

The George Washington University Undergraduate Handbook American Studies 2013-14

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Revised: 09/12/13

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The American Studies Major

Students in the American Studies (AMST) major analyze the society, culture, and politics of the United States from an interdisciplinary perspective that draws on history, cultural analysis, art and architecture, public policy, and folklore studies, among others. Students may choose to major or minor in American Studies. In either case, they are introduced to key concepts in the analysis of culture and society through a set of five core courses and five American Studies upper-level courses. The program culminates with a Senior research seminar, in which students write a paper based on original research.

Advising

Students *must* make an appointment with the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) in order to declare their major. Simply filing your Declaration of Major form with the Columbian School will not be adequate. When you meet with the DUS, s/he will help you fill out the Declaration of Major form.

Once you have declared your major, **you will be assigned a member of the faculty as your permanent undergraduate advisor.** After your initial meeting, this is the person you should see to answer questions about requirements or to get course approvals.

Outline of Requirements for the Major

The outline below is designed to be only a quick reference summary of the requirements for the AMST major. You must read the following pages in order to fully understand the details of these requirements. In fall 2010, The George Washington University started using a four-digit course numbering system; the new four-digit course numbers are listed here with the old three-digit course numbers listed in parentheses.

Starting in Fall 2013, there are new requirements for majors. This only applies to new majors who sign up for the major in Fall 2013 or later.

Old majors who signed up before Fall 2013 will continue to follow the old system with focus areas. Old majors may NOT switch to the new requirements.

Required Courses (for NEW MAJORS ONLY – signed up Fall 2013 or later)

- 6 hours: AMST 2010 & 2011 – American Studies survey sequence
- 3 hours: AMST 3900 – Critiquing Culture
- 3 hours: AMST 3901 – Examining America
- 15 hours: Five upper level American Studies courses (AMST 2000-3000 level)
- 6 hours: Two semesters of foreign language or placement into a Level Three foreign language by examination.
- 3 hours: One course about a foreign culture (non-US)
- 3 hours: AMST 4500 – Senior Seminar (*This course is offered ONLY in the Fall Semester.*)**

**Beginning Fall 2013, majors will not be allowed to register for AMST 4500 until they have completed at least 2 of the following 4 courses required for the major: AMST 2010, 2011, 3900 & 3901.

Required Courses for OLD MAJORS (signed up before Fall 2013)

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- 6 hours: AMST 2010 & 2011 – American Studies survey sequence
 - 3 hours: AMST 3900 – Critiquing Culture
 - 3 hours: AMST 3901 – Examining America
 - 15 hours: Five courses in a single area of focus, three in the American Studies department
 - 6 hours: Two semesters of a foreign language or waived if tested as Level 3 placement
 - 3 hours: One course about a foreign culture (non-US)
 - 3 hours: AMST 4500 – Senior Seminar (*This course is offered ONLY in the Fall Semester.*)**

Course of Study

A. Required Core Courses

Required Core Courses for Majors

AMST 2010 and AMST 2011 – American Studies Survey Sequence. These courses provide students with a strong grounding in the cultural history of the United States and an introduction to scholars' debates about that history. AMST 2010 covers the period up to the Civil War; AMST 2011 covers the period since the Civil War.

AMST 3900 – Critiquing Culture. An intense study of modes of cultural analysis, including ethnography and cultural studies methods, and their application to the examination of the complex ways that cultural texts and practices interact with structures of power. Of various theories and themes central to American Studies, emphasis is on scholarly debates about mass culture, ideology, visuality, discourse, and affect. One course of the two-semester junior-level core sequence for majors. Minors admitted with permission of instructor.

AMST 3901 – Examining America. Examination of modes of power and forms of identification within and across U.S. national borders. Focus on social constructions of the nation; forms of diversity and identity, such as race, gender, and sexuality; and the transnational flow of people, ideas, culture, and religion. One course of the two-semester junior-level core sequence for majors. Minors admitted with permission of instructor.

AMST 4500– Research Seminar. In the fall of their senior year, majors undertake a capstone project based on original research in primary sources and analysis of scholarly literature. These courses have changing themes, and students are required to write their paper on a topic relevant to the course overall. Students will usually have two or more courses to choose from.

B. Foreign/Comparative Cultures Courses

- Two semesters of foreign language or placement into a Level Three foreign language by examination.
- One course about a foreign culture selected from the CCAS list of foreign cultures or approved by the Department.

C. Five Additional Courses

1. For NEW majors only (signed up Fall 2013 or later)

Five upper-level American Studies courses

Students take five upper-level courses in the American Studies department. Courses must be listed as AMST and be 2000 level or higher.

2. For OLD majors only (signed up before Fall 2013)

Five courses in a “Focus Area”

Students must choose one of the following focus areas and take FIVE courses in that area. The list of approved focus courses appears later in the handbook. Please keep in mind, however, that we cannot list all courses that count in the focus, due to the changing nature of specific topics courses. Faculty advisors may approve focus courses not listed. At least THREE of the focus courses must be offered by the American Studies department; qualifying American Studies courses are marked with an asterisk (*) on the list that follows.

Note: AMST 2490 and AMST 3950 are “special topics” numbers that are assigned to many different courses. Courses with these numbers will count for your focus only if they are on the list in the handbook or are approved by your American Studies advisor

Cultural Politics. The study of power relations, broadly constructed, and the ways in which different groups have taken shape within particular frameworks of power; how power has been maintained and disseminated through social and cultural forms.

Global Connections. The study of the ways in which people, ideas, and cultural forms of expression circulate around the world and take shape in the United States; how the United States is experienced in other countries; and how the United States is part of the Americas, broadly conceived.

Space, Place, and Society. The study of the ways in which place shapes social development and vice versa, with particular emphasis on the importance of the built environment, material culture, and forms of representation in social organization.

1. Additional Information

- You may use courses that count for the American Studies focus areas to fulfill GCRs or requirements for other majors. However, you may not count any course twice within the major; for example, you may not count a single course to fulfill both the cultural history requirement and a focus requirement.
- Some courses taught by Prof. James Miller (AMST/ENGL) are not cross-listed as American Studies, but any course taught by him can fulfill the 3-of-5 requirement.

The American Studies Minor

Students interested in selecting an American Studies minor take 18 hours of course work, as follows:

- **American Studies Survey Sequence.** 6 hours: AMST 2010 and AMST 2011.
- **Any Four Additional upper-level American Studies Courses (2000-3000 level).** 12 credit hours

Focus Courses

Many GW courses are variable topics or offered on an occasional basis; thus, ***courses other than these may be appropriate for the area of focus; the American Studies Undergraduate advisors can approve other selected courses.*** All focus courses must be at the 2000, 3000, or 5000 level. The core courses may not be double-counted to fill the focus requirements. Courses offered by the American Studies department are marked with an asterisk (*).

Cultural Politics

*AMST/PSC 2120 (<i>AMST/PSC 2120 was formerly offered as AMST 2490/PSC 2990</i>)	Freedom in US Thought & Popular Culture
*AMST/WSTU 2125 (<i>AMST 2490</i>)	Varieties of Feminist Theory
*AMST/HIST 2320	US Media & Cultural History
*AMST 2350	US Religion and Politics
*AMST/HIST/WSTU 2380	Sexuality in US History
*AMST 2490	Performance and Culture in America
*AMST 2490	The African American Experience
*AMST 2490	Interracial America
*AMST 2490W/Hist 3001W	Science, Politics, and Society in Modern America
*AMST 2495	Special Topics in African American History
*AMST 2530/AH 2156	Folk Arts in America
*AMST 2532/ANTH 2532	Introduction to Folklore
*AMST 2533/ANTH 2533	Material Culture in America
*AMST/HIST/WSTU 3352	Women in the United States (first half)
*AMST/HIST/WSTU 3353	Women in the United States (second half)
*AMST 3950	Cultural History of New Deal Era
*AMST 3950	American Slavery & Its Legacy
*AMST 3950	The Postwar American Consumer
*AMST 3950	Monuments, Movements and Management
*AMST 3950	The Civil War and American Popular Culture
*AMST 3950	America in the 1990s
*AMST 3950	Black Consumer Culture & Politics
*AMST 3950	The Long Civil Rights Movement
*AMST 3950W	U.S. Black Feminism 1830-1990
*AMST 5771/HIST 3356	Epidemics in American History
*AMST/HIST/HONR 5772	Race, Medicine, and Public Health
AH 2151	American Art in the Age of Revolution
AH 2152	American Art in the Age of National Expansion
AH 2153	American Art of the 20 th Century
AH 2161	History of Decorative Art: American Heritage
ENGL 3490	Early American Literature and Culture
ENGL 3520	American Romanticism
ENGL 3560	American Realism
ENGL 3620-3621	American Poetry
ENGL 3630-3631	American Drama
ENGL 3640-3641	The American Novel
ENGL 3720-3721	Contemporary American Literature
ENGL 3730W/AMST 3950W	Love and Longing in Asian/Pacific/American Cultures
ENGL 3850	Ethnicity and Place in American Literature
ENGL 3950	Cultural Theory and Black Studies

ENGL 3960	Asian American Literature
ENGL 3965/AMST 3950:	Asian American Cultural Studies
ENGL 3970	Jewish American Literature
HIST 3001/AMST 2490	Jewish Lives in 19 th & 20 th Century America
HIST 3001/AMST 2490	Jews in American Popular Culture
HIST 3001	Freedom and Slavery in America
HIST/AMST 3350-3351	U.S. Social History
HIST/AMST 3360	African American History
HIST/WSTU/AMST 3362	Black Women in U.S. History
HIST 3367	History of the Jewish People in America

Global Connections

*AMST 2410	20th Century US Immigration
*AMST 2490	Nation-Building on US-Mexico Border
*AMST 2490	Performance and Culture in the Americas
*AMST 2490	US-Middle East Cultural Encounters
*AMST 2490	Frontiers and Borderlands
*AMST 2490	Making the US-Mexico Border
*AMST 2530/AH 2156	Folk Arts in America
*AMST/HIST 2710	US in a Global Context, 1898-Present
*AMST/HIST 2730	World War II in History and Memory
<i>(also offered as AMST 2490/HIST 3001W)</i>	
*AMST/ANTH 2750	Latinos in the United States
<i>(also offered as AMST 2490W/ANTH 2991W)</i>	
*AMST 3950	Americans Abroad: Fiction and Film
*AMST 3950	Field Methods in Latino Culture
ANTH 3513	Human Rights and Ethics
ENGL 3810	Holocaust in Literature and Film
ENGL 3810	Latino Literature
ENGL 3850	Ethnicity and Place in American Literature
ENGL 3950	Cultural Theory and Black Studies
ENGL 3960	Asian American Literature
ENGL 3970	Jewish American Literature
HIST 3001	Freedom and Slavery in America
HIST 3001	History of US Counter Intelligence
HIST 3302	America Before 1764
HIST 3303	Revolutionary America
HIST 3033	War and the Military in American Society
HIST 3035	The United States and the Wars in Indochina
HIST 3045	International History of the Cold War
HIST 3313	History of the American West
HIST 3332-3333	History of American Foreign Policy Since WW II
HIST 3366	Immigration, Ethnicity, and the American Experience
HIST 3367	History of the Jewish People in America
HIST 3520	Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World
PSC 2367	Human Rights

Space, Place, and Society

*AMST/HIST 2440	The American City
*AMST 2490	Nation-Building on US-Mexico Border
*AMST 2490	Weather in American History and Culture
*AMST 2490	Making the US-Mexico Border
*AMST 2520/AH 2154	American Architecture (1600-1860)
*AMST 2521/AH 2155	American Architecture (1860-present)
*AMST 2530/AH 2156	Folk Arts in America
*AMST 2533/ANTH 2533	Material Culture in America
*AMST/HIST 3324	U.S. Urban History
*AMST 3950	Claiming Space
*AMST 3950	Monuments, Movements and Management
ANTH 3811/AMST 3811	Historical Archaeology
ANTH 3835/AMST 3835	Historical Archaeology Field Program
AH 2161	History of Decorative Arts: American Heritage
ENGL 3850	Ethnicity and Place in American Literature
GEOG 2140	Cities and Society
GEOG 3143	Urban Sustainability
GEOG/AMST 2144	Explorations in Historical Geography
GEOG 2145	Cultural Geography
GEOG 2146	Political Geography
GEOG/AMST 3810	Building Cities
HIST/AMST 2020W	Washington DC: History, Culture, and Politics
HIST/AMST 2020	Washington DC: History, Culture, and Politics
HIST 30001	Environmental History
PSC 2212	State and Urban Policy Problems
SOC 2105	Social Problems in American Society
SOC 2169	Urban Sociology
SOC 2170	Class and Inequality
SOC 2179	Race and Minority Relations

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