

American Studies

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wp.stolaf.edu/american-studies (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/american-studies>)

The American Studies Program promotes meaningful dialogue about the United States by viewing American history, institutions, and culture from multiple perspectives and by examining the United States as a complex geo-political entity. An American studies major equips students to engage in reflexive analysis and to develop analytic and interpretive skills. Students explore how cultures shape personal and group identities; students learn to seek out diverse perspectives, which means studying change over time; students examine how what we take as "natural" is almost always "socially constructed."

Overview of the Major

The American studies major is structured for both exploration and coherence. The level I course introduces and integrates different disciplinary questions and concepts in the study of contemporary culture. The level II course combines different disciplines to study a single topic or time period. The level III seminar focuses on a topic and then requires students to participate in a substantial interdisciplinary research project. Students augment these American studies courses with disciplinary courses (see list on department website) that engage American matters. It is both easy and interesting to double major in American studies, as courses in other departments can often count toward the American studies major, as well. Because of the range of options in American studies, majoring is also a good way to fulfill general education requirements, as the courses often cover a wide range of general education credit.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Major (<http://wp.stolaf.edu/curriculum-committee/american-studies-major-ilos>)

Distinction

See Academic Honors (<http://catalog.stolaf.edu/academic-regulations-procedures/academic-honors/#distinction>)

Senior majors may apply for distinction in American studies. Candidates must satisfy minimum GPA requirements (3.50 in the major), prepare a research project under the direction of a faculty advisor, and submit their work for faculty review. Students declare their interest by October 15 of their senior year; the review occurs in April.

Requirements

In consultation with an advisor, students construct nine-course majors that normally include the following:

AMST 100	American Culture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives	1.00
One level II American Studies topics course		1.00

One level III American Studies seminar (the topics course and the seminar may be taken more than once, and if so, your number of disciplinary courses, see below, will be reduced accordingly) 1.00

Six designated disciplinary courses (with at least one course in each of three departments) 6.00

Total Credits 9

Of the nine courses, at least two must carry MCD general education credit and at least two must be at level III.

Courses

AMST 100: American Culture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

This analysis of modern American society introduces theories and methods of culture studies, beginning with anthropological definitions of culture and including perspectives of sociology, political science, history, art history, and English. Students examine the moral ecology of everyday life in America, looking at the cultural meanings of work, clothes, food, family, gender, buildings, bodies, television, advertising, and education. Counts toward women's and gender studies major and concentration and media studies concentration. Offered annually in the fall semester.

AMST 205 -210: American Studies: A Topical Approach

Students apply theories and methods of culture studies to a selected major topic in American culture. The course employs a discussion format, focusing on critical reading and analytic essays. Recent topics include "Sitcom America," "American Adolescence," and "Campus Ecology." Usually offered annually in the spring semester. May be repeated if topic is different.

AMST 294: Academic Internship

AMST 298: Independent Study

AMST 301: Seminar in American Studies

This course undertakes an intensive study of a particular period or topic through the interdisciplinary perspective of American studies. This course employs a seminar format, with concentration on student research. Recent topics include: "Disney's America," "American Women of Color," "Man and Nature," and "California Dreams." Offered annually in the spring semester. May be repeated if topic is different.

AMST 394: Academic Internship

AMST 396: Directed Undergraduate Research

This course provides a comprehensive research opportunity, including an introduction to relevant background material, technical instruction, identification of a meaningful project, and data collection. The topic is determined by the faculty member in charge of the course and may relate to his/her research interests. Offered based on department decision. May be offered as a 1.00 credit course or .50 credit course.

Prerequisite: determined by individual instructor.

AMST 398: Independent Research

Approved Courses

AFAM 231 Africa and the Americas: The Diaspora Experience

AMCON 101 Declaring Independence, 1607-1865

AMCON 102 Democratic Vistas, 1800-1900

AMCON 201 Remaking America, 1865-1945

AMCON 202 Pursuits of Happiness, 1920-Present

ART 253 Art Since 1945

DANCE 246 Dance in the United States

ECON 242 Environmental Economics

ECON 245 Economics of Health Care

ECON 371 Economics of Public Policy

ECON 374 Money and Banking

ECON 376 Labor Economics and Employment Relations

EDUC 170 Urban Schools and Communities (off-campus)

EDUC 260 Foundations in Education

EDUC 378 Multicultural Education in Hawaii: Seminar and Practicum (off-campus)

EDUC 379 Urban Education Practicum and Seminar (off-campus)

ENGL 205 American Racial and Multicultural Literatures

ENGL 276 Literature and the Environment

ENGL 340 Advanced Studies in Literary Eras: American

ENGL 345 Topics in American Racial and Multicultural Literatures

ENGL 392 Major American Authors

ENVST 202 The Culture of Nature

ENVST 222 Campus Ecology

ENVST 270 Nature and American Landscapes

ES/PS 276 Environmental Politics

FAMST 232 Introduction to Family Studies

FAMST 242 Family Relationships

FAMST 253 Human Sexuality

FILM 201 American Film History

HIST 165 Slavery in the Americas

HIST 169 From Fjord to Frontier: Norwegian-American History in Literature

HIST 181 Civil Rights Revolution

HIST 182 America Since 1945

HIST 188 Topical Seminar (American Topics)

HIST 198 American History to 1865

HIST 199 American History Since 1865

HIST 270 Major Seminar: American History

HIST 272 Women in America

HIST 275 Environmental History

HIST 277 African-American History

HIST 282 Topics in Native American History

HIST 288 America in the Civil War and Reconstruction Era

HIST 290 Reel America: U.S. History in Film

HIST 299 Topics in History (American Topics)

HIST 370 American Seminar

HIST 375 Problems of Contemporary America

MEDIA 160 Mass Media

MEDIA 260 Media and Screen Cultures

MUSIC 345 Advanced Study in Music History

PSCI 111 American Politics

PSCI 211 Media and Politics

PSCI 244 Race and American Politics

PSCI 255 Political Parties and Elections

PSCI 272 American Constitutional Law: Power

PSCI 311 Seminar in American Politics

PSYCH 227 Environmental Psychology at Rocky Mountain National Park (off-campus)

RACE 121 Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies

RACE 122 Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies

SWRK 221 Social Work and Social Welfare

SWRK 258 Social Policy

SOAN 121 Introduction to Sociology

SOAN 234 Native North American Cultures and Religions

SOAN 242 Contemporary Native American Issues

SOAN 246 LGBTQA Lives and Issues

SOAN 248 Sociology of Dying, Death, and Bereavement

SOAN 260 Marriage and the Family

SOAN 264 Race and Class in American Culture

SOAN 265 Religion, Culture, and Society

WMGST 121 Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies

Interim courses approved for credit as designated disciplinary courses in American studies are offered annually. See the director for the approved list, and consult with the director about other courses not on the list above that meet American studies criteria.

Faculty

Director, 2016-2017

Mark Allister

Professor of English and Environmental Studies
American literature; environmentalism; popular music; men's studies;
American studies

Eric J. Fure-Slocum

Associate Professor of History
20th century US history; labor and urban history

Judy Kutulas

Professor of History
20th-century U.S. history; U.S. women's history; popular and material
culture

L. DeAne Lagerquist

Professor of Religion
church history; American religion; Christianity in India; Lutheranism

Diane C. LeBlanc

Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Director of the Writing
Program
rhetoric and composition; creative writing; gender studies

Matthew Rohn

Associate Professor of Art and Art History and Environmental Studies
19th-and 20th-century art; American culture; gender and multi-
cultural studies; social justice; visual ecocriticism

Mary E. Titus (on leave)

Professor of English
late 19th-early 20th-century American literature; literature of the
American south; gender theory; material culture

Colin Wells

Professor of English
early American literature; 18th-century literature