American Studies

The American Studies Program offers a major leading to the bachelor’s degree and a minor. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the program director at an early stage in their studies for general education and preparatory course recommendations. The program director also provides ongoing advising and career information for American Studies students.

Bachelor of Arts in American Studies (120 units)

American Studies is an interdisciplinary study of American culture. The American Studies Program offers a major leading to the bachelor’s degree and a minor. The Program is governed by a committee of faculty from various departments and schools who also serve as advisors. Majors confer with the program director to plan their programs, which are recorded on official advising forms.

Students planning to major in American Studies should consult the program director early in their academic careers for general education and preparatory course recommendations and for teaching credential information.

Requirements

A minimum of 36 units distributed as follows:

Core courses (21 units):

Take the following courses:

- AMST 300 Introduction to American Studies (3)
  Prerequisites: None
- AMST 350I California Culture (3)
  Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement; upper-division standing
- AMST 498 Senior Seminar in American Studies (3)
  Prerequisites: Completion of AMST 300 and 18 units of upper-division work in American Studies or affiliated fields.

Take 6 additional units in AMST-designated courses, which include AMST 351, 360, 421I and 495.

Take 3 units from the following courses:

- HIST 477A American Cultural History (3)
  Prerequisites: None
- HIST 477B American Cultural History (3)
  Prerequisites: None

Take 3 units from the following courses:

- ENGL 372I Comedy in the United States (3)
  Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Exploration courses, and upper-division standing.
- ENGL 375 American Ethnic Writers (3)
  Prerequisites: ENGL 100; GE Foundation requirements.

Elective pattern (15 units):

Students choose a five-course elective pattern in consultation with the program advisor in one of the following areas of concentration. No more than two courses in this elective pattern can come from any one academic department.

1. American Institutions, Ideas, and Experiences
2. Diversity and Difference
3. Popular Culture, Media, and Consumerism
4. Public Culture and Civic Engagement
5. Student Designed Area of Concentration
Minor in American Studies

Minimum of 18 units.
Take all of the following courses:

AMST 300 Introduction to American Studies (3)
Prerequisites: None

AMST 350I California Culture (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement requirement; upper-division standing Interdisciplinary examination of the culture of California.

Take one of the following courses:

HIST 477A American Cultural History (3)
Prerequisites: None

HIST 477B American Cultural History (3)
Prerequisites: None

Take 9 units chosen in consultation with faculty advisor.

American Studies Courses (AMST)

UPPER DIVISION

300. Introduction to American Studies (3)
Interdisciplinary approaches to study of American civilization from colonial period through twentieth century. Significant issues and problems in American life examined from perspectives of several disciplines.

350I. California Culture (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement requirement; upper-division standing Interdisciplinary examination of the culture of California.
Interdisciplinary examination of California culture. Emphasis on how California’s history, politics, environment, social movements, art, and literature produce a contested and always changing culture.

351. Celebrity in American Culture (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement; upper-division standing Interdisciplinary examination of the changing meanings of fame in American society, addressing the production, consumption and cultural work of celebrity.

360. Explorations in American Popular Culture (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement; upper-division standing Examines broad terrain of American popular culture from multiple disciplinary perspectives, interrogating both the form and content of cultural production and reception in the past and present. Not open for credit to students with credit in AMST 200.

421I. Animals in American Culture (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement; upper-division standing Interdisciplinary examination of the role of non-human animals in making cultural meaning. Traces the many ways in which animals, not just humans, have shaped American history and culture.

495. Selected Topics in American Studies (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation; upper-division status.
Topics of current interest in American Studies selected for intensive development. May be repeated to a maximum of 6 units with different topics in different semesters. Topics announced in Schedule of Classes.

498. Senior Seminar in American Studies (3)
Prerequisites: Completion of AMST 300 and 18 units of upper-division work in American Studies or affiliated fields.
Capstone research course for American Studies majors Letter grade only (A-F).