

## AMERICAN PATCHWORK Levels B1 – C2 - *Stacey Benoit*

Spread over almost 10 million square kilometres with ancestors who spanned the globe, Americans are indeed a diverse bunch. What ties them together? How does the nation work as a whole?

As a world leader in so many domains: technology, science, media, manufacturing, but also handgun killings, military spending, prison population, environmental footprint..., America is a land that grapples with issues of innovation, wealth, identity, law and violence: individually, communally and as an entire nation. When is the American experience used for the common good and when does it create adversity and chaos, both at home and abroad?



**Course content** will include looking at texts, films, news reports and talking to American students in a French class at the *University of North Carolina* by Skype. We will try to dissect what elements unite and divide Americans and what connects and differentiates them from Europeans and others.

**Coursework** will include a presentation on a societal issue, an organization, a community, a business or other element that embodies the complexity of American culture(s). Students will be asked to research and reflect on the common (and sometimes leading) role that American culture plays in various themes and current events. Our understanding of American society will also come from comparing it to European models, highlighting a multicultural approach rather than an "us and them" juxtaposition.

**Evaluation** will be based equally on active participation, written work and the research and presentation.