12.9.2025

Finnish Society and Culture 5 ECTS

SOC.100-2025-2026-1 Finnish Society and Culture

The course introduces students to the society and culture of contemporary Finland. The module is organized around thematic lectures, related experiments, and readings. The inspirational lectures are given by experts in history, literature, music, art, culture, innovation, business, and the welfare state.
The module is specially designed for international students who wish to know more about Finland and reflect academically on their experiences in Finland. After the course, the students will have a diverse understanding of the Finnish culture, societal development, and background of Finland. The students will also have gathered insights into contemporary issues in culture and society.

In charge: University Lecturer Mikko Perkiö

Required (1-5):

1) **Attend a minimum of 5 lectures , but read the PowerPoint/lecture material of all lectures** for the exam.
2) **Collect a minimum of 3 experiments** (see the end of the document)
3) **Write a learning diary (between 1500-**2000 words; pass/fail)
4) **Required reading** (below, for the exam)
    1. Haapala, Pertti (2009) Modernization of Finland 1800-2000. In Mikko Perkiö (ed.) Perspectives to Global Social Development. Tampere University Press. P. 48-66.
    2. Sulkunen, Irma: Suffrage, gender and citizenship in Finland, a comparative perspective NORDEUROPAforum 1/2007. P. 27-44.
    3. Jauhiainen, Jussi S. & Tedeschi, Miriam (2021) Undocumented Migrants' Everyday Lives in Finland (Chapter 4, sections 4.1-4.5.). In J. S. Jauhiainen, M. Tedeschi, Undocumented Migrants and their Everyday Lives. P. 93-113.
    4. Lehtola, V. P. (2015). Sámi histories, colonialism, and Finland. *Arctic Anthropology*, *52*(2), 22-36.
5) **Participate in the exam;** assessment 1-5 grades**.**

Lecture series :

Mon15 Sept 2025 at 14.00–15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio. **Introduction (C**ourse objectives, structure, and practises).
Lecture 1. **Public sauna and Finnish culture. University Lecturer Mikko Perkiö, Tampere University (TAU)**

Mon 22 Sept 2025 at 14.00–15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio. Lecture 2: **Global Tampere. Adjunct Professor Jarmo Peltola, University of Helsinki.**

Mon 29 Sept at 14.00-15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio. Lecture 3: **Finnish 'National Philosopher' Snellman and nationalism in making Finland a nation. University Lecturer Mikko Lahtinen, TAU**

Mon 6 Oct at 14.00–15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio. Lecture 4: **Was Elias Lönnrot, the author of Kalevala, a colonialist? Author Juha Hurme**

Mon 20 Oct at 14.00-15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio Lecture 5: Culture 2: **A Song of Our Own - A Brief Mental History of Finnish Popular Music. Documentarian & Music Journalist Pekka Laine.**

Mon 27 Oct at 14.00-15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio Lecture 6. **ITE art - Finnish Contemporary Folk Art as a lens to Finland's visual art. Curator Elina Vuorimies.**

Mon 3 Nov at 14.00-15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio Lecture 7: **Finnish Cultural Taste. Dr. Riie Heikkilä, Senior Research Fellow, TAU.**

Mon 10 Nov at 14.00-15.30. TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio Lecture 8: **Finland, One of a Kind. Professor of Practice Matti Apunen, TAU**

Mon 17 Nov at 14.00-15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio Main auditorio. Session 9: **EXAM**

Mon 24 Nov at 14.00-15.30 TAU Main Building D205 D10b auditorio: Session 10. **EXAM** (re-take)

The course assessment is based on the exam.

The exam is a **multiple-choice test** on the very basics of the lectures and the main points of the required reading. The test is graded 1-5. More detailed instructions will follow. There will be an opportunity for a re-take exam session.

Write a learning diary based on the most impactful lecture sessions and experiments that you have attended during the course. You may analyze also any reading of the course. Discuss on the concepts you have individually selected and form arguments and viewpoints to justify the problematization that you find important in Finland. Argue how the course expanded your understanding of Finnish culture and society. Write 1500-2000 words. Submit via Moodle. The l**earning diary** is assessed as PASS/FAIL.

Extra reading:

This is Finland: things you should and shouldn't know
Finnish everyman's rights – the right to roam & enjoy nature
Nature in Finland.
Lavery, Jason (2006) The History of Finland, Greenwood Press.
Meinander, Henrik (2020) A History of Finland. C. Hurst & co.
Taipale, Ilkka (2013) 100 Social Innovations from Finland.
Kainulainen, S. (2023). In the Backyard of Finnish Happiness-Empirical Observations from the Happiest Country on Earth. Open pdf via
Eriksen, K. G., Jore, M. K., Loftsdóttir, K., Mikander, P., & Sund, L. (2024). Education and Coloniality in the Nordics. *Nordisk tidsskrift for pedagogikk og kritikk*, 10(3), 1-13.

Könönen, J. (2018). Differential inclusion of non-citizens in a universalistic welfare state. *Citizenship studies*, *22*(1), 53-69.
Ndomo, Q. (2024). The Working Underclass: Highly educated migrants on the fringes of the Finnish labour market. *JYU Dissertations*. Open pdf via
Eloranta, J., & Ojala, J. (2022). Modern Finnish Economic History. In Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Economics and Finance. View the final draft:
Kivimäki Ville. (2013) Battled Nerves, Finnish Soldier's War, Trauma and Military Psychiatry, 1941-44, Åbo Akademi University.
Karjalainen, T. M., & Kärki, K. (Eds.). (2020). *Made in Finland: studies in popular music*. Routledge.
Pantzar, Katja (2022) Everyday Sisu: Tapping into Finnish Fortitude for a Happier, More Resilient Life.
Pantzar, Katja (2018) The Finnish Way: Finding Courage, Wellness, and Happiness Through the Power of Sisu.

Series of experiments:

Experiment 1
Nature next to a city: Go hike around Suolijärvi in Hervanta OR walk in the forest near Pyynikki tower. OR even a visit a natural park such as Isojärvi, Helvetinjärvi, or Seitseminen.

Experiment 2
Visit a Public Sauna. Rauhaniemi OR Rajaportti saunas recommended.

Experiment 3:
Visit one of Tampere museums:
Vapriikki (including virtual Tampere 1918 Civil War Museum)
The Finnish Labour Museum Werstas
Amuri Museum of Historic Housing.

Experiment 4:
Read several sections of Kalevala OR a classic novel: Aleksis Kivi: Seven Brothers; Väinö Linna: The Unknown Soldier; Sofi Oksanen: Purge; Rosa Liksom: Compartment No. 6. If another classic novel, please justify your choice.

Experiment 5:
One Aki Kaurismäki film.

Experiment 6:
Pop/Rock/Punk etc. gig OR enjoy 'Lavatanssit' at a dance pavilion OR Art music concert.

Experiment 7:
A visit to a national art museum; Kiasma OR Ateneum.

Experiment 8:
An architecture-walk in Helsinki the Senate Square OR Jugend/Art Nouveau/Modern style - walk in Helsinki city centre.