symbolism, ritual logic, and connection of these celebrations to natural cycles and community life.

The course also addresses modernization and transformation processes in contemporary society. New forms of celebration are examined, including national and political holidays, urban and professional events, and global cultural phenomena such as Valentine's Day, Halloween, and New Year. The influence of media, popular culture, and digital technologies on contemporary holiday practices is explored.

Issues of commercialization, the role of holidays in cultural industries and tourism, and their significance for personal, local, national, and global identity are also discussed. Through this comprehensive approach, students develop skills in interpreting holiday practices as a dynamic cultural phenomenon.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching is conducted through lectures and seminars, combined with independent student work—reading specialized literature, analyzing specific holiday practices, preparing written assignments, and participating in discussions. Out-of-class activities include field observations, working with audio and video materials, and participating in holiday events.

Assessment is conducted through a written exam, which evaluates theoretical knowledge, critical analysis skills, and the ability to apply academic approaches to the interpretation of traditional and contemporary holidays.

TRADITIONS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

ECTS Credits: 2

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Elective

Semester: III

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology

Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology

analuleva@gmail.com

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Traditions and Cultural Heritage" aims to familiarize students with the theoretical and applied issues related to the understanding and study of traditions, as well as the management and social uses of cultural heritage.

It provides a systematic perspective on the dynamics of traditional cultural practices and their transformation in the contemporary cultural environment.

Course Content:

The program combines theoretical and applied components, focusing on two main thematic areas: the construction and functions of traditions and cultural heritage. Students are introduced to key concepts and approaches in ethnography and folkloristics, with emphasis on the role of traditions as social and cultural phenomena.

Special attention is given to the mechanisms for preserving, interpreting, and managing cultural heritage, as well as its various uses—in education, museum practice, cultural tourism, and media communication. Students examine examples from Bulgarian and international practice that demonstrate how traditions and heritage adapt to contemporary social and cultural conditions.

The program combines lectures with practical exercises, including the analysis of museum collections, project development for preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, and observation and documentation of local customs and celebrations.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, students should:

Understand the main theoretical and applied issues related to the construction, management, and use of traditions and cultural heritage;

Acquire basic knowledge of the mechanisms for preserving and interpreting cultural heritage;

Be able to apply this knowledge in practice, for example in ethnographic museums or institutions dealing with the protection and management of cultural values;

Comprehend the role of traditions and heritage in the formation of identities and cultural communication.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching is conducted through lectures and seminars, combined with independent work—reading specialized literature, analyzing ethnographic materials, and preparing written assignments. Out-of-class activities include observation of local customs, work with museum exhibitions, and participation in practical projects.

Assessment is carried out through ongoing evaluation, taking into account student participation during lectures and seminars, the quality of written assignments, and involvement in discussions and practical exercises. The final grade is based on these components, without a written exam.

TRAVEL WRITING, TRAVELERS AND TOURISM

ECTS Credits: 2

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Elective

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology

Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Roman Hadjikosev, Department of Literature and Ethnology

r.hadjikosev@swu.bg

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course "Travel Writing, Travelers and Tourism" is an elective and is taught entirely as lectures (30 hours). It emphasizes the concept of human mobility throughout different stages of historical development, with special attention to the modern era and various forms of travel, from tourism to exploratory journeys.

Course Content:

The lectures cover different types of tourism and the specifics of each. Historically, the course examines various forms of travel and the relationship between the nature of travel and the texts that describe it. Emphasis is placed on genre differentiation, particularly the travelogue, which is the most common form of representing journeys.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

Recognize a wide range of lesser-known texts related to adventure and travel literature;

Analyze the national-psychological characteristics of Bulgarian travelers in comparison with those from other backgrounds;

Distinguish successful from mediocre texts based on artistic criteria;

Be familiar with a broad set of geographical realities presented in a historical and social context.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

The course is conducted entirely as lectures, focusing on both historical and contemporary aspects of travel and tourism. Lectures have a research and analytical character, encouraging active participation through discussions, questions, and comments on texts and historical-cultural phenomena. Assessment is based on ongoing evaluation, combining theoretical knowledge with critical analysis and interpretation skills, and the ability to place travels in a historical-social context and recognize cultural and psychological traits of different travelers.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND VISUALIZATION

ECTS Credits: 2**Weekly Hours:** 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours**Assessment Method:** Ongoing assessment**Course Status:** Elective**Semester:** II**Department:**

Department of Culturology

Faculty of Arts

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimitriya Spasova, Department of Culturology

d.spasova@swu.bg

Tel.: +359 73 588 501

Course Description:

The course "Traditional Culture and Visualization" introduces students to the festivals and rituals of the family and calendar cycles, as well as to certain elements of traditional culture related to the home, food, and space. These are treated as resources for cultural animation, event organization, and visualization in contemporary cultural tourism. The course has a practical focus, emphasizing independent field observations and the development of projects to visualize elements of traditional culture. Students gain skills to transform tradition into a contemporary cultural resource and participate in the creation of cultural products with educational, tourist, and social potential.

Course Content:

The course begins with an introduction to the topic and familiarization with the essence, principles, and functions of cultural animation. Traditional culture is viewed as a rich source for visualization and the creation of cultural products related to festivals, rituals, and everyday practices.

Special attention is given to the role of ethnographic museums, open-air museums (skanzens), and specialized exhibitions in presenting traditional culture. Various forms of cultural visualization are analyzed, such as festivals, events, and reenactments, allowing tradition to be experienced in a contemporary context.

Students learn methods for field observation and documentation of festive rituals, developing skills for collecting and interpreting ethnographic data. The course concludes with the development of a project for a themed folklore event, integrating the acquired knowledge and skills.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching is conducted through lectures and independent student work. Out-of-class activities include consultations, written assignments, field observations, and the development of projects for cultural events and visualizations of traditional culture elements. Assessment is ongoing and based on:

Active participation in lectures and discussions;

Presentation of field observation results;

Written assignments and analyses;

Development and defense of a cultural animation project.

This approach ensures continuous feedback and encourages students to apply their knowledge in practical contexts.

MEDIA AND TRADITIONAL CULTURE

ECTS Credits: 2**Weekly Hours:** 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours**Assessment Method:** Ongoing assessment**Course Status:** Elective**Semester:** II**Department:**

Department of Culturology
Faculty of Arts

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dimitriya Spasova, Department of Culturology
d.spasova@swu.bg
Tel.: +359 73 588 501

Course Description:

This course is dedicated to the study and presentation of traditional culture in the media. Students will explore international and Bulgarian institutions involved in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, the processes of its digitalization, and the ways it is presented in virtual environments.

Special attention is given to UNESCO activities, cultural heritage conventions, and lists of intangible cultural heritage elements. The course also covers the national “Living Human Treasures” system and Bulgaria’s participation in UNESCO’s Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In addition to institutional and legal frameworks, the course examines how traditional culture appears in print and electronic media, social networks, web TV, and virtual tourism. It analyzes the role of digitalization, multimedia archives, and virtual museums in preserving and promoting traditional culture in a globalized world.

Course Content:

The course begins with an introduction to the concept of intangible cultural heritage as part of cultural identity. Key institutions and organizations responsible for its preservation are presented, both international (UNESCO) and national (research centers, programs).

Practices for digitalizing cultural heritage and creating multimedia repositories—virtual museums, libraries, and encyclopedias—are explored. The course examines visualization of traditional culture in visual, print, and digital media, as well as the role of social media, internet platforms, web TV, and cultural tourism.

By the end of the course, students are expected to have a deep understanding of the role of traditional culture in media and the possibilities for its adaptation and preservation in a globalized and digitally transformed world.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching consists of lectures and independent student work. Out-of-class activities include consultations, written assignments and analyses, work with digital and multimedia resources, and the development of a project related to visualization or digitalization of an element of traditional culture.

Assessment is through ongoing evaluation based on: active participation in lectures and discussions; submission of written assignments and case studies; and a final practical project. Continuous assessment ensures feedback and encourages students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts.

CANONICAL AND NON-CANONICAL RELIGIOUS FORMATIONS IN THE BULGARIAN TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY

ECTS Credits: 2

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Elective

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Elena Azmanova-Rudarska, Department of Literature and Ethnology
eazmanova@abv.bg
Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the emergence and development of early religious teachings in Bulgarian lands, known from Old Church Slavonic/Bulgarian written sources. These include canonical Christian denominations (Eastern Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism), Judaism, Islam, and certain non-canonical forms such as medieval heresies and modern religious teachings and practices (esoteric teachings and new spiritual movements). The course covers the period from the Middle Ages (9th–17th century), the Bulgarian National Revival (18th–19th century), and the modern era up to the end of the 20th century. It examines the role of religious teachings in the

development and modernization of Bulgarian society and explores how non-canonical teachings were integrated into the sociocultural context and the ideas and processes they generated in traditional society.

Course Content:

The first block, *From the History of Religious Beliefs*, examines the dynamics of religious ideas in Bulgarian lands from pagan times to Christianization in 864 AD, focusing on Orthodoxy, Judaism, religious and ethnic boundaries, and canonical and non-canonical ideas in medieval Christianity. Special attention is given to heretical teachings and their reflection in traditional communities, Bogomil motifs in church architecture and painting, and written annotations preserving evidence of these beliefs.

The course analyzes the adoption of new religious codes in the Late Middle Ages, the influence of Eastern religions on sacred concepts, and the role of Western Christian denominations and Catholicism. Islam in the Balkans is studied both as opposition and interaction, emphasizing shared religious spaces and non-canonical beliefs in everyday life. The block concludes with religious searches during the National Revival and up to contemporary times, including the emergence of Protestantism, biblical and para-biblical codes, and esoteric schools of the 19th century such as Spiritualism, Theosophy, Dūnovism, and Freemasonry, within the broader European esoteric context.

The second thematic block, *The Role of Religion in Traditional Society*, presents religion as a social integrator and analyzes holidays and community forms of experiencing the sacred. Rituals, cults, and celebrations are examined as key manifestations of religious action, including rites of passage. The interaction between official religions (Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Protestantism) and folk beliefs is studied, including magical practices, images of spirits and vampires, and veneration of healing saints such as St. George, St. Nicholas, St. Panteleimon, and Saints Cosmas and Damian.

The course also explores sacred spaces—shrines, votive sites, temples, türbes, and tekkes—and the roles of religious functionaries: priests, preachers, missionaries, sorcerers, and teachers. Special emphasis is placed on religious symbolism and its functions in traditional Bulgarian communities, as well as sacred knowledge, including preaching, care for the soul, and paths to salvation and enlightenment.

Students prepare term papers and presentations, receiving methodological guidance, bibliographies, and evaluation of their research.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching consists of lectures and independent work. Out-of-class activities include consultations, preparation of written assignments and term papers, bibliographic work, and data collection. Assessment is based on ongoing evaluation and current control of student performance.

TRADITIONAL FOLK COSTUME

ECTS Credits: 2

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Elective

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology

Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology

analuleva@gmail.com

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the traditional clothing of Bulgarians and other ethnic and religious communities from the pre-industrial era, its transformation in modern times, and the contemporary uses of traditional folk costumes.

Course Content:

The program provides knowledge about an important part of traditional (pre-industrial) culture—human clothing. Combining utilitarian functions with symbolic meanings of specific elements and ways of wearing, clothing serves as a recognizable social sign for members of traditional culture.

The course covers:

History of costume and pre-industrial clothing

Regional characteristics and typology

Head coverings and decoration
Ritual functions of clothing
Changes during the Bulgarian National Revival and urban adaptation
Contemporary uses of traditional costumes

Learning Outcomes:

Students should be able to:

Recognize main types of traditional folk costumes

Identify elements and regional affiliation of costumes

Understand social and symbolic functions of clothing

Apply knowledge in ethnographic museums or institutions involved in cultural heritage preservation

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching consists of lectures with systematic presentation of traditional Bulgarian clothing and its regional and social variations. Assessment combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills for recognizing and analyzing folk costumes and their functions, preparing students for work in museums or cultural heritage institutions.

TRADITIONAL DWELLINGS, FURNISHINGS, AND HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

ECTS Credits: 2

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 0 seminars + 2 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Ongoing assessment

Course Status: Elective

Semester: II

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology

Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Prof. Dr. Ana Luleva, Department of Literature and Ethnology

analuleva@gmail.com

Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

This course provides in-depth knowledge of traditional settlements, dwellings, and ways of living in the pre-industrial culture of Bulgarians and other main ethnic communities in Bulgaria. It also introduces students to developments in ethnographic research and contemporary approaches to studying traditional culture.

Course Content:

The course focuses on culture as a dynamic system within its social and historical context. Main topics include:

Presentation of settlements, dwellings, furnishings, and household items in the pre-industrial era

Historical perspective and changes during modernization, the Bulgarian National Revival, and post-Liberation period

Regional variants and typologies

Key terms and concepts in ethnography

Important works and studies in the field

Learning Outcomes:

After completing the course, students should be able to:

Understand core concepts of Bulgarian traditional/pre-modern culture

Recognize ethnographic patterns and regional variations

Analyze cultural phenomena considering historical dynamics and construction mechanisms

Teaching and Assessment Method:

The course is delivered mainly through lectures with visual illustrations, ethnographic examples, and discussions of key terms and concepts. Ongoing assessment develops both theoretical knowledge and analytical/practical skills, enabling students to discuss cultural phenomena in historical and social contexts, with continuous feedback throughout the course.

FOOD AND EATING

ECTS Credits: 7

Weekly Hours: 2 lectures + 1 seminar + 11 independent study hours

Assessment Method: Exam
Semester: II

Course Status: Compulsory

Department:

Department of Literature and Ethnology
Faculty of Philology

Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Iliya Nedin, Department of Literature and Ethnology
i_nedin@hotmail.com
Tel.: +359 73 588 534

Course Description:

The course “Food and Eating in Bulgarian Culture” aims to provide students with an in-depth understanding of traditional Bulgarian cuisine, exploring both the functional role of food and its place within ritual and ceremonial systems. The course traces the historical development of dietary habits and traditions, the influence of geographical and social factors on eating practices, as well as processes of modernization and globalization that shape contemporary food culture. Students gain knowledge of traditional products and dishes, regional characteristics, preparation and storage methods, as well as modern health-conscious trends in eating.

Course Content:

The course treats food as a complex social, cultural, and functional phenomenon.

Introduction to the concept of “traditional food” and its cultural significance, emphasizing functional and social roles.

Overview of main food products and dishes, regional variations, preparation methods, and dishes typical for daily life and holidays.

Food as part of ritual and ceremonial systems: festive and ritual dishes for Christmas, Easter, Sirni Zagovezni, and Gergyovden; symbolism of food in rituals; connections with religion and social order.

Functional and social role of eating: traditional dietary habits, rules of consumption, and the significance of the table for family and community.

Traditional methods of food preparation and storage, and influence of natural and geographical conditions.

Modernization of food culture: urbanization, industrialization, changing eating habits, social significance of meals.

Contemporary trends: combining tradition with modernity via modern restaurants, fusion cuisine, reinterpretation of ceremonial dishes, culinary festivals, and digital promotion of traditional cuisine.

Globalization and eating: international cuisines, global food brands, changing daily eating patterns, habits of younger generations, and modern health trends including fitness culture, vegetarianism, and veganism.

Teaching and Assessment Method:

Teaching consists of lectures and independent study. Extracurricular activities include consultations with the lecturer, preparation of written assignments and mini-projects, analysis of visual and textual materials, participation in discussions, and observation of culinary practices.

Assessment is based on ongoing evaluation, including:

Active participation in lectures and discussions

Written assignments, analyses, and short projects

Presentation of examples from traditional or modern cuisine

Independent research exercises, including regional and holiday food practices

Ongoing assessment provides continuous feedback, encourages active learning, and develops analytical, cultural, and practical competencies in the field of food and eating.