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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.

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 additional American Studies courses (no more than two of which may be at the 1000-level)
- 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.

B. Five Additional Courses

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

Five additional American Studies courses

Students take five additional courses in the American Studies department, no more than two of which can be at the 1000-level
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

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