The School of Liberal Arts

American Studies

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Program Administrator

Rachel Devline, History (Director)

Affiliated faculty have homes in the following schools and departments:
Anthropology
Architecture
Art
Communication
English
History
Latin American Studies
Philosophy
Political Science
Major

An interdisciplinary and interdepartmental major designed to provide an analysis of American thought, culture, and society, past and present. The required and elective courses balance flexibility and coherence as students select areas of concentration from the broad categories of American arts, American thought and experience, and American institutions and social practices. Students are also encouraged to address specifically local, regional and comparativist dimensions of these categories both through their coursework and through internships at local institutions and museums.

A student majoring in American studies must take the seven required courses listed below in addition to seven elective courses selected from a list of appropriate courses grouped in three major categories and offered by participating departments.

Normally, the elective courses are selected from above the 100 level and at least three of the seven courses must be above the 300 level. With the exception of American Studies 301 and 501, all of the required courses should normally be completed by the junior year.

Students interested in American studies should consult with the director as soon as possible so they can arrange their program with an eye to the American studies requirements. The director also maintains an up-to-date list of acceptable electives. Full descriptions of the courses are provided by the participating departments.

AMST 456, 457 Internship Studies (1-3, 1-3)
Staff. Prerequisites: approval of instructor and program director. An experiential learning process coupled with pertinent academic coursework. Open only to juniors and seniors in good standing. Registration is completed in the academic department sponsoring the internship on TUTOR. (Note: A maximum of six credits may be earned in one or two courses.)

AMST 491, 492 Independent Studies (3, 3)
Staff. Open to qualified juniors and seniors only.

AMST H499-H500 Honors Thesis (3, 4)
Staff. Only one of these courses will count towards requirements for the major.

REQUIRED COURSES

American Studies

AMST 201 Issues of American Identity (3)
Staff. An exploration of one of the central themes of American studies, the American identity, through the study of selected issues arising out of the American moral, cultural, political, and religious experience.

AMST 301 Special Topics in American Studies (3)
Staff. Seminar primarily for American studies majors, generally taken in the junior year, comprising a detailed exploration of some one topic or theme relevant to the American scene.

AMST 311 New Orleans as a Cultural System (3)
Staff. Analyzing the City as a cultural system, the course explores the nature of the intersections among diverse cultural phenomena such as space, ritual, food, and music.

AMST 501 Seminar in American Studies (3)
Staff. Seminar primarily for American studies majors, generally taken in the senior year, involving an in-depth study of a major motif, movement, or problem in American intellectual or religious thought. The production of an acceptable research paper demonstrates competence in American studies.
History
HISU 141-142 The United States from Colonization to 1865, and The United States from 1865 to the Present (3, 3)
or six credits of American history approved by the American studies director.

English
ENLS 375-376 American Life in American Literature, 1620-1864 and 1865-1940 (3, 3)
or six credits of American literature approved by the American Studies Director.

ELECTIVE COURSES
Students should consult with the director for additional or alternative courses.

American Arts
ARHS 360 Art in America, 1492 to the Civil War
ARHS 361 American Art from the Civil War to World War II
MUSC 331 History of Music in the United States
MUSC 332 Musical Theatre in America
MUSC 334 History of Jazz
MUSC 335 Music in Contemporary Society

American Thought and Experience
ENLS 373 Introduction to African-American Literature
ENLS 431 American Literature to 1820
ENLS 436 American Renaissance
ENLS 437 19th-Century American Literature
ENLS 440 Modern American Literature
ENLS 441 Contemporary American Literature
ENLS 442 Southern Literature
HISU 342 Urban America
HISU 340 Women and Gender in U.S. History to 1830
HISU 341 Women and Gender in U.S. History, 1830 to the Present
HISU 343 History of American Religion
HISU 344 African American Religious History
HISU 355 American Political Traditions: Foundations, 1776-1860
HISU 358 Slavery and Freedom in the Antebellum South
HISU 361 U.S. Identity Politics, 1945-Present
HISU 370 Introduction to African-American History: Emancipation to Present
HISU 381 Southern Folk Culture
HISU 382 Mythic South in Film and Television
HISU 452 Rise and Fall of the Plantation South
HISU 652 Ideas and Thinkers in American History, 1607-1865
HISU 661 The New South
American Arts
ARHS 360 Art in America, 1492 to the Civil War
ARHS 361 American Art from the Civil War to World War II
MUSC 331 History of Music in the United States
MUSC 332 Musical Theatre in America
MUSC 334 History of Jazz
MUSC 335 Music in Contemporary Society

American Thought and Experience
ENLS 373 Introduction to African-American Literature
ENLS 431 American Literature to 1820
ENLS 436 American Renaissance
ENLS 437 19th-Century American Literature
ENLS 440 Modern American Literature
ENLS 441 Contemporary American Literature
ENLS 442 Southern Literature
HISU 342 Urban America
HISU 340 Women and Gender in U.S. History to 1830
HISU 341 Women and Gender in U.S. History, 1830 to the Present
HISU 343 History of American Religion
HISU 344 African American Religious History
HISU 355 American Political Traditions: Foundations, 1776-1860
HISU 358 Slavery and Freedom in the Antebellum South
HISU 361 U.S. Identity Politics, 1945-Present
HISU 370 Introduction to African-American History: Emancipation to Present
HISU 381 Southern Folk Culture
HISU 382 Mythic South in Film and Television
HISU 452 Rise and Fall of the Plantation South
HISU 652 Ideas and Thinkers in American History, 1607-1865
HISU 661 The Old South
HISU 662 The New South, 1865-Present
PHIL 313 Classic American Thought
PHIL 314 Recent American Philosophy

American Institutions and Social Processes
ANTH 413 North American Prehistory
ANTH 605 North American Indians
ANTH 613 Southeastern United States Prehistory
POLA 315 Elections in America
POLA 322 The American Presidency
POLA 324 Public Policy
POLT 486 American Political Thought
SOCI 103 Sociology of the Family
SOCI 106 Urban Sociology
SOCI 109 Social Problems
SOCI 602 Political Sociology
SOCI 611 Sociology of Work and Leisure
Although not included in the program’s requirements, American Studies students are strongly encouraged to take one or more of the following courses as early in their career as possible.

- ANTH 102 Cultural Anthropology
- COMM 315 Film Analysis
- COMM 326 Critical Analysis of the Media
- POLS 101 Introduction to Politics
- SOCI 201 Foundations of Sociology