



Teaching European Culture in NZ

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Outline

- Background
- Assumptions
- Challenges
- Opportunities

Background

- European Studies at VUW:
 - School of Languages and Cultures
 - Major in European Studies:
 - Euro 101 [Taught largely by staff in French, German, Italian and Spanish]
 - Euro 301
 - + range of papers from other Schools
- Euro 401
- Asia-Euro 403
- Interdisciplinary courses with focus on Europe

Assumptions

- Of teachers:
 - Students will know *what* Europe is
 - Students will know *where* Europe is
 - Students will know how to start finding out about Europe

Assumptions

- Of students:
 - Studying European culture doesn't require understanding anything about European history, politics and society

OR

- Studying European history, politics and society doesn't require understanding anything about European culture



“How could we improve the course?”

“More history and less homosexual poets”

Challenges

- Communicating the importance of studying European culture
- Overcoming distance/stereotypes
- Definitional issues:
 - What is Europe?
 - What is “European culture”?
- Interdisciplinarity

Opportunities

- Redefining teaching European culture in NZ
- “Identity and diversity”
- Interdisciplinarity
- Inter-institutional collaboration