

AMERICAN STUDIES

amstp.northwestern.edu

The American Studies Program is interdisciplinary, comparative, and internationally oriented. The competitive-admissions major examines the development and expressions of national culture alongside those of borderland and diasporic American cultures and amongst global cultures. It draws on a broad range of faculty from the humanities and social sciences so that students can examine components of US culture and the diverse experiences of Americans and others affected by Americans locally, nationally, and globally. Students are allowed a wide-ranging yet disciplined exploration that crosses the boundaries of traditional academic fields. All students write a thesis explicitly dealing with the United States in a comparative or global dimension.

Because this selective honors program has more applicants than available space, admission depends in part on academic distinction and on demonstrated interest in comparative American cultures. First- and second-year students apply for admission to the major early in spring quarter.

Study abroad and upper-level language proficiency are strongly encouraged.

Program of Study

- American Studies Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/american-studies/american-studies-major/>)

American Studies Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the American Studies major, students should be able to:

- Assess the importance of interdisciplinary learning by engaging with a variety of disciplinary perspectives on the study of America within their major required and related courses
- Apply critical skills of analysis to a variety of primary historical sources, cultural expressions, and/or literature across the humanities and social sciences
- Comprehend the past and present of the United States from a variety of ideological perspectives
- Integrate an understanding of the national traditions and ideals of the United States with different local, regional, transnational, and/or global traditions
- Exercise advanced writing skills that demonstrate clear articulation of ideas and effective expression of understanding

American Studies Courses

AMER_ST 301-1 Seminar for Majors (1 Unit) Set of required courses structured to share a broad comparativist or internationally oriented theme, integrating methods and materials from different disciplines. Change of instructor each quarter; change of theme every year. Limited to 20 students.

AMER_ST 301-2 Seminar for Majors (1 Unit) Set of required courses structured to share a broad comparativist or internationally oriented theme, integrating methods and materials from different disciplines. Change of instructor each quarter; change of theme every year. Limited to 20 students.

AMER_ST 301-3 Seminar for Majors (1 Unit) Set of required courses structured to share a broad comparativist or internationally oriented theme, integrating methods and materials from different disciplines. Change of instructor each quarter; change of theme every year. Limited to 20 students.

AMER_ST 310-0 Studies in American Culture (1 Unit) Readings and discussions of topics in American cultural life—for example, law in 20th century America or television news in contemporary US culture. Limited enrollment with emphasis on student participation. Prerequisites vary. May be repeated for credit with consent of program director.

AMER_ST 390-1 Senior Project (1 Unit) Thesis or field study. Required of majors. *Advanced Expression*

AMER_ST 390-2 Senior Project (1 Unit) Thesis or field study. Required of majors. *Advanced Expression*

AMER_ST 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit) This course is for American Studies majors doing independent research or reading with a faculty member. Must be approved by American Studies Director.