

AMST - AMERICAN STUDIES

AMST101 Introduction American Studies (3 Credits)

Introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of American Studies by examining concepts such as culture, identity, cultural practices, and globalization, as well as theories underlying these concepts. Engages key themes, especially constructions of difference and identity, cultures of everyday life, and America and the world.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST101 or AMST201.

Formerly: AMST201.

AMST189C Martin Luther King Jr. (3 Credits)

Examines the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr. We immediately rethink the image of King who liberals and conservatives construct as a dreamer of better race relations. We engage the complexities of an individual, who articulated a moral compass of the nation, to explore racial justice in post-World War II America. This course gives special attention to King's post-1965 radicalism when he called for a reordering of American society, an end to the war in Vietnam, and supported sanitation workers striking for better wages and working conditions. Topics include King's notion of the "beloved community", the Social Gospel, liberalism, "socially conscious democracy", militancy, the politics of martyrdom, poverty and racial justice, and compensatory treatment. Primary sources form the core of our readings.

Cross-listed with: HIST108C, AASP298M.

Credit Only Granted for: HIST108C, AASP298M, or AMST189C.

AMST202 Cultures of Everyday Life in America (3 Credits)

Examine the structures and patterns of everyday life in the U.S., utilizing methods such as ethnography, oral history, survey research, and textual, visual, and material cultural analysis.

AMST203 Popular Culture in America (3 Credits)

An introduction to American popular culture, its historical development, and its role as a reflection of and influence on our culture and society.

AMST204 Film and American Culture Studies (3 Credits)

Exploration of the American film from a historical perspective, illustrating the motion picture's role as an institutional phenomenon, as a form of communication, and as a source of cross-cultural study.

AMST205 Material Aspects of American Life (3 Credits)

Historical survey of American material culture. Ways of describing and interpreting accumulated material evidence (e.g., buildings, town plans) introduced by stressing relationship between artifact and culture.

AMST210 Introduction to Ethnography (3 Credits)

A qualitative research method course used to study social worlds communities, cultures, institutions, and other social groups from the perspectives of the people who inhabit those social worlds. Ethnographic research involves understanding cultural traditions from an insider's perspective by studying the everyday lives of people steeped in those traditions.

AMST212 Diversity in American Culture (3 Credits)

Exploration of the role of diversity in the shaping of American culture. Special emphasis will be placed on the multicultural origins of American popular and material culture, such as foodways and entertainment, and on the experience of "Americanization."

AMST213 Heroes and Villains in American Film (3 Credits)

We will examine the complex, changing, and ever-present representations of heroes and villains in American film. Beginning with a foundational understanding of how heroes and, conversely, villains have been defined through classic Hollywood film, we will explore how these definitions have shifted throughout the 20th and 21st century in various narrative genres, including westerns, war films, film noir, fantasy, science fiction, and, of course, superhero movies. In particular, we will be focusing on how the hero and villain maintain or disrupt specific cultural ideologies concerning race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and ability. This course will examine how these various ideologies have evolved throughout the 20th and 21st century, impacting the ways in which heroes and villains are both represented in American film and perceived by diverse audiences. Finally, we will examine our own complicated and sometimes troubling identification with these heroes, even when they might stand in stark contrast to our cultural values and identities.

Cross-listed with: CINE282.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST213, HONR219F, CINE282 or FILM298V.

Formerly: HONR219F, FILM298V.

AMST250 Empire and Settler Colonialism (3 Credits)

Engages with the connections between settler colonialism and empire/imperialism and what their effects are on race, land, dispossession, and migration. The course will begin by grounding students in course key concepts including Settler Colonialism, Empire, Imperialism, Sovereignty, and Legality, situating these concepts in relation to space, place, and geography. The second half of the course will use these theoretical lenses to analyze the social conditions faced by BIPOC peoples. These topics will cover criminalization and police violence, Indigenous and women of color feminist and two spirit/queer experience, environmental racism, and state-based forms of racial documentation. The course will end with a discussion of decolonization and what it means in relation to settler colonialism and empire.

AMST260 American Culture in the Information Age (3 Credits)

Examines the ways in which content and form of public information interact with the culture, families & individuals.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST260 or AMST298I.

Formerly: AMST298I.

AMST262 Houses, Schools, and Prisons in American Life (3 Credits)

This interdisciplinary course explores the role of property, discipline, and punishment in American life. By exploring the ideological underpinnings in property, discipline, and punishment and their manifestations in houses, schools, and prisons we will explore how these entities reflect American society and its values.

AMST269 Special Topics in Study Abroad II (1-6 Credits)

Special topics course taken as part of an approved study abroad program.

Repeatable to: 15 credits if content differs.

AMST290 Shifting Sands: Constructing Cultural Mainstreams and Margins in the U.S. (3 Credits)

Examines the construction, operation, and meaning of cultural mainstreams and margins in a range of contexts, spaces, and times in the U.S. Using a variety of primary sources, research methods, and interdisciplinary scholarship, we will explore how Americans make and assign meaning to cultural mainstreams and margins. We will examine how and why cultural margins and mainstreams shift over time and what their consequences have been for social policies, laws, power relations, and national identity.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST289A or AMST290.

Formerly: AMST289A.

AMST298 Selected Topics in American Studies (3 Credits)

Cultural study of a specific theme or issue involving artifacts and documents from both past and contemporary American experience.

Repeatable to: 6 credits if content differs.

AMST298Q U.S. Latinx Literature and Culture (3 Credits)

Examines the poetry, prose, and theater of Latinx communities in the United States from their origins in the Spanish colonization of North America to their ongoing development in the 21st century. Considers how authors use literary form to gain insight into human experience, including mortality, religious belief, gender and sexuality, war and peace, family, language use, scientific inquiry, cultural tradition, ecology, and labor. Also studies how Latinx literary traditions have shaped and been shaped by broader currents in American literature, as well as what connections exist between Latinx literature and social and artistic developments in other parts of the world, particularly Latin America and the Caribbean. Authors may include Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca, Eulalia Perez, Juan Nepomuceno Seguin, Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton, Jose Marti, Arthur A. Schomburg, Jesus Colon, Julia de Burgos, Cesar Chavez, Ariel Dorfman, Gloria Anzaldua, Junot Diaz, and Cristina Garcia.

Cross-listed with: ENGL235.

Credit Only Granted for: ENGL235 or AMST298Q.

AMST310 Introduction to Comparative Ethnic and Racial Studies (3 Credits)

Introduces students to the study of race and ethnicity in the United States. The class is organized according to the following five units: (1) Introduction; (2) Key concepts; (3) Mechanisms of racial formation; (4) Prevailing myths about race; and (5) Contemporary issues related to race and ethnicity. Through readings, film clips, and presentations, we will explore how the concept of race has developed and endured over time and become familiar with key concepts, such as "race" and "intersectionality". We will attempt to better understand how race is associated with other forms of difference, such as class, gender and ethnicity. We will identify and confront the prevailing myths about race and ethnicity in the United States. Finally, we examine the ways in which contemporary issues reveal the dynamics of race and ethnicity.

Cross-listed with: AAST310.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST310, AAST398F, AAST310, or AMST328L.

Formerly: AMST328L and AAST398F.

AMST312 Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies (3 Credits)

Key concepts and theories in Native American Studies beginning with an overview of the field and some of its foundational readings and history, then will move into an understanding of Native American identity and representation and a discussion of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. The course will outline past and present genocidal practices that seek to eliminate Native people and Indigenous responses to those structures such as the concept of survivance, Native feminisms, and theories of Indigenous resurgence. The course seeks to move students through an understanding of past and present structures affecting Native American people in the United States and Canada and move into readings that highlight Native articulations of present and future agency. While the focus of the course is Native peoples with the United States and Canada, understanding Indigenous histories and concepts always includes a hemispheric and transnational analysis.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST328N, ANTH468F, RELS319N, or AMST312.

Formerly: AMST328N, ANTH468F, or RELS319N.

AMST315 Religion in American Culture (3 Credits)

Introduces students to the world's major religious traditions and examines how American culture informs, and is informed by, the variety of religious beliefs and practices in the U.S. This course is primarily concerned with religion as a system of meaning. The focus of the course is not on the history of religion or on analysis of religious texts, but rather on the meaning of a religion to its believers.

Recommended: AMST101.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST315 or AMST328R.

Formerly: AMST328R.

AMST320 (Dis)ability in American Film (3 Credits)

Explores the connection between film and disability through an analysis of independent and mainstream American films in various film genres. Specifically, we will consider how these film representations reflect and/or challenge the shifting social perspectives of disability over the 20th and 21st centuries. Beginning with the presentation of disability as theatrical spectacle in the traveling sideshow and early cinema, we will work our way through film history to develop an understanding of our society's complicated relationship with disability.

Credit Only Granted for: AMST320 or AMST328X.

Formerly: AMST328X.

AMST323 Filipino American History and Biography (3 Credits)

Focus is placed on Filipino American experiences with an emphasis on identity, community building and organizing to influence public policy. We will cover pertinent events from the US and Philippine history in order to understand the impact of colonialism, migration, immigration and assimilation on Filipino Americans.

Cross-listed with: AAST363.

Credit Only Granted for: AAST363, AMST323, AAST398D, or AMST328J.

Formerly: AAST398D.

AMST324 Growing Up Asian American: The Asian Immigrant Family and the Second Generation (3 Credits)

An interdisciplinary course examines the experiences of children of Asian immigrants in the U.S., focusing on intergenerational dynamics in the Asian immigrant family, their intersections with race, gender, class, sexuality, and religion, and how these shape second-generation Asian American life. Topics include identity and personhood, the model minority myth and education, work and leisure, language and communication, filiality and disownment, mental health and suicide.

Cross-listed with: AAST394, IMMR394.

Credit Only Granted for: AAST394, AAST398E, AMST324, AMST328V, IMMR319G or IMMR394.

Formerly: AAST398E.

AMST328 Perspectives on Identity and Culture (3 Credits)

Analysis of the cultural aspect of identity formation and the role of individual or community identities in cultural production. Examination of cultural texts such as film, literature, fashion, artifacts, archival records, architecture, monuments, sports, and paintings.

Repeatable to: 9 credits if content differs.

AMST328W Asian Americans in Film (3 Credits)

Explores how Asian Americans have historically been represented in the U.S. by Hollywood, and in turn, how independent and Hollywood Asian American filmmakers have represented themselves. It covers the history of racial, gendered, and sexualized representations of Asian Americans in Hollywood, as well as Asian American filmic responses within and outside Hollywood. It also introduces how four basic tools of film analysis mise-en-scene, cinematography, editing and sound work together to create meaning in moving images. It examines how these elements are put together in three different types of films by Asian American filmmakers: narrative, documentary, and experimental. How films function in society to circulate ideas that reproduce and challenge stereotypes about Asian Americans.

Cross-listed with: AAST355.

Credit Only Granted for: AAST355, AAST398L or AMST328W.

Formerly: 398L.

AMST340 Introduction to History, Theories and Methods in American Studies (3 Credits)

Introduction to the process of interdisciplinary research, including research literatures, questions, first-hand sources and library and analytic methods in American Studies. Each student will craft a prospectus for original research.

Prerequisite: Must have completed AMST201; and 2 courses in AMST.

Restriction: Must be in American Studies program; and sophomore standing or higher.

AMST369 Special Topics in Study Abroad III (1-6 Credits)

Special topics course taken as part of an approved study abroad program.

Repeatable to: 15 credits if content differs.

AMST386 Experiential Learning (3-6 Credits)

Restriction: Permission of ARHU-American Studies department; and junior standing or higher.

AMST388 Honors Thesis (3-6 Credits)

Individual research, thesis and oral defense. The research project will be conducted under the supervision of a faculty member.

Restriction: Must be admitted to AMST honors program; and permission of ARHU-American Studies department; and senior standing.

Repeatable to: 6 credits if content differs.

AMST398 Independent Studies (1-3 Credits)

Provides the student with the opportunity to pursue independent, interdisciplinary research and reading in specific areas of American culture studies.

Restriction: Permission of ARHU-American Studies department.

Repeatable to: 6 credits if content differs.

AMST418 Cultural Themes in America (3 Credits)

Examination of structure and development of American culture through themes such as "growing up American," "culture and mental disorders," "race," "ethnicity," "regionalism," "landscape," and "humor."

Repeatable to: 6 credits if content differs.

AMST418N Asian American Public Policy (3 Credits)

Using Asian Pacific Americans as a case study, this course will analyze the development of public policy in America. Each week, topics such as community development, voting rights, and the movement to redress the wartime internment of Japanese Americans will serve as backdrops for discussion. We will explore the policy-making roles of legislators, judges, local and national political leaders, journalists, writers, unions, social movements, and community organizations.

Cross-listed with: AAST421.

Credit Only Granted for: AAST421, AAST498M or AMST418N.

Formerly: AAST498M.

AMST425 Film and American Landscape (3 Credits)

Explores how representations of various geographic spaces in American film impact our understanding of community, identity, and place. In particular, we will think about how these spaces are culturally produced and changeable rather than static. The same space can hold diverse meanings for various groups of people and how such a space is represented in film is often wrapped up with issues of power, the reinforcement of stereotypes, and the creation of self/other dichotomies. By analyzing a variety of narrative, documentary, major studio, and independent films, we will seek to understand how American films' representations of rural, urban, and suburban spaces both reflect, contradict, and often influence our lived experiences of these spaces; in other words, this course will examine how the "reel" intersects with the "real".

Credit Only Granted for: AMST418K or AMST425.

Formerly: AMST418K.

AMST428 American Cultural Eras (3 Credits)

Investigation of a decade, period, or generation as a case study in significant social change within an American context. Case studies include "Antebellum America, 1840-1860" and "American culture in the Great Depression."

Repeatable to: 6 credits if content differs.

AMST429 Perspectives on Popular Culture (3 Credits)

Topics in popular culture studies, including the examination of particular genres, themes, and issues.

Repeatable to: 6 credits if content differs.

AMST450 Seminar in American Studies (3 Credits)

Developments in theories and methods of American Studies scholarship, with emphasis upon interaction between the humanities and the social sciences in the process of cultural analysis and evaluation.

Prerequisite: AMST201 and AMST340; and 1 course in AMST.

Restriction: Senior standing; and must be in American Studies program.

AMST498 Special Topics in American Studies (3 Credits)

Topics of special interest.

Repeatable to: 9 credits if content differs.

AMST498J Asian American Politics (3 Credits)

Students will gain a greater understanding of 1) the role of Asian Americans in US politics, 2) the political attitudes and behaviors of Asian Americans and 3) how to conduct research on Asian American politics. Though the class will concentrate on Asian Americans, issues related to Asian American politics will be examined within the larger context of America's multicultural political landscape.

Cross-listed with: AAST443, GVPT368C.

Credit Only Granted for: AAST498T, AAST443, GVPT368C or AMST 498J.

Formerly: AAST498T.

AMST499 Independent Studies (1-3 Credits)

Provides the student with the opportunity to pursue independent, interdisciplinary research and reading in specific areas of American culture studies.

Restriction: Permission of ARHU-American Studies department; and must be in American Studies program.

Repeatable to: 6 credits if content differs.