

## **Reading Finnish Society and Culture**

This course explores central themes in Finnish society and culture through the study of Finnish texts. The course deepens the knowledge attained in the first-year introductory course by looking at specific cases which illuminate Finnish social and cultural life and the construction of Finnish identity in discourse. Topics include history and society, language, media, folk culture, literature, popular culture and the arts. Basic knowledge of Finnish language is required as the source material and documents used in teaching are mostly in Finnish.

**Title:** Reading Finnish Society and Culture  
**Course-unit value:** 1.0 cu  
**Availability:** Annual  
**Open to:** Students of BA Finnish and East European Studies in their first year. Any other student in any year.

**Course leader:** Dr T Hjelm  
**Other participants:** Dr D Abondolo

### **Aims**

1. To provide an introduction to specific themes in Finnish society and culture.
2. To provide an understanding of Finnish language in its social and cultural context.
3. To give students an awareness of basic approaches to cultural and social analysis.

**Objectives:** **By the end of the course, you should have acquired**

1. A knowledge of specific themes in Finnish history, society, and culture.
2. An ability to understand and interpret Finnish culture through Finnish language texts.
3. An enhanced ability to understand and interpret Finnish culture in its historical and social context.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Twenty two-hour classes in the form of lectures and seminar-type discussions. Students are required to write a short (1-page) 'orientation paper' for each class, which will be discussed. We will

also view a Finnish film and visit an appropriate exhibition or performance, if applicable.

### **Assessment**

By a three-hour unseen examination and two practice essays of 2000 words, submitted at the end of fall and spring semester. The orientation papers and essays will make up 50% of the final mark with the final examination contributing the other 50%.

### **Essays**

During the course students are required to write two essays. Submission of these is a prerequisite for proceeding to the examination. Students formulate their own essay questions on the basis of their own interests. The fall term essay should consider the topics discussed during the first term and the spring term essay the topics discussed during the second term. The question should address a specific problem; it is not an opportunity merely to list a succession of facts about an issue. Students should confirm the title with the course tutor who will give you further guidance on readings, question formulation, and so on.