American Studies (AMR)
Interdisciplinary Major and Minor in American Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

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Minors or second majors of particular interest to students majoring in American Studies: Art (ARH/ARS), Biology (BIO), English (EGL), History (HIS), Linguistics (LIN), Media Arts (MDA), Political Science (POL), Psychology (PSY), Sociology (SOC), South Asian Studies (SOA), Spanish (SPN)

Department Information - American Studies

With the increase in migration and economic globalization and their impact on the culture of the United States and the Americas as a whole, scholars in many disciplines are examining, from interdisciplinary perspectives, the impact of the making of the Americas on world culture. The program in American Studies redefines traditional disciplinary approaches, integrating and connecting new approaches to American studies that include a multicultural as well as a transnational understanding of the Americas. New methods of cultural analysis are introduced that challenge the power of comparative transnational histories to diversify political narratives of citizenship, homeland, and popular sovereignty. They also challenge how we understand others.

The interdisciplinary major in American Studies introduces students to the rich variety of cultures, languages, and societies of the Americas. Students develop an in-depth knowledge of American culture beginning with core courses introducing interdisciplinary methods, through elective courses in a particular concentration, and synthesized by a capstone seminar.

Graduates with a major in American Studies can expect to work in education, business, journalism, government, and politics. Combined with a science major, the major provides a good background for the health professions. Majors will also be prepared to move on to graduate study in business, education, the humanities, law, and social sciences.

Requirements for the Major and Minor in American Studies

Requirements for the Major in American Studies (AMR)

The major in American Studies leads to the Bachelor of Arts degree. Except where noted, all courses offered for the major must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher. Eighteen credits for the major must be earned in courses numbered 300 or higher.

Completion of the major requires 39 credits.

A. Core Courses

1. AMR 101 Local and Global: National Boundaries and World-Systems
2. AMR 102 Making American Identities
3. AMR 301 Ethnicity and Race in American History
4. AMR 401 Senior Seminar in American Studies

B. Study of Another Language

Six credits (or the equivalent of two semesters) of an intermediate-level language other than English appropriate to the student's intended concentration, to be chosen in consultation with the undergraduate director. All coursework taken to satisfy this requirement must be passed with a letter grade of C- or higher.

C. Concentration Requirement

Students must take five courses from one of the following groups, and two additional courses from any other of the groups. At least 12 credits must be at the 300 or 400 level.

Arts in Societies

- AFH 206 Great Books of the Black Experience
- AFH 385/HUF 385 French Caribbean Literature
- AFH 386/HUF 386 Caribbean and American Connection in Literature
- AFH 249/EGL 249 African American Literature and Music in the 19th and 20th Centuries
- AFH 329, AFH 300 Pan-African Literature I, II
- AFH 339/ARH 329 Arts of the African Diaspora
- AFS 463, AFS 464 The Media and Black America I, II
• CLT 235 American Pluralism in Film and Literature
• CLT 320 Multicultural Experience in American Literature
• EGL 217, EGL 218 American Literature I, II
• EGL 226 Contemporary American Literature: 1945 to the Present
• EGL 320 Literature of the 20th Century
• EGL 367 Contemporary African American Literature
• EGL 369 Topics in Ethnic Studies in Literature
• EGL 378 Contemporary Native American Fiction
• EGL 379 Native American Texts and Contexts
• HIS 361 American History/American Film
• HUI 333/EGL 333 The Italian American Experience in Literature
• HUI 338 Images of Italian Americans in Film
• HUS 271 United States Latino Literature and Culture
• HUS 390 Latin American Cinema
• MUS 320 U.S. Popular Music
• MUS 304 Contemporary Traditions in American Music: 1900 to the Present
• MUS 308 History of Jazz
• MUS 310 Music and Culture of the 1960s

American Peoples

• AFS 239 Introduction to the Caribbean Experience
• AFS 240 Issues in Caribbean Society
• AFS 395/ANT 395 Religions of the Caribbean
• ANT 201 Peoples of South America
• ANT 353 Archaeological Analysis and Interpretation
• ANT 362 Long Island Archaeology
• ANT 385 Prehistoric Peoples of the Americas
• HIS 389 Modern Mexico
• HIS 421, HIS 422 Colloquia in Latin American History
• HUS 254 Latin America Today
• HUS 261 Latin American Literature
• LAC 200 Introduction to Latin American and Caribbean Studies
• LIN 200 Language in the United States
• LIN 307 Sociolinguistics
• POL 214 Modern Latin America
• POL 382 Politics and Political Change in Latin America
• SOC 364 Sociology of Latin America
• SPN 392 The Culture and Civilization of Spanish America
• SPN 395, SPN 396 Introduction to Spanish American Literature I, II
• SPN 405 Issues in Hispanic Cultural Studies
• SPN 415 Hispanic Cultures in Contact
• SPN 420 Topics in Spanish and Latin American Cinema
• SPN 435 Topics in Latin American Literature from the Colonial Period to the Present

History and Politics

• AFS 325/HIS 325 The Civil Rights Movement
• AFS 372 African-American Political Thought
• AFS 375 Slavery
• HIS 103 American History to 1877
• HIS 104 United States Since 1877
• HIS 213 Colonial Latin America
• HIS 214/POL 214 Modern Latin America
• HIS 216/POL 216 History of U.S.-Latin American Relations
• HIS 250 The Second World War, 1939-1945
• HIS 262 American Colonial Society
• HIS 326 History of Popular Culture
• HIS 362 Making Peace with the Sixties
• HIS 365 Environmental History of North America
• HIS 369 American Social History to 1860
• HIS 370 U.S. Social History, 1860-1930
• HIS 396 Topics in U.S. History
• HIS 411 to HIS 414 Colloquia in American History
• POL 102 Introduction to American Government
• POL 320 Constitutional Law and Politics: United States
• POL 324 American Politics Parties and Pressure Groups
• POL 325 Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
• POL 326 Politics of New York State
• POL 327 Urban Politics
• POL 328 Criminal Law
• POL 344 American Political Ideology and Public Opinion
• POL 367 Mass Media in American Politics

Ethnicity, Race, Gender, and Philosophy

• AFH 379/PHI 379 Philosophy of Race
• AFS 350/WST 350 Black Women and Social Change: A Cross-Cultural Perspective
• AFS 101, AFS 102 Themes in the Black Experience I, II
• AFS 277/HIS 277 The Modern Color Line
• AFS 300 Blacks in the City
• AFS 310 American Attitudes Toward Race
• AFS 319 The Politics of Race
• AFS 360 African American Social Commentary
• AFS 370 The African American Family
• ANT 356 Urban Anthropology
• AFS 380/ANT 380 Race and Ethnicity in Latin America and the Caribbean
• HIS 333/WST 333 Women in U.S. History
• HIS 374/WST 374 Historical Perspectives on Gender Orientation
• HIS 387/WST 387 Women, Development, and Revolution in Latin America
• HIS 397 Topics in History of U.S. Immigration and Ethnicity
• HUI 237/WST 237 Images of Italian American Women
• HUI 236 The Italian American Scene
• HUI 336 Italian Americans and Ethnic Relations
• JDS 226/HIS 226 The Shaping of Modern Judaism
• PHI 310 American Philosophy
• PHI 378 Philosophical Topics in Asian-American History
• PHI 383/WST 383 Philosophical Issues of Race and Gender
• POL 330/WST 330 Gender Issues in the Law
• POL 347/WST 347 Women and Politics
• SOC 247/WST 247 Sociology of Gender
• SOC 302 American Society
• SOC 310 Ethnic and Race Relations

D. Upper-Division Writing Requirement

All students are required to write a term paper for AMR 301, which is evaluated by the instructor for its evidence of upper-division writing ability. Students whose writing is judged satisfactory will have fulfilled the upper-division writing requirement. AMR 301 also satisfies the Stony Brook Curriculum learning objective WRTD. Students who do not fulfill the requirement in AMR 301 must submit to the major advisor, no later than the first semester of the senior year, a portfolio of papers written for subsequent upper-division courses taken for the major and must achieve an evaluation of satisfactory on the portfolio. Students who do not fulfill the WRTD requirement in AMR 301 should consult with the department advisor to ensure that their plan for completing the Upper Division Writing Requirement is consistent with university graduation requirements for General Education. Students completing the Stony Brook Curriculum (SBC) must complete a course that satisfies the “Write Effectively within One's Discipline” (WRTD) learning objective to graduate. The Upper Division Writing Requirement is consistent in most cases with the SBC learning outcomes for WRTD.

Notes:

1. Only three credits of AMR 447 Directed Readings, AMR 487 Independent Research, or AMR 488 Internship may be used to satisfy major requirements.
2. Students should consider the prerequisites to upper-division courses for the major when choosing elective and D.E.C. courses.
3. Other relevant courses, including special topics courses offered by other departments, may be substituted for major requirements with permission of the undergraduate director.

The Minor in American Studies

Interdisciplinary in nature, the minor in American Studies is designed especially for students who wish to add a variety of American perspectives and an overview of American culture to the development of their majors. Students are encouraged to approach American Studies from the perspective of their major. Beyond the four required courses, the minor is organized around the student’s interest in a particular area of American
Studies. At least 12 of the 21 credits required for the minor must be taken at Stony Brook. The specific distribution of credits should be determined in consultation with the undergraduate director.

Requirements for the Minor in American Studies (AMR)

All courses offered for the minor must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher. Students should consider the prerequisites to upper-division courses for the minor when choosing elective and D.E.C. courses.

Completion of the minor in American Studies requires 21 credits.

1. AMR 101 Local and Global: National Boundaries and World-Systems
2. AMR 102 Making American Identities
3. AMR 301 Ethnicity and Race in American History
4. AMR 401 Senior Seminar in American Studies
5. Three additional courses selected from the approved list of courses (available from the undergraduate director) at the 300 or 400 level, chosen in consultation with the program advisor.

Declaration of the Minor

Students must declare the American Studies minor no later than the middle of their junior year, at which time they must consult with the program advisor and plan their course of study for fulfillment of the requirements.

Sample Course Sequence for the Major in American Studies

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*If not taken in Fall senior year*
AMR 101: Local and Global: National Boundaries and World-Systems
Introduction to the contemporary capitalist world-system as a complex network of unequal power relationships and its inextricable role in our daily lives. Consideration of the ways the Americas have been incorporated into the world-system through colonialism and early capitalist ventures, with emphasis on the 20th century in terms of transnationalism, globalization, and the mobility of capital and labor, especially as this creates racial formations.

Prerequisite: U3 or U4 standing
Advisory Prerequisite: To be announced with the topic
DEC: G
SBC: HFA+
3 credits

AMR 102: Making American Identities
A chronological representation of some of the ways that the peoples living in the current U.S. have identified themselves collectively as Americans and individually as belonging to distinct groups marked by racial, ethnic, gender, and class differences. Readings include texts of various kinds: historical, fictional, and theoretical. A computer (virtual) classroom is part of the coursework.

Prerequisite: U3 or U4 standing
Advisory Prerequisite: To be announced with the topic
DEC: F
SBC: SBS+
3 credits

AMR 301: Ethnicity and Race in American History
Overview of the role and place of ethnicity and race in the history of North America through investigation of the ways that ethnic belonging and identity have evolved through the 19th and 20th centuries. Readings and discussion consider how ethnicity is forged through engagement with other “outside” as well as “inside” groups toward an understanding of how and why notions of “ethnicity” and “race” have changed over time. Groups that may be considered include African, Arab, Asian, German, Hispanic, Irish, Italian, Jewish, Native, and South Asian Americans.

Prerequisites: U3 or U4 standing; AMR 101 or 102
DEC: K
SBC: ESI, SBS+, WRTD
3 credits

AMR 390: Humanities Topics in American Studies
Selected topics in American studies in the humanities. Topics may include philosophy and drama in the United States, North and South American films, literary trends in the Americas. Semester supplements to this Bulletin contain specific description when course is offered. May be repeated as the topic changes.

Prerequisite: U3 or U4 standing
Advisory Prerequisite: To be announced with the topic
DEC: G
SBC: SBS+
3 credits

AMR 392: Social and Behavioral Sciences Topics in American Studies
Selected topics in American studies in the social and behavioral sciences. Topics may include political history of the United States and Latin America, North and South American economies. Semester supplements to this Bulletin contain specific description when course is offered. May be repeated as the topic changes.

Prerequisite: U3 or U4 standing
Advisory Prerequisite: To be announced with the topic
DEC: F
SBC: SBS+
3 credits

AMR 395: Topics in American Studies
Selected topics in non-Western cultures, societies, traditions, literatures, etc. Topics may include contemporary Indian societies in Central and South America, sociology of Latin and South America. Semester supplements to this Bulletin contain specific description when course is offered. May be repeated as the topic changes.

Prerequisite: U3 or U4 standing
Advisory Prerequisite: To be announced with the topic
DEC: J
SBC: SBS+
3 credits

AMR 397: Topics in American Studies
Topics in U.S. literature, culture, history, etc., placed within a broad historical context, including social, political, economic, and cultural history and institutions. Topics may include, for instance, women and men in the contemporary United States and contemporary U.S. culture. Semester supplements to this Bulletin contain specific description when course is offered. May be repeated as the topic changes.

Prerequisite: U3 or U4 standing
Advisory Prerequisite: To be announced with the topic
DEC: K
SBC: SBS+
3 credits

AMR 401: Senior Seminar in American Studies
Students synthesize the theories, methods, and knowledge gained in previous coursework through in-depth study of a particular issue or question. Discussion is structured around topics that engage the central themes of the histories, cultures, and societies of the Americas from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Prerequisites: U4 standing; AMR major or minor
Advisory Prerequisite: AMR 301
3 credits

AMR 447: Directed Readings in American Studies
Independently supervised readings in selected topics in American Studies. May be repeated.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor and department
1-6 credits

AMR 458: Speak Effectively Before an Audience
A zero credit course that may be taken in conjunction with any AMR course that provides opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes of the Stony Brook Curriculum’s SPK learning objective.

Pre- or corequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent; permission of the instructor
SBC: SPK
S/U grading

AMR 475: Undergraduate Teaching Practicum I
Work with a faculty member as an assistant in one of the faculty member's regularly scheduled classes. The student is required to attend all the classes, do all the regularly assigned work and meet with the faculty member at regularly scheduled times to discuss the intellectual and pedagogical matters relating to the course.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor and department
SBC: EXP+
3 credits, S/U grading

AMR 476: Undergraduate Teaching Practicum II

Work with a faculty member as an assistant in one of the faculty member's regularly scheduled classes. The student is required to attend all the classes, do all the regularly assigned work and meet with the faculty member at regularly scheduled times to discuss the intellectual and pedagogical matters relating to the course. Students assume greater responsibility in such areas as leading discussions and analyzing results of tests that have already been graded. Students may not serve as teaching assistants in the same course twice.

**Prerequisites:** AMR 475; permission of instructor and department

**SBC:**  EXP+

3 credits, S/U grading

**AMR 487: Independent Research**

Intensive readings and research on a special topic undertaken with close faculty supervision. May be repeated.

**Prerequisites:** Permission of instructor and department

0-6 credits

**AMR 488: Internship**

Intensive readings and research on a special topic undertaken with close faculty supervision. May be repeated.

**Prerequisites:** Permission of instructor and department

**SBC:**  EXP+

0-6 credits, S/U grading

**AMR 495: Senior Honors Project in American Studies**

A one-semester project for seniors. Arranged in consultation with the department, the project involves writing a paper under the close supervision of an appropriate instructor, on a suitable topic. Students who are candidates for honors take this course.

**Prerequisite:** Permission of department

3 credits