

American Studies

The concentration in American Studies seeks to understand American society and cultures as emerging from historical and contemporary processes at work in local, national, and global contexts. Concentrators study four broad themes: social structure and the practices of identity, space and place, production and consumption of culture, and science, technology, and everyday life. The concentration is predicated on the ideal of scholarly engagement with the public, so students take junior seminars that engage some aspect of the public humanities such as public policy, memorialization, community studies or civic engagement. Study abroad is supported and encouraged.

Interested students may contact the director of undergraduate studies.

A concentrator in American Studies will be able to:

- Analyze texts, contexts, and data from multiple disciplinary and historical perspectives
- Synthesize research as verbal, visual and/or digital presentations
- Explore the theory and/or practice of the engagement of scholarship with a broader public
- Understand how American society and cultures have been and are being shaped by global flows of people, goods and ideas
- Experiment with new media as critical tools for scholarship

Concentrators have gone on to a vast variety of careers, including law, public humanities, politics, public service, academics, business, creative arts, and medicine.

Requirements for Students Who Declare Spring 2021 and After:

The concentration requires 10 classes.

Each concentrator must take at least 8 upper-level courses including a Junior Seminar (an AMST 1700 level course) and a Senior Seminar (AMST 1900 level course). Students may take as many AMST 1900 level courses as they wish, however, for the course to count as a senior seminar it must be taken during the senior year.

Students may count up to two lower-level classes (below 1000-level).

Each concentrator will create an individual FOCUS consisting of at least three courses in consultation with the Concentration Advisor. The focus is the flexible core of the concentration. Here each student builds a coherent and dynamic interdisciplinary cluster of related courses that develops his or her compelling interest in some aspect of American experience. Up to three courses from outside of AMST and ETHN can be counted for credit within the concentration if they relate to the concentrator's focus area.

Of the 10 required classes, four must be seminars, and two must be classes offered under the AMST or ETHN prefixes that have been tagged with a specific method. Each class must be tagged with a different method. These seminars and tagged classes can count for any other concentration requirement.

All seniors are required to do a capstone electronic portfolio.

Some concentrators may elect to do an Honors Thesis and are encouraged to take AMST 1800, the Honors Seminar, in the Spring of their Junior year. Students pursuing honors are required to take two independent study courses (AMST 1970) in their senior year, in addition to the regular concentration requirements (for a total of 12 credits), in order to write their honors thesis.

Requirements for the American Studies Concentration

Junior Seminar: A course from the AMST 1700 Series, for example: 1

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| AMST 1700B | Death and Dying in America |
| AMST 1700C | Slavery in American History, Culture and Memory |
| AMST 1700D | Race and Remembering |
| AMST 1700F | American Publics |

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| AMST 1700I | Community Engagement with Health and the Environment | |
| Senior Seminar: A course from the AMST 1900 series taken during the senior year, for example: | | 1 |
| AMST 1900A | The Problem of Class in America | |
| AMST 1900B | America and the Asian Pacific: A Cultural History | |
| AMST 1900C | Narratives of Slavery | |
| AMST 1900D | America as a Trans-Pacific Culture | |
| AMST 1900F | Transnational Popular Culture | |
| AMST 1900G | Movements, Morals, and Markets | |
| AMST 1900I | Latina/o Cultural Theory | |
| AMST 1900J | Race, Immigration and Citizenship | |
| AMST 1900K | China in the American Imagination | |
| AMST 1900L | Cold War Culture The American Culture in the Cold War | |
| AMST 1900N | Ethnicity, Identity and Culture in 20th Century New York City | |
| AMST 1900O | Filipino American Cultures | |
| AMST 1900P | Essaying Culture | |
| AMST 1900Q | From Perry to Pokemon: Japan in the United States, the United States in Japan | |
| AMST 1900R | Gender, Race, and Class in the United States | |
| AMST 1900S | Green Cities: Parks and Designed Landscapes in Urban America | |
| AMST 1900U | Immigrant Radicals: Asian Political Movements in the Americas 1850-1970 | |
| AMST 1900V | Immigrants, Exiles, Refugees, and Citizens in the Americas | |
| AMST 1900W | Latina Literature: The Shifting Boundaries of Identity | |
| AMST 1900X | Latina/o Religions: Encounters of Contestations and Transformations | |
| AMST 1900Y | Latino New York | |
| AMST 1900Z | Latinos and Film | |
| Two additional upper-level seminars taken from the AMST 1700, AMST 1800, or AMST 1900 series | | 2 |
| Four upper-level lectures or seminars numbered between AMST 1000 and AMST 1900, including those AMST 1900s listed above. Some examples of past seminars include: | | 4 |
| AMST 1250G | Topics in Material Culture Studies: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1880-1920 | |
| AMST 1596 | Education Beyond the Classroom Walls: Teaching and Learning in Cultural Institutions | |
| AMST 1600D | Sports in American Society | |
| AMST 1601 | Health and Healing in American History | |
| AMST 1611M | Trauma and the Shame of the Unspeakable: The Holocaust, American Slavery, and Childhood Sexual Abuse | |
| AMST 1901D | Motherhood in Black and White | |
| AMST 1902Z | Radio: From Hams to Podcasts | |
| AMST 1904V | Decolonizing Minds: A People's History of the World | |
| AMST 1905N | War and the Mind in Modern America | |
| AMST 1905Q | Laboring Women: Work, Reproduction, and Leisure since Reconstruction | |
| AMST 1906H | Beauty Pageants in American Society | |
| AMST 1906I | Decolonizing Museums: Collecting Indigenous Culture in Taiwan and North America | |

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| Two additional courses under the AMST or ETHN prefix | 2 |
| Ungraded Capstone ePortfolio | |
| Total Credits | 10 |

Requirements for Students Who Declare Prior to Spring 2021:

Each concentrator will take 10 upper-level courses, four of which must be seminars, including a Junior Seminar (an AMST 1700 level course) and a Senior Seminar (AMST 1900 level course). Students may take as many AMST 1900 level courses as they wish, however for the course to count as a senior seminar it must be taken during the senior year.

Each concentrator will create an individual FOCUS consisting of at least three courses in consultation with the Concentration Advisor. The focus is the flexible core of the concentration. Here each student builds a coherent and dynamic interdisciplinary structure of related courses that develops his or her compelling interest in some aspect of American experience. Courses from outside of AMST and ETHN can be counted for credit within the concentration if they relate to the concentrator's focus area.

All seniors are required to do a capstone electronic portfolio.

Some concentrators may elect to do an Honors Thesis and are encouraged to take AMST 1800, the Honors Seminar, in the Spring of their Junior year. Students pursuing honors are required to take two independent study courses (AMST 1970) in their senior year, in addition to the regular concentration requirements (for a total of 12 credits), in order to write their honors thesis.

Requirements for the American Studies Concentration

Junior Seminar: A course from the AMST 1700 Series, for example: 1

| | |
|------------|--|
| AMST 1700B | Death and Dying in America |
| AMST 1700C | Slavery in American History, Culture and Memory |
| AMST 1700D | Race and Remembering |
| AMST 1700F | American Publics |
| AMST 1700I | Community Engagement with Health and the Environment |

Senior Seminar: A course from the AMST 1900 series taken during the senior year, for example: 1

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|------------|---|
| AMST 1900A | The Problem of Class in America |
| AMST 1900B | America and the Asian Pacific: A Cultural History |
| AMST 1900C | Narratives of Slavery |
| AMST 1900D | America as a Trans-Pacific Culture |
| AMST 1900F | Transnational Popular Culture |
| AMST 1900G | Movements, Morals, and Markets |
| AMST 1900I | Latina/o Cultural Theory |
| AMST 1900J | Race, Immigration and Citizenship |
| AMST 1900K | China in the American Imagination |
| AMST 1900L | Cold War Culture The American Culture in the Cold War |
| AMST 1900N | Ethnicity, Identity and Culture in 20th Century New York City |
| AMST 1900O | Filipino American Cultures |
| AMST 1900P | Essaying Culture |
| AMST 1900Q | From Perry to Pokemon: Japan in the United States, the United States in Japan |
| AMST 1900R | Gender, Race, and Class in the United States |
| AMST 1900S | Green Cities: Parks and Designed Landscapes in Urban America |
| AMST 1900U | Immigrant Radicals: Asian Political Movements in the Americas 1850-1970 |

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|---|--|-----------|
| AMST 1900V | Immigrants, Exiles, Refugees, and Citizens in the Americas | |
| AMST 1900W | Latina Literature: The Shifting Boundaries of Identity | |
| AMST 1900X | Latina/o Religions: Encounters of Contestations and Transformations | |
| AMST 1900Y | Latino New York | |
| AMST 1900Z | Latinos and Film | |
| Two additional upper-level seminars taken from the AMST 1700, AMST 1800, or AMST 1900 series | | 2 |
| Six upper-level lectures or seminars numbered between AMST 1000 and AMST 1900, including those AMST 1900s listed above. Some examples of past seminars include: | | 6 |
| AMST 1250G | Topics in Material Culture Studies: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1880-1920 | |
| AMST 1596 | Education Beyond the Classroom Walls: Teaching and Learning in Cultural Institutions | |
| AMST 1600D | Sports in American Society | |
| AMST 1601 | Health and Healing in American History | |
| AMST 1611M | Trauma and the Shame of the Unspeakable: The Holocaust, American Slavery, and Childhood Sexual Abuse | |
| AMST 1901D | Motherhood in Black and White | |
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| AMST 1905Q | Laboring Women: Work, Reproduction, and Leisure since Reconstruction | |
| AMST 1906H | Beauty Pageants in American Society | |
| AMST 1906I | Decolonizing Museums: Collecting Indigenous Culture in Taiwan and North America | |
| Ungraded Capstone ePortfolio | | |
| Total Credits | | 10 |

Honors

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| AMST 1970 | Independent Reading and Research (Students pursuing honors in the concentration are required to take two semesters of Independent Study to produce the Honors Thesis) |
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WHAT we study

American Studies at Brown is concerned with four broad themes:

- **Social Structures and the Practices of Identity:** How do communities and individuals come to define themselves, and how do others define them, in terms of, among other categories, nation, region, class, race, ethnicity, gender, sex, religion, age and sexuality? How do organizations and institutions function socially and culturally? What are the roles of social movements, economic structures, politics and government?
- **Space and Place:** How is space organized, and how do people make place? This includes the study of natural and built environments; local, regional, national and transnational communities; and international and inter-regional flows of people, goods, and ideas.
- **Production and Consumption of Culture:** How do people represent their experiences and ideas as culture? How is culture transmitted, appropriated and consumed? What is the role of artists and the expressive arts, including literature, visual arts and performance?
- **Science, Technology, and Everyday Life:** How does work and the deployment of science and technology shape American culture? How

do everyday social practices of work, leisure and consumption provide agency for people?

HOW we study

American Studies at Brown emphasizes four intersecting approaches that are critical tools for understanding these themes:

- **Cultural and Social Analysis:** Reading and analyzing different kinds of texts, including literary, visual, aural, oral, material objects and landscapes. Examining ethnic and racial groups, institutions, organizations and social movements.
- **Global/International Contextualization:** Comprehending the United States as a society and culture that has been shaped by the historical and contemporary flows of people, goods and ideas from around the world and in turn, learning about the various ways in which America has shaped the world.
- **New Media Understandings:** Understanding the creation of new forms of discourse, new ways of knowing and new modes of social organization made possible by succeeding media revolutions. Using new media as a critical tool for scholarship.
- **Publicly Engaged Scholarship:** Connecting the theory and the practice of publicly-engaged research, understanding and presentation, from community-based scholarship to ethnography, oral history, and museum exhibits. Civic engagement might include structured and reflective participation in a local community or communities or the application of general theoretical knowledge to understanding social issues.