What is the Culture and Society Unit?

Culture and Society is situated as bridging the academic content of the six core units and the improved communication elements of the Academic English unit. This is a compulsory unit with 3 hours of classes per week. It consists of lectures, seminar discussion classes and whole group research skills classes. There are three main elements:

1) Presentation of cultural and socio-political topics

Students are introduced to a wide range of social, political, economic, and cultural issues. Information is presented with a series of weekly lectures by UCL academics and guest speakers. Lecture topics are followed up by weekly seminar discussions that students lead themselves. Topics may include: Globalisation, the Scandinavian Welfare State, Asylum in Europe, Multicultural Britain, Eastern Perceptions of the West, Philosophy, German Literature and European Modernity, and the Arts.

2) Practical Research Skills

Practical research skills are developed through weekly classes focusing on all aspects of the scientific research process. Students learn how to orient themselves in the UCL Science Library, and conduct searches for relevant books and journals. Computer classes focusing on website evaluation allow students to become more critical of the information available on the internet. The importance of correctly citing original ownership of ideas and information is developed through classes discussing plagiarism and how to avoid it by referencing information appropriately.

3) Research Initiative

Students are expected to become more independent and confident about knowing where to find information, and how to present it appropriately to an academic audience in both oral and written form.
One key concept that the unit involves is training students to be academically literate. This involves teaching students how to reflect critically on information that the media reports on cultural and socio-political matters.

Assessment

Assessment is designed to reflect the various aims of the course, and the growing ability of the students as the academic year progresses to be more confident in their expression of ideas, and informed about issues relating to culture and society. The main assessed piece of work is a Culture and Society Research Project of 2,500 - 3,000 words which students submit in Term 3. Students are given an initial mark for their first draft submitted after Reading Week in Term 2 which helps them in the process of formulating and re-formulating their ideas.

Culture and Society Assessment Components

Term 1	%	Term 2	%	Term 3	%
Academic Referencing Systems	5%	Presenting & Incorporating Data	5%	Culture and Society Project Final draft 2,500-3,000 words*	40%
Evaluating websites	5%	Culture and Society Project First draft 2,500-3,000 words	10%	Oral Presentation using Power point on the Final Project (12-15 minutes)	20%
Academic Note-taking	5%	Poster Presentation on the First draft (10 minutes)	10%		
				Total	100%