

AMERICAN STUDIES

College of Liberal Arts

Director: Brett Mizelle

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Affiliated Faculty: Elyse M. Blankley (English/Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies), Patricia A. Cleary (History), Sharon D. Downey (Communication Studies), Linda N. España-Maram (Asian and Asian American Studies), Araceli Esperza (English), J. William Gibson (Sociology), Paul Gilmore (English), George Hart (English), Ann Johnson (Communication Studies), Maulana Karenga (Black Studies), Karen Kleinfelder (Art), Dennis Lopez (English), Eileen Luhr (History), Brett Mizelle (History), Charles Noble (Political Science), Daniel J. O'Connor (Liberal Studies), Carlos R. Piar (Religious Studies), Karen Rasmussen (Communication Studies), Maythee Rojas (Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies), Max Rosenkrantz (Philosophy), Anna Sandoval (Chicano and Latino Studies), Sarah Schrank (History), Nancy Strow Sheley (English/Liberal Studies), Craig R. Smith (Communication Studies), Jon R. Stone (Religious Studies), Dean S. Toji (Asian and Asian American Studies), John N. Tsuchida (Asian and Asian American Studies), Frederick Wegener (English), Hugh Wilford (History)

Career Possibilities

Advertising • Entertainment • Journalism • Management • Marketing • Mass Media (film, radio, television) • Politics • Professional Writing and Editing (creative or technical) • Public Relations • Publishing • Historian • Administrator in Historic and Cultural Preservation • Teacher • Museum Curator • Multimedia Specialist • Preservation and Environmental Law • College Instructor • Environmental Public History Review Specialist • Human Resources Manager • Systems Analysts • Insurance Broker (Some of these, and other careers, require additional education or experience. For more information, see www.careers.csulb.edu.)

What is an American? How and why is culture important to our lives and identities? How do we represent the past and what importance—and limitations—do these representations have? How and why does culture—including popular culture, the arts, and literature—serve as a site of social struggle? How do diverse groups within the Americas imagine their identities and their relation to the United States? What happens when we look at our world(s) from a variety of perspectives? These are some of the questions that are addressed in American Studies, an interdisciplinary approach to American history, life, and culture.

American Studies is a vital, malleable, and growing academic enterprise, one known for the new questions it has posed, the new perspectives it has brought to the study of the cultures of the United States, and the new information it has introduced into scholarly and public conversations about national identity and experience. Students in this interdisciplinary program play an active role in their own education, working with the program director to design their own plan of inquiry into various aspects of American society and culture.

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)

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

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, AMST 360, AMST 421 and AMST 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 372 Comedy in the United States (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirements, one or more Exploration courses, and upper-division standing.

ENGL 375 U.S. 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. America and the World
6. Student Designed Area of Concentration

Minor in American Studies

Minimum of 18 units.

Take both of the following courses:

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

AMST 350 California Culture (3)
Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement requirement; upper-division standing.

Take one additional AMST-designated course.

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.

310. Foodways in Contemporary America (3)

Prerequisites: Completion of GE Foundation Courses

Examines the production and consumption of food in the U.S. after 1945, comparatively exploring issues of race, class, gender, and inter-ethnic relations. Themes include food as "Americanization," "authentic" cuisine, politics of sustainability, and social justice in the food industry.

Letter grade only (A-F).

350. California Culture (3)

Prerequisites: GE Foundation requirement requirement; upper-division standing.

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.

421. 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).