MA North American Studies

Dr. Joke Kardux | Leiden

2 November 2018
Raymond and Beverly Sackler Chair in the History and Culture of the U.S. and the Americas

Prof. dr. Adam Fairclough
Appointed in 2005,
Retired August 2016

Fairclough, Midterm Elections Lecture, Nov. 1, 2018

New Chair from September 1, 2017
Prof. dr. Damian Pargas
Elsevier keuzegids Oct. 2018:

“Leiden best North American Studies program in the Netherlands.”

You can find detailed scores on the Elsevier website: https://onderzoek.elsevierweekblad.nl/onderzoek/beste-studies-2018/52/vergelijk/0891,892,893 and

NSE: National Student Survey (Feb. 2018)

Striking scores Leiden MA NAS (max. score 5):
• Study program in general: 4.5
• General atmosphere: 4.7
• Quality of guidance your teachers provide: 4.7
• Academic guidance/counseling: 4.4

Skills taught:
• Critical assessment of scholarly work: 4.5
• Analytical thinking: 4.4; Critical thinking: 4.5
• Oral communication skills: 4.5;
• Academic writing skills (in English): 4.6
• Team work: 4.3
• Debating/reasoning skills: 4.5

→ Virtually all these NAS scores are above national average
Admission requirements to MA NAS:

• Admissible are students with a BA history, English, American Studies, or International Studies with at least 30 EC courses in American history/literature (e.g. 30 EC minor American Studies)

• Pre-master track American Studies (30 or 60 EC) is required for students with a:
  
  - University BA in other fields than listed under admissible above (pre-master **30 EC**)
  
  - HBO BA in English, History, Journalism, or European Studies (pre-master **60 EC**)

For more details about entry requirements, check [here](#)
Approach + Leiden profile

Interdisciplinary approach to the study of the U.S., with special attention to the influence of the past on contemporary social, political, and cultural developments, and the place of the U.S. in the region and the world.

Special (but not exclusive) focus on:

- Slavery and African-American emancipation struggles in transnational perspective;
- U.S. political history and international relations;
- Immigration and ethnicity in U.S. history, literature and culture;
- Cultural identities and memory politics
MA Course requirements

• 4 courses (10 EC each)  40 EC
  (1 required + 3 electives*)
• Thesis seminar + MA thesis  20 EC
• Total  60 EC (30 per semester)

• You’re permitted to replace 1 elective course by a 10 EC internship
MA Course program 2018-2019

Semester 1:
• Major Issues in American History and Culture (required)
• African Americans and Great Migrations
• Comics Against the Code: Autobiography and Journalism in American Graphic Novels
• The U.S. and Human Rights

Semester 2:
• The Rise and Decline of American Empire
• Migration Matters: (Im)migration, Memory, and Identity in American literature and Film
• Thesis Seminar and MA thesis (required)
• Readings in American History (required for students starting in Feb. 2019)
Pre-master track for HBO BA students (60 EC)

Semester 1, 2018-19 (three courses, 3 x 10 EC))

• From the Pilgrims to the Present
• Lit.5a: American literature, 1917-present
• Transatlantic Relations: Europe and the U.S. in the 20th C.

Semester 2 (2 of the following courses + pre-master thesis)

• Slavery and Memory in the Black Atlantic (10 EC) and
• Minds Matter: American Public Intellectuals and their Ideas, or
• Irresistible Empire? 20th Century U.S. Consumer Culture in a Trans-Atlantic Context

• BA premaster thesis (required for 60EC pre-master; 8000 words, 10 EC)
Career prospects NAS alumni

• According to the most recent survey conducted in Spring 2016, among Leiden NAS graduates

• 70% found a job within 2 months
• 100% found a job within 6 months
• 80% found a first job on academic or professional (HBO) level

• Note that, in Feb. 2016 when the survey was last held, the economy was just recovering. The current career prospects for NAS students are likely to be even better.

Click here for list of jobs found by recent NAS graduates.
Career preparation and prospects

What kind of preparation works?

• Acquiring relevant work experience alongside your studies (via an internship, board membership or job)

• A master’s degree does pay off: In their first job, but also after a few years of work experience, master’s students often occupy higher-level positions than bachelor’s students

• Contact our Student Career Service desk for advice on internships and work.
Curricular internships (10 EC)

NAS students have done internships at:

• Springer Nature’s *Cross-cultural internship* in India
• Voice of Witness, California
• NL Embassy, Bangkok, Thailand
• NL Embassy, Washington
• NL Consulate, New York
• Museum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden
• Roosevelt Institute of American Studies, Middelburg
• Internship NOS News in Washington
• Communication at Min. of Education, Culture and Science,
• Elsevier Magazine, etc. etc
Internship testimonial:

• Email from Sophie Oostelbos, who did 6-month internship at NL Consulate in New York (2015/16):

  “De afgelopen week zijn we hier ontzettend druk geweest met de Algemene Vergadering van de VN. Ik zelf heb onderdeel uit mogen maken van het sociale media team van premier Rutte wat een ontzettend gave ervaring was.”

• Stage-onderzoek: “Ik ga voor het evenement Northside Festival de sociale media posts vanuit het Consulaat analyseren. Waar ligt het bereik het hoogst, welke posts doen het goed, etc., om daar dan een advies over te schrijven.”

• For other testimonials by NAS students about internships, click here
Transferable skills taught in Leiden NAS program:

National Student Survey scores Feb. 2018:

- Critical assessment of scholarly work: 4.5
- Analytical thinking: 4.4;
- Critical thinking: 4.5
- Oral communication skills: 4.5;
- Academic writing skills: 4.6
- Team work: 4.3
- Debating/reasoning skills 4.5
Annabelle van Waes

• NAS alumna, graduated February 2017
• Since Nov. 2017 trainee Information Manager at Ypublic

• About transferable skills: “The analytical skills I learnt during my studies are very useful in this field. Every day I’m challenged to see the bigger picture and establish links between things. As an information manager I also try to uncover the ‘question behind the question’. To do so I also use many of the skills I developed in my studies.”

• Read Annabelle’s complete testimonial as well as other testimonials by Leiden NAS alumni [here](#)
Teaching career

Quite a few NAS graduates go on to do a one-year teacher training program with ICLON (U Leiden).

However, to be eligible for the teacher training program in English, NAS graduates must have a BA degree in English Language and culture.

To be eligible for the teacher training program in history, NAS graduates must have a BA degree in History.

One NAS graduate did the World Teacher’s Program at ICLON.
Leiden NAS student wins thesis prize

The 2018 Theodore Roosevelt American History Award was awarded to Leiden NAS alumna Megan Griffiths for her master’s thesis on the Salem witchcraft 'crisis' of the 1692.

For blog interview with Megan, click here
Topics of recent MA Theses:

• Henry Clay, the Colonization Society and the Compromise on Slavery
• Marriner S. Eccles, the Federal Reserve System and the New Deal 1933-1939
• "Anybody Out There?!" Henry Waxman and the Congressional Response to the AIDS Epidemic of the 1980s
• West Germany and the Year of Europe: A Coalition Under Pressure - West German - American Relations 1973-74
• Legitimacy in New York Politics: The Political Machine vs Civil Service Reformers
• Representing the Muslim “Other”: (Neo-)Orientalism in Selected Post-9/11 Fiction and Film
• North versus South: A Textual Analysis of Journalism During the 1961 Freedom Rides
• Rodney King, the 1992 Los Angeles Riots, and the Rise of Gangsta Rap
• David Halberstam: A Case Study of a Journalist's Role and Vision on the Vietnam War
• Post-war Austria through American Eyes, 1945 - 1948
• The Suppression of Resistance to Japanese-American Wartime Evacuation and Incarceration

continued next slide
Topics of recent MA Theses continued

• Character vs. Caricature: The Construction of Blackness in Carl Van Vechten's *Nigger Heaven* and Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem*
• Exhibiting the Jewish Lower East Side and Black Harlem: The Representation of Place and the Construction of Ethnic Identity in Two 1960s Museum Exhibitions
• Stuck In Denial versus Moving With Science: Climate Change Discourses and the Influence of the Denial Machine on Left and Right News Media
• Paul Ryan: True Conservative or Enemy of the Base? An analysis of the Relationship between the Tea Party and the GOP
• An Analysis of the Use of Historical and Rhetorical Devices in President Barack Obama's Speeches
• Commodified Kin: Enslaved Families' Responses to the Antebellum Domestic Slave Trade in the Chesapeake
• "Rapresenting: The Miscellaneous Meaning of Gangsta Rap in 1990s America"
• Rebellion in the Borderlands: Slave Flight and the Runaway Slave in Antebellum Texas, 1836-1860
• Black Power Youth Literature: Trying to Overcome the Cultural Deficit
• The Spirit of 1943: Zoot Suits, Riots and Racial Anxiety on the Los Angeles Home Front
• From "The Cincinnati Effect" to "The Ferguson Effect": Media's Growing Involvement in Police Brutality Against Black Citizens
• Mr Europe, Mr Atlantic? Paul Henri Spaak's Efforts to Safeguard Atlantic Unity against Franco-American Hostilities
• The Federal Anti-Lynching Debate: Walter White and Mary McLeod Bethune's Struggle for Justice
• Food for Thought: Food Practices, Identity and Memory in Post-Civil Rights Era Southern Literature
Info Leiden North American Studies:

**Department website prospective students**

**Dept. website for enrolled students**

**E-prospectus NAS 2018-19 (course descriptions)**

**E-prospectus Premaster 2018-19**

**More information:**
Coordinator of studies: drs. Els Munter, e.c.munter@hum.leidenuniv.nl;
Dept. Chair: dr. Joke Kardux, j.c.kardux@hum.leidenuniv.nl