

AMERICAN STUDIES, B.A.

Program Description

American Studies (AMST) is an interdisciplinary program that examines American society and culture, both past and present. Through a study of American history, literature, philosophy, religion, media, social science, and fine arts, students critically analyze the richness of the American experience.

American Studies is linked with PreK-4 Elementary Education as a required double major in order to comply with requirements in individual states requiring content area specialization for teaching certification.

American Studies majors also learn to deconstruct various American narratives that are embedded in formal and popular culture and that reveal a deeper understanding of race, ethnicity, class, and gender, and of America's place in the world. In this sense, students become "cultural critics" who, in seeing connections across academic disciplines, are able to apply an interdisciplinary perspective in assessing the dominant assumptions about power and identity in everyday life.

American Studies majors also have an opportunity to do an internship, a field-based experience that helps them link theory to practice through the application of AMST courses and research strategies to real-life problems. Typical internships sites include the Betsy Ross House, Franklin Institute, Cliveden Historical House, Germantown Historical Society, National Park Service, and the Philadelphia criminal justice system.

American Studies Program Link (<http://www.lasalle.edu/american-studies/>)

Why Take This Major?

The Bachelor of Arts in American Studies prepares students for numerous careers that require broad-based understanding of American culture, critical thinking and writing, and interdisciplinary perspectives and applications. Such careers include law, journalism, business, public service, social work, education, museum studies, and graduate school.

Degree Earned

B.A.

Required for Graduation

- Courses
 - Major: 13
 - Total: 38
- Credits
 - Major: 39
 - Total: 120
- GPA
 - Major: 2.0
 - Cumulative: 2.0

Student Learning Outcomes

- Apply an interdisciplinary perspective in analyzing the role of race, ethnicity, gender, and class in American society;
- Deconstruct various American narratives that are embedded in formal and popular culture;

- Conduct independent research, gather evidence, evaluate such evidence, and offer conclusions in written arguments that are grammatically, mechanically, and rhetorically correct;
- Identify, deconstruct, and analyze the American narrative through a variety of primary and secondary sources;
- Develop and present digital productions that break down and/or interpret the various points of view contained in the readings, class discussion, location visits, and interdisciplinary connections;
- Develop a refined level of critical reading, thinking, writing, and speaking skills that promote ethical understanding and the ability to view issues from multiple perspectives including global perspectives, preparing for a range of careers and profession - from law, journalism, and education, to public service, business, and graduate school;
- Deconstruct various American narratives that are embedded in formal and popular culture as embodied in the oral and written presentation of the capstone course and paper;
- Analyze the role of the city in modern life, construct informed interpretations and conclusions as well as integrate them into written, digital, and oral observations about the city and its citizens, especially as they relate to the course themes.

Progress Chart

Level One - Core Courses

12 courses and 2 modules required.

Major Requirements

Major requirements include 4 Level Two ILO requirements, *fulfilled through the major*.

Students in this major must complete **38** courses in total in order to graduate. **13** courses will be from this major program.

Code	Title	Credits
Level One - Core Courses		
<i>Universal Required Courses</i>		
Students must complete the following 4 courses.		
ILO 8.1: Written Communication (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)		
ENG 110	College Writing I: Persuasion	3
ILO 5.1: Information Literacy (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)		
ENG 210	College Writing II: Research	3
ILO 1.1: Understanding Diverse Perspectives (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)		
FYS 130	First-Year Academic Seminar ¹	3
ILO 2.1: Reflective Thinking and Valuing (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)		
REL 100	Religion Matters	3
<i>Elective Core Courses</i>		
Students must complete 1 course in each of the following 4 ILOs.		
ILO 3.1a: Scientific Reasoning (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)		
	Choose course within ILO (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	4
ILO 3.1b: Quantitative Reasoning (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)		

Choose course within ILO (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	3
ILO 6.1: Technological Competency (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
Choose course within ILO (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	3
ILO 8.1a/12.1: Oral Communication/Collaborative Engagement (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
Choose course within ILO (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	3
<i>Distinct Discipline Core Courses</i>	
Students must complete 1 course in each of the following 4 ILOs. Each course must be from a different discipline. (A "discipline" is represented by the 3- or 4-letter prefix attached to each course.)	
ILO 4.1: Critical Analysis and Reasoning (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
AMST 100 American Dreams: Amer Themes	3
ILO 9.1: Creative and Artistic Expression (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
Choose course within ILO (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	3
ILO 10.1: Ethical Understanding and Reasoning (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
Choose course within ILO (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	3
ILO 11.1: Cultural and Global Awareness and Sensitivity (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
Choose course within ILO (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	3
<i>Universal Required Modules</i>	
Students must complete the following 2 non-credit modules. ²	
ILO 7.1a (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
Health Literacy Module	
ILO 7.1b (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
Financial Literacy Module	
Major Requirements	
<i>Level Two</i>	
Students must complete 1 course/learning experience in each of the 4 commitments.	
ILO 2.2: Broader Identity (Capstone Course/Experience) (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
AMST 400 Capstone Seminar in American Studies (ILO 2.2)	3
Select one ILO from 3.2a, 3.2b, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 7.2a, or 7.2b: Expanded Literacies (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
AMST 200 Themes in American Culture (ILO 6.2)	3
ILO 8.2b: Effective Expression (Writing-Intensive Course) (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
AMST 300 Themes in American Culture (ILO 8.2b)	3
Select one ILO from 10.2, 11.2, or 12.2: Active Responsibility (https://catalog.lasalle.edu/undergraduate/ilo/)	
AMST 360 Internship (ILO 12.2)	3
<i>All Other Required Courses</i>	
AMST 100 American Dreams: Amer Themes	3
AMST 210 Keys to the Keystone State - A Digital Humanities Approach	3

AMST 273 Special Topics ³	3
AMST 300 Themes in American Culture	3
AMST 360 Internship ³	3
AMST 400 Capstone Seminar in American Studies	3
One American History course	3
One American Literature course	3
One American Art course	3
One American Social Science course	3
One American Philosophy course	3
One American Religion	3
One American Media or Film course	3
Three courses in an area of emphasis ⁴	9
<i>Free Electives</i>	
In addition to the requirements listed above, students must take enough courses to the fulfill graduation credit requirements for their School and major.	
Total Credits	97

1

NOTE. The following students use Level 2 Capstone Experience in Major instead of FYS 130 First-Year Academic Seminar: Honors, BUSCA, Core-to-Core, Transfer, and Non-Traditional/Evening.

2

The Modules are **not** required for Transfer Students, Core-to-Core Students, or BUSCA Students. BUSCA students are required to take modules if/when they pursue a bachelor's degree.

3

May Substitute for a Required Course.

4

American Studies majors select three courses in one academic discipline dealing with the American experience (e.g. American literature, American history, American philosophy, American Art, American Religion) or three courses based in one American theme or topic (e.g. Gender in America, Religion and Politics, The American Family, Media and American Culture, Evolution of American Education).

Recommended Course Sequence

AMST Majors and Double Majors should take the integrating American Studies courses in the following sequence:

Code	Title	Credits
AMST 100	American Dreams: Amer Themes	3
AMST 300	Themes in American Culture	3
AMST 400	Capstone Seminar in American Studies	3
Total Credits		9

Students may take AMST 360 Internship after having at least completed AMST 100 American Dreams: Amer Themes and AMST 300 Themes in American Culture.

Students may take AMST 373 at any time, without a prerequisite.

Dual Major Requirements

Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in American Studies as a Dual Major: 10 courses

Three Integrating Courses:

- AMST 100 American Dreams: Amer Themes
- AMST 300 Themes in American Culture
- AMST 400 Capstone Seminar in American Studies

Three courses in American topics core American Studies areas:

- One American history course
- One American literature course
- One American art course

Three controlled electives:

- One Foundations of American education course (EDC 325 Teaching English Language Learners/EDC 326 Foundations of Early Childhood Education)
- One American Religion course
- One American Philosophy course

Free elective:

- One free elective dealing with the American experience or American Education (EDC 104 Educational Diversity in America)

Minors

- American Studies, Minor (<https://catalog.lasalle.edu/archives/2023-2024/undergraduate/arts-sciences/history/american-studies-ba/american-studies-minor/>)

Course Descriptions**American Studies****AMST 100 American Dreams: Amer Themes**

This course introduces students to interdisciplinary modes of analyzing American culture. Core readings across disciplines will be supplemented by instruction and practice in various research strategies, including oral history, use of AMST-related data bases, and critical deconstruction of primary sources, that focus on the intersection of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Readings, films, field trips, and activities will also emphasize the use of myths, symbols, and images in analyzing the American experience. Open to non-majors; no prerequisites.

AMST 200 Themes in American Culture

This course focuses on one American theme or topic (e.g., "The Family in American Culture," "The City in American Life") and examines it from the perspectives of multiple academic disciplines. The course builds on and refines the analytic skills presented in AMST 100 and it provides opportunities for students to draw on, integrate, and synthesize content from AMST core discipline courses, as well as from AMST controlled electives. Prerequisite: AMST 100. (May be repeated for credit as topic varies)

AMST 210 Keys to the Keystone State - A Digital Humanities Approach
This course investigates Pennsylvania's rich political, cultural, and social history. Beginning with William Penn and his 'Frame For Pennsylvania Government', we will identify individuals, places, and events essential in the rich history of the Keystone State. Our focus will be interdisciplinary, including the impact of the arts, entertainment, sports and leisure that have contributed to the shaping of Pennsylvania's character. Students will learn to utilize the concepts, tools, and techniques that reflect the best research and analytical practices in the digital humanities, as well as having the opportunity to put them to work in both individual and group investigations. In addition, they will gather and compile new data in response to an original American Studies research question, inspired by Penn's vision for the Commonwealth.

AMST 273 Special Topics**AMST 274 Special Topics****AMST 300 Themes in American Culture**

This course focuses on one American theme or topic (e.g., "The Family in American Culture," "The City in American Life") and examines it from the perspectives of multiple academic disciplines. The course builds on and refines the analytic skills presented in AMST 100, and it provides opportunities for students to draw on, integrate, and synthesize content from AMST core discipline courses, as well as from AMST controlled electives. Topic for the 2022-2023 year is based on Twentieth Century American popular music. (May be repeated for credit as topic varies.). Prerequisite(s): AMST 100

AMST 360 Internship

Working under a professional supervisor, students expand their understanding of American culture and society through hands-on participation at a professional site under the supervision of site personnel. The internship requires meetings with the faculty supervisor, reflection journals, a major paper, and an evaluation by the site supervisor and internship director. Restriction(s): AMST Majors, AMST Double Majors, and AMST Minors Prerequisite(s): AMST 100: Introduction to American Studies; AMST 300 Themes and Topics in American Studies

AMST 400 Capstone Seminar in American Studies

This seminar, limited to 18 students, requires core readings on a selected theme as well as refinement of research skills relevant to the completion of a major research paper. Sample course topics have included: The American City, Food and Drink in America, Medicine in America, Bob Dylan and the Sixties, The Fifties in American Culture, The American Family, Immigration and Immigrants, and The City in Film. Restriction(s): AMST Majors, AMST Double Majors, and AMST Minors Prerequisite(s): AMST 100: Introduction to American Studies; AMST 300 Themes and Topics in American Studies

AMST 444 Research in AMST I

This course provides the student with an opportunity to do research with a faculty member. The student and the faculty member agree on the research project before the student registers for the course.

AMST 445 Research in AMST II

This course is a continuation of the 444 research course. It provides the student with an opportunity to continue to conduct research with a faculty member.

Program Contact Information

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