

Too Tolerant? Understanding Dutch Culture in International Perspective

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Class meets: TTH 12:30-2:00 synchronous via Zoom (find links in Canvas) <https://utexas.instructure.com>

Office hours: TTH 11-12:30 or by appointment

Welcome to “Too Tolerant?”/Live from the Netherlands!

This is one of the few true small courses you may take at UT, with lots of contact with your classmates and myself. Hopefully you will make friends in this class, as you’ll get to know each other well in the coming months in this more intimate setting. Even though we meet on Zoom, I still want to retain that atmosphere. To that end I request that you keep your camera on during class, and find a place where you can attend somewhat undisturbed. We will do a lot of break out room discussions and having the camera on makes class interaction a lot more fun. (Brief breaks are perfectly fine, however).

Introduction to the class theme and content and assignments

The Dutch are well known for their “tolerant,” laid back attitude towards religious, gender, and sexual differences, as well as such issues as drug use, prostitution, and euthanasia. This course explores both the stereotypes and the actuality of these Dutch attitudes and policies and examines the background to the latter within the context of Dutch and European cultural history.

This exploration of these issues in the Dutch and the European context allows for a consideration of what makes each of our culture(s) “tick” and offers a revealing look at cultural differences and their genesis. At the same time, we ask how many of these cultural differences will remain in an increasingly global culture in which the Netherlands is strongly tied to both the European Union and to an American economy and worldview. As source material we use primary Dutch literature texts, media texts and images, film, government brochures and secondary (scholarly) literature on the topic.

We first discuss some of the well-known stereotypes held about the Dutch and then explore Dutch history, in particular the influences over the centuries of geography, of (international) trade and shipping, and of a number of wars. We trace the rise of a unique feature of Dutch society, called *verzuiling* or “pillarization,” which led to a “separate but equal” segmented structure in which people with different religious, cultural, political mores led largely separate lives within their “pillar.” We will investigate whether this led to more tolerance or a similar kind of bubble effect which we have seen emerge in our own political and social landscape due to how we consume and curate (social) media.

Next, we explore specific debates that form a central role in today’s Dutch culture: the role of the state in matters of religion, the Dutch school system, changing attitudes toward social and economic safety nets. We look at dynamics of gender and attitudes towards gender and sexual diversity and reproductive rights; race relations historically, and after WW II and decolonization, and most recently in light of the “Zwarte Piet” debate and BLM; religious (in) tolerance in light of increased Muslim immigration. We discuss how the Dutch negotiate the shift from a rather homogeneous to a more multicultural society and the Conservative-Right and Nationalist/“nativist” backlash that has tried (but mostly failed) to gain a foothold. Finally, we also take an in depth look at the very different way Dutch policy makers and politicians have responded to the Covid19/Corona crisis. In the Netherlands, many of the above-mentioned debates are couched in the language of tolerance: how to respond to a Muslim community in which some hold radical views that are diametrically opposed to Dutch cultural values? Is it intolerant to reject the intolerance of others, even if it is in name of a defense of Dutch tolerance? How tolerant are we of disobedient behavior when it affects only the individual versus the collective?

Texts/Media

1 book and one course pack: 1. Ian Buruma *Murder in Amsterdam: The Death of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance* (order this text yourself, it is widely available second hand) and 2. a required course pack (also referred to as the “class reader”) available from *Jenn’s Copies* by week 2: 2518 Guadalupe • (512) 482-0779 • and you can also order your course packet online: <https://jennscopiespacket.com/> For email questions: 2518@jennscopies.com
Also follow the links in this syllabus for links to websites, articles, or films.

Technology

Free or Low Cost Software at UT: Take advantage of services available to you at no additional cost: The university provides certain online tools to students at no additional cost to include access to Office 365 (which comes with Microsoft Word), PowerPoint, Excel and other tools. Additionally, the university provides file storage through UT Box, UT Austin branded Google G Suite email account and unlimited Google Drive Storage, survey creation through Qualtrics, and other tools. Before purchasing a tool, check the [IT@UT web page](#) on no additional cost services to see if it is already provided by ITS.

Zoom Etiquette

It is quite challenging to focus on online classes. It is nearly impossible to focus if you have multiple screens open that do not relate to the class, especially as class will consist of Zoom + use of Canvas, and the use of a paper class reader. *Make sure you close all other windows, screens and so forth before class time, close chats and social media not related to the class and silence them so it is easier to be “present” at the Zoom classes.*

- If you do not have a private space available to you, *be sure to wear headphones to minimize interruptions.*
- Mute yourself unless you are speaking.
- Use the “raise hand” button to speak, or raise your hand on camera.
- Use your preferred name as your Zoom screen name, you may add pronouns if you wish (she/her, they/them, he/him).
- You may also use the chat to participate in classroom-related discussions, but keep it limited as it is difficult to listen to discussion and read chat at the same time.
- Turn off your camera if you are leaving the meeting temporarily.
- If the video or audio is choppy, try turning off your video.

Grading

25% Discussion, quizzes, and participation in class. Show up **on time** and **come prepared** to discuss the week’s texts. Short quizzes by which I check on your reading knowledge are part of your participation grade! Missing 4 or more class sessions without a valid excuse leads to a reduction of one half letter grade. If you have to miss class for a legitimate reason, email me. Class sessions will usually be recorded, so if you miss a class you can look at the video later to see what you have missed. For excused medical absences bring a doctor’s note. If you watch the lecture after the fact and submit answers to the discussion questions to me within a week, your absence will not be counted as such. I will limit this option to FOUR sessions, unless there are medical reasons for you to miss synchronous sessions.

10% Class presentation of a particular’s week’s reading, alone or in a pair (once during semester). Prepare a short analytical summary: what is the text about, who is the author, and what are his/her views? What can we learn from this text? Create a hand-out for your fellow classmates, you can upload it to canvas or show it via screen sharing. You may prepare a Powerpoint or other kind of slideshow for this purpose, but you will be graded on the basis of content and coherence, not on pretty slides! 10 minutes per presenter!

30% Three 1 page response papers, questions will be provided.

30% One 6-8 page final paper. Choose a topic with relevance to the class theme, find 3-6 sources on it (some of them can be web-based but run them by me first!) and explore the subject in some depth. A proposal is due by week 12, a bibliography is due by week 13. Comparative topics such as: “X in the U.S. versus X in the Netherlands” work especially well for this kind of a paper.

5% Brief final presentation of about 4-5 minutes in which you tell the class about your paper and your findings during our last class session. You are graded on organization, clarity, and timing.

IMPORTANT UT RESOURCES

The University Writing Center

Is a free UT center that is there to support student writing. <https://uwc.utexas.edu/services/writing-appointments/>

Disabilities

The University of Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 512- 471-6259, 512-471-6441 TTY.

Mental health It is common for students to feel a great deal of stress when starting college. If you

need to talk to someone, contact the Counseling and Mental Health Center at 512-471-3515.

Student disclosures of sexual violence The University of Texas fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as a UT student, the course instructor is required to notify UT's Title IX Office.

IMPORTANT UT POLICIES

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

Class Recordings

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

Q Drop Policy

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you'll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution.

University E-mail

It is your responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in your e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Using someone else's work in your own writing without giving proper credit is considered plagiarism, a serious form of academic dishonesty that can result in severe penalties. Copying someone else's work, buying a paper and submitting it as your own, copying and pasting text (even with changes), or borrowing images from an online source, are some examples of plagiarism. Even if you plagiarize accidentally, you can be held responsible and penalized.

Learning to cite sources appropriately is an important part of becoming a professional. When you are unsure about citation, you are encouraged to ask your instructor (who is already an expert in the discipline) what is appropriate in the context of your assignment. Consultants at The University Writing Center can also help you determine whether you are citing sources correctly—and they have helpful guides online for using direct quotations and paraphrasing. Reviewing those skills will help you feel confident that you are handling sources professionally in your writing.

Calendar-Syllabus

Readings are listed on the day they will be discussed **so read them *before* we have our next Zoom meeting.**
Always have the assigned text at hand!

Week 1**Introduction**

T Jan 10

Introduction to the course structure of class, syllabus, bios, first reading
 Cartoons “The Dutch...” “Italian...”

Assignment: order Buruma book, and look at material for Thursday,
 Think of which presentation you would like to do, and fill out your bio sheet!
 Read Shetter CH 1

TH Jan 12

Stereotypes of the Dutch debunked***Sign up for presentations, return bio!***

“Netherlands Profile” “Conformist nonchalance,” “Dutch Soldiers Find Smiles Are...”
 Shetter CH 1 “Approaches to the Country,” “Lessons for U.S. from a Flood-Prone Land”

Assignment: Read Shetter CH 13 and 14

Week 2**Introductory History of the Netherlands**

T Jan 17

Discussion of Shetter chapters 13, “A Historical Dimension” and 14, “The Modern Netherlands”

Assignment: GET YOUR CLASS READER AT JENN’S COPIES and read Van der Horst part I

TH Jan 19

What makes the Dutch *Dutch*?

Reader: Van der Horst “Egalitarian” part I

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 3

Week 3**What makes the Dutch *Dutch*? Part II**

T Jan 24

Van der Horst “Egalitarian” part II

Presentation:

Th Jan 26

Dutch Social Structures

Shetter CH 6 “Planning a Society,” “The Dutch Social Welfare System in the 20th
 Century” “Dutch Laws Pertaining to Tolerance” “Netherlands” (overview of social security)
 “Going Dutch”

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 4 and work on response paper #1

Week 4**Education in the Netherlands**

T Jan 31

Response Paper 1 due!

Shetter CH 19 “Dutch Society”

Shetter CH 7 “Education”

“Structure of the Dutch education System”, “Higher Education in the Netherlands”

“Dutch Higher Education Policy Refocuses on Quality”

Presentation:

TH Feb 2

Religion/Religious Pluralism

Shetter CH 11 “Religion and Pluriformity” “Elastic Catholic...”

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 5.

Week 5

The Position of Women and Mothers in the Netherlands

T Feb 7

“Netherlands Claims Progress In Improving Situation of Women,” U.S. Dept. of State on “Women in the Netherlands,” “Working (Part-Time) in the 21st Century”

More up to date sources can be found here:

<https://www.rathenau.nl/en/science-figures/personnel/women-science/women-academia#:~:text=In%202018%2023%25%20of%20all,lopsided%20the%20gender%20ratio%20becomes.>

<https://www.oecd.org/netherlands/Gender2017-NLD-en.pdf>

Presentation:

Th Feb 9

“The Netherlands: Country of Mothers,” “Fertility and Family” “Misconceptions about the Netherlands,” “Adolescent Sexual Health..” “Teen pregnancy...” <https://www.kit.nl/the-dutch-approach-to-abortion-leading-or-lagging-in-guaranteeing-womens-rights/>
<https://abort-report.eu/netherlands/>

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 6

Week 6

Sex and Sexuality, Legal and IllegalI: Homosexuality

T Feb 14

“Max en Sven,” “Utopianism and Sexual Politics,” “Same Sex Marriages” “Going Dutch?” “Same-Sex Marriage and Adoption: Unresolved Issues...” *COC in the Netherlands*

<https://dutchreview.com/news/the-netherlands-drops-to-13th-place-for-lgbtqia-policies-in-europe/>

Presentation:

Th Feb 16

Sex and Sexuality, Legal and IllegalII: Prostitution

“The Red Thread and Prostitution in the Netherlands,” “A new trick: Dutch taxman hunting prostitutes,” “At Issue: is sex for the disabled a right?”

https://humanityinaction.org/knowledge_detail/the-audacity-of-tolerance-a-critical-analysis-of-legalized-prostitution-in-amsterdams-red-light-district/

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 7, write response paper#2!

Week 7

Health and Public Policy: Covid in the Netherlands

T Feb 21

<https://www.rivm.nl/en/coronavirus-covid-19/guidelines-and-recommendations>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic_in_the_Netherlands

Presentation:

Th Feb 23

Euthanasia Debates

Response paper 2 due!

“Push for the Right to Die Grows in the Netherlands” “Holland’s Euthanasia law”

Dutch Courage," "The Dutch Way of Death," "Euthanasia for Babies?" "Jack's death..."

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 8

Week 8

T Feb 28

Myths versus Reality: Dutch Drugs Policy

"Why Dutch drug policy threatens U.S.," "The Disasters of War: American Repression versus Dutch Tolerance in Drug Policy," "Law Could Hamper Drug Tourism in the Netherlands," "Don't Pass The Dutchie: Amsterdam Bans Pot From Schools, Playgrounds"

Presentation:

Th Mar 2

Dutch Drug Policy II

"The Origins and Future of the Dutch Approach towards Drugs" "Amsterdam responds to"

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 9

Week 9

T Mar 7

Dutch National Identity

Shetter CH 15 "The Ethnic Heritage"

Presentation:

Th Mar 9

Shetter CH 20 "Cultural Identity"

Assignment: read texts for week 10

SPRING BREAK March 13-19

Week 10

T Mar 21

WW II and the Holocaust in the Netherlands

"WW II and the Holocaust in the Netherlands: Revising Myths," "Chronology-Directives," "Number of victims in the Second WW in the Netherlands," "Relative and Absolute European Jewish Death Rates"

Presentation:

Assignment: watch Return to Holland (film) on line (Amazon Prime)

Th Mar 23

Discuss Willy Lindwer *Return to Holland* (film) available on Amazon Prime

"Anne Frank and the Dutch Myth," "Dutch Nix Anne Frank as Citizen"

Presentation:

Assignment: Write response paper #3 and read text for week 11 (LONG chapter!)

Week 11

T Mar 28

The Dutch "Multicultural Society" I

Van der Horst "A Debt of Honour" "Is Zwarte Piet Racism? Race Relations in the Netherlands" "Thin veil of Dutch Tolerance" Dutch Parliament Paves the way for..." "Europeans Greatly overestimate..."

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/black-lives-matter-spurs-scrutiny-of-dutch-colonial-past>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/dutch-king-orders-investigation-into-royals-colonial-past-2022-12-06/>

Presentation:

Assignment: write response paper #3

Th Mar 30

The Dutch "Multicultural Society" II**Response paper 3 due!**

Gloria Wekker "The Case of Zwarte Piet" (Ch 5 in *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2016)

Tamara Nisic "From Multiculturalism to Integration or from Marginalization to Assimilation?"

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/thousands-attend-black-lives-matter-demo-amsterdam-71176624>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/europe/amsterdam-black-lives-matter-netherlands-heritage-tour-slavery-dutch-east-india-company-a9595986.html>

Presentation:

Assignment: read text for week 12, come up with topic(s) for final paper, this should be a ½ -1 page typed proposal.

Week 12**Doing Dutch Politics**

T Apr 4

Shetter CH 10 "The Political System," "The Political Wing of the Poldermodel," "Political Systems in Europe,"

<http://www.politico.eu/article/netherlands-election-2017-mark-rutte-geert-wilders-right-wing/>

Presentation:

Th Apr 6

Hand in topic for final paper!**Political trouble since 9/11: Political murders, Pim Fortuyn, van Gogh**

"Rightist in Netherlands Is Slain, and the Nation is Stunned," "Brutal End...,"

"Theo Van Gogh," "Tolerating a Time Bomb"

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 13 and create bibliography for final paper. Continue reading Ian Buruma *Murder in Amsterdam*

Week 13**Dutch Response to Home Grown Intolerance: Buruma *Murder in Amsterdam***

T Apr 11

Watch Van Gogh *Submission* in class

Discussion of Ian Buruma *Murder in Amsterdam* chapters 1-4

Presentation:

Th Apr 13

Ian Buruma *Murder in Amsterdam***Hand in bibliography for final paper!**

Final discussion on Buruma: chapters 5, 6, and 7

Presentation:

Assignment: read texts for week 14, work on final paper.

Week 14**The New Intolerance? The Geert Wilders Phenomenon**

T Apr 18

"Dutch Tolerance Tried," "Letter from Amsterdam"

Geert Wilders File, BBC Profile: Geert Wilders, Ian Buruma "Totally Tolerant, Up to a Point" "Watch and discuss excerpt of *Fitna* and the controversy surrounding it

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/10/netherlands-geert-wilders-politics-far-right?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Presentation:

Assignment: prepare for final presentation.

Th Apr 20

Final Presentations

Assignment: work on your final paper

Week 15

NO FINAL

Sat Apr 29

Final paper due, 5 PM.

Papers need to be uploaded as a word or PDF file on Canvas by 5 PM. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Extensions will not be granted unless you discuss this need with me by April 27th and get my approval. Such an extension will be no more than two days due to my grade deadlines.

If you hand in your work later than my grading deadline your work will not be counted, and grades will not be changed. PLAN ACCORDINGLY!