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, dynamic, 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 including careful attention to issues related to such matters as race, ethnicity, class, and gender. The level II course combines different disciplines to study a single topic or time period determined by the instructor. The level III seminar focuses on a topic and then requires students to participate in a substantial interdisciplinary research project of their own design. Students augment these American studies courses with disciplinary courses (see list on department website) that engage American issues and topics. 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMST 100</td>
<td>American Culture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One level II American Studies topics course 1.00

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. Offered annually in the fall semester. Counts toward women's and gender studies major and concentration and media studies concentration.

**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

Also, see American Studies web-page for dynamic list.

- AFAM 231
- AMCON 101
- AMCON 102
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 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 The Media Landscape
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, 2018-2019**

**L. DeAné Lagerquist**
Professor of Religion
church history; American religion; Christianity in India; Lutheranism

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

**Louis K. Epstein**
Assistant Professor of Music
musicology

**Eric J. Fure-Slocum**
Associate Professor of History
20th-century U.S. history; labor and urban history

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

**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 multicultural studies; social justice; visual ecocriticism

**Mary E. Titus**
Professor of English
late 19th-early 20th-century American literature; literature of the American south; gender theory; material culture

**Colin Wells**
Professor of English, Associate Dean of Humanities
early American literature; 18th-century literature