

American Studies

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

American Studies is an individualized interdisciplinary major that offers undergraduates a unique opportunity to take advantage of the depth and breadth of Americanist scholarship and research on the campus in order to explore and understand the United States and its place in the globalizing world. American studies courses integrate a variety of subjects, methods, and materials from many academic disciplines, including the traditional blend of history and literature, as well as the social sciences, material culture, built environment, law, technology, urbanism, ecology, economy, and arts.

Declaring the Major

In order to declare the major, students with less than 60 units must complete AMERSTD 10 and one other lower division requirement. Students beyond 60 units must be enrolled in AMERSTD 10 and speak with a faculty adviser before being allowed to declare. For details on how to declare, please see the student academic adviser at 265 Evans Hall, email: amerstd@berkeley.edu.

Honors Program

Students who wish to be eligible to graduate with honors must enroll in the honors thesis seminar, AMERSTD H195. For admission to the course, students must have senior standing, an overall GPA of 3.51, and a GPA of 3.65 in the major. For further information, please contact the student academic adviser in 265 Evans Hall, email: amerstd@berkeley.edu.

Declaring the Minor

Visit the American Studies Minor webpage (<https://as.ugis.berkeley.edu/about-the-minor/>) for information about declaring the minor.

In addition to the University, campus, and college requirements, listed on the College Requirements tab, students must fulfill the below requirements specific to their major program.

General Guidelines

1. All courses taken to fulfill the major requirements below must be taken for graded credit, other than courses listed which are offered on a *Pass/No Pass* basis only. Other exceptions to this requirement are noted as applicable.
2. No more than one upper division course may be used to simultaneously fulfill requirements for a student's major and minor programs, with the exception of minors offered outside of the College of Letters & Science.
3. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 must be maintained in both upper and lower division courses used to fulfill the major requirements.

For information regarding residence requirements and unit requirements, please see the College Requirements tab.

Summary of Degree Requirements

Lower Division Prerequisites: Four courses total

Upper Division Requirements: 30-36 units

Historical Requirement

Senior Thesis Requirement: Four units

Please see below for the specific details regarding these requirements.

Lower Division Prerequisites

The lower division prerequisites are meant to introduce the student to a variety of scholarly approaches to the study of American culture and society. In order to determine whether particular courses fulfill the prerequisites, please contact the American Studies student academic adviser in 237 Evans Hall or an American Studies faculty adviser.

AMERSTD 10 Introduction to American Studies 4
or AMERSTD 10AC Introduction to American Studies

Select three lower division courses that focus on the United States^{1, 2}

- ¹ No more than three of these courses may be from the same department.
- ² Appropriate courses taken at other universities or community colleges may be substituted with faculty adviser approval.

Upper Division Requirements

30-36 units, distributed among the following:

Core Methods Courses: 6-8 units

Students are required to take one course each from the two methods series, "Examining US Cultures in Time" and "Examining US Cultures in Place." See the program's website for available courses every semester. It is expected that these courses will be completed during the junior year. Due to the unique interdisciplinary nature of the courses, these requirements should be satisfied at UC Berkeley.

Area of Concentration: minimum of six courses, 18-20 units¹

Upper division coursework drawn from the College of Letters & Science and the professional schools and colleges, in the student's individually articulated area of concentration. Areas of concentration may be highly individualized, depending on the student's intellectual focus, prior preparation, and the availability of courses. Students planning to declare the major should complete a four year plan, major application form and meet with a faculty adviser in their sophomore year or early in their junior year to plan their upper division program. Subsequently, this program can be revised with the approval of the faculty adviser.

- ¹ The area of concentration must include courses from at least two different departments, but no more than three courses from any one discipline. The area may include courses from up to six different departments.

Historical Requirement

One of the courses taken to complete the American Studies major (either upper or lower division) must focus on US history, culture, and/or politics before 1900. Students should check with an American Studies student academic adviser to ensure that the course they take meets this requirement.

Senior Thesis Requirement

Because American Studies at UC Berkeley is an interdisciplinary program based on the major's own offerings and supplemented by individualized programs of study drawing on the resources of the whole campus, students in this major complete their work in the major with an interdisciplinary senior thesis. The thesis is intended to give students the opportunity to develop an extended analysis of a significant problem related to their area of concentration and to craft the essay into a finished piece of scholarly work. It is designed to give students a sense of competence and confidence in researching, framing, and completing an explicitly interdisciplinary project.

Select one of the following thesis course options:

AMERSTD 191 Senior Thesis Seminar [4]

AMERSTD 190 Senior Thesis [4]

AMERSTD H1 Senior Honors Thesis Seminar [4]

A thesis course offered by another department ¹

¹ A thesis course from another department must be approved in advance by an American Studies faculty adviser.

General Guidelines

1. All minors must be declared before the first day of classes in your Expected Graduation Term (EGT). For summer graduates, minors must be declared prior to the first day of Summer Session A.
2. All upper-division courses must be taken for a letter grade.
3. A minimum of three of the upper-division courses taken to fulfill the minor requirements must be completed at UC Berkeley.
4. A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 is required in the upper-division courses to fulfill the minor requirements.
5. Courses used to fulfill the minor requirements may be applied toward the Seven-Course Breadth requirement, for Letters & Science students.
6. No more than one upper division course may be used to simultaneously fulfill requirements for a student's major and minor programs.
7. All minor requirements must be completed prior to the last day of finals during the semester in which the student plans to graduate. If students cannot finish all courses required for the minor by that time, they should see a College of Letters & Science adviser.
8. All minor requirements must be completed within the unit ceiling. (For further information regarding the unit ceiling, please see the College Requirements tab.)

Requirements

The American Studies minor allows students to take advantage of the one of largest and most diverse course curricula available anywhere in the world as well as learn about the American context that impacts and defines the issues they are learning about in their departmental majors. Open to all UC Berkeley students, the minor will introduce students to interdisciplinary modes of inquiry, foster knowledge about the culture of the U.S., and train students to write and communicate clearly about it.

To receive a minor in American Studies, students must complete 24-units as follows:

- One lower-division Introduction to American Studies course: Introduction to American Studies (AMERSTD 10, 4 s.h.) or AMERSTD 10AC Introduction to American Studies (4 s.h.) (4 units)
- Two upper-division courses that focus on "Time," and two upper-division "Place" courses in American Studies (16 total units)
- One capstone research/writing project to be completed in one of the existing seminar courses taught by American Studies affiliated faculty (4 units)

All students in the minor will have hands-on guidance and advice from American Studies faculty. For more information about the minor, please see our website (<https://as.ugis.berkeley.edu/american-studies-minor/>) and contact the American Studies Student Academic Advisor, Laura Spautz at amerstd@berkeley.edu.

Undergraduate students must fulfill the following requirements in addition to those required by their major program.

For a detailed lists of L&S requirements, please see Overview tab to the right in this guide or visit the L&S Degree Requirements (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/degree-requirements/>) webpage. For College advising appointments, please visit the L&S Advising (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/home/>) Pages.

University of California Requirements

Entry Level Writing

All students who will enter the University of California as freshmen must demonstrate their command of the English language by fulfilling the Entry Level Writing requirement. Fulfillment of this requirement is also a prerequisite to enrollment in all reading and composition courses at UC Berkeley and must be taken for a letter grade.

American History and American Institutions

The American History and American Institutions requirements are based on the principle that all U.S. residents who have graduated from an American university should have an understanding of the history and governmental institutions of the United States.

Berkeley Campus Requirement

American Cultures

All undergraduate students at Cal need to take and pass this campus requirement course in order to graduate. The requirement offers an exciting intellectual environment centered on the study of race, ethnicity and culture of the United States. AC courses are plentiful and offer students opportunities to be part of research-led, highly accomplished teaching environments, grappling with the complexity of American Culture.

College of Letters & Science Essential Skills Requirements

Quantitative Reasoning

The Quantitative Reasoning requirement is designed to ensure that students graduate with basic understanding and competency in math, statistics, or computer/data science. The requirement may be satisfied by exam or by taking an approved course taken for a letter grade.

Foreign Language

The Foreign Language requirement may be satisfied by demonstrating proficiency in reading comprehension, writing, and conversation in a foreign language equivalent to the second semester college level, either by passing an exam or by completing approved course work taken for a letter grade.

Reading and Composition

In order to provide a solid foundation in reading, writing, and critical thinking the College of Letters and Science requires two semesters of lower division work in composition in sequence. Students must complete parts A & B reading and composition courses in sequential order by the end of their fourth semester for a letter grade.

College of Letters & Science 7 Course Breadth Requirements

Breadth Requirements

The undergraduate breadth requirements provide Berkeley students with a rich and varied educational experience outside of their major program. As the foundation of a liberal arts education, breadth courses give students a view into the intellectual life of the University while introducing them to a multitude of perspectives and approaches to research and scholarship. Engaging students in new disciplines and with peers from other majors, the breadth experience strengthens interdisciplinary connections and context that prepares Berkeley graduates to understand and solve the complex issues of their day.

Unit Requirements

- 120 total units
- Of the 120 units, 36 must be upper division units
- Of the 36 upper division units, 6 must be taken in courses offered outside your major department

Residence Requirements

For units to be considered in "residence," you must be registered in courses on the Berkeley campus as a student in the College of Letters & Science. Most students automatically fulfill the residence requirement by attending classes at Cal for four years, or two years for transfer students. In general, there is no need to be concerned about this requirement, unless you graduate early, go abroad for a semester or year, or want to take courses at another institution or through UC Extension during your senior year. In these cases, you should make an appointment to meet an L&S College adviser to determine how you can meet the Senior Residence Requirement.

Note: Courses taken through UC Extension do not count toward residence.

Senior Residence Requirement

After you become a senior (with 90 semester units earned toward your B.A. degree), you must complete at least 24 of the remaining 30 units in residence in at least two semesters. To count as residence, a semester must consist of at least 6 passed units. Intercampus Visitor, EAP, and UC Berkeley-Washington Program (UCDC) units are excluded.

You may use a Berkeley Summer Session to satisfy one semester of the Senior Residence requirement, provided that you successfully complete 6 units of course work in the Summer Session and that you have been enrolled previously in the college.

Modified Senior Residence Requirement

Participants in the UC Education Abroad Program (EAP), Berkeley Summer Abroad, or the UC Berkeley Washington Program (UCDC) may meet a Modified Senior Residence requirement by completing 24 (excluding EAP) of their final 60 semester units in residence. At least 12 of these 24 units must be completed after you have completed 90 units.

Upper Division Residence Requirement

You must complete in residence a minimum of 18 units of upper division courses (excluding UCEAP units), 12 of which must satisfy the requirements for your major.

Mission

The goal of the American Studies interdisciplinary major is to enable students to learn a set of research, critical thinking, and written and oral communication skills that will enable them to become self-conscious and thoughtful investigators of American society. To meet this basic goal, our courses are designed to give students a basic understanding of American history, culture, political economy, social structures, and environment (both natural and constructed), as well as to enable them to use a range of concepts and methods to define and analyze significant problems, issues, and questions relating to American life. Through a close reading of diverse texts and physical and cultural materials, American Studies students learn how to critically analyze how individuals, groups, and a wide variety of political, economic, and cultural institutions have interacted to shape and give meaning to the American experience.

Learning Goals for the Major

1. Research Skills:
 - Students learn how to locate and evaluate primary source materials and secondary texts. These include published contemporary and historical documents, artifacts of material culture, landscape and architectural structures, visual and auditory media, oral history, and folklore.
2. Critical Thinking Skills:
 - Students learn how to analyze and evaluate cultural texts including literature, performance, film, art, etc., and demonstrate a basic understanding of cultural theory and aesthetics (i.e., to understand and think critically about American society from a humanities perspective).
 - Students learn to critically analyze and evaluate social science arguments, demonstrating an understanding of the premises of qualitative and quantitative evidence (i.e., understand and think critically about American society from a social science perspective).
 - Students learn to analyze and understand the American past so as to gain perspective on and critical understanding of current issues and problems in American life (i.e., to understand and think critically about American society from an historical perspective, which by definition integrates humanities and social science approaches).
 - Students learn to critically analyze and interpret the meaning of American material culture and its built and natural environments (i.e., understand and think critically about American society from the perspectives of the knowledges embodied in the disciplines of geography, architecture, landscape architecture, environmental studies, and art).
3. Written and Oral Communication Skills

- Students learn how to communicate effectively in written form, demonstrating the ability to formulate a well organized argument supported by evidence.
- Students learn how to communicate effectively orally, while demonstrating the ability to listen and respond to what others are saying.

4. Specialized Knowledge

- Time: Students gain in-depth, substantive knowledge about American life and culture in a particular year.
- Place: Students gain in-depth, substantive knowledge about American life and culture in a particular city, region, or other place.
- Students gain in-depth substantive knowledge about particular themes, issues, problems, and questions in American life and experience.

5. Integrative Knowledge and Skills

- Students demonstrate their mastery of all of the above skills by writing a Senior Thesis that is a focused interdisciplinary research project in their specialized area of concentration.

Major maps are experience maps that help undergraduates plan their Berkeley journey based on intended major or field of interest. Featuring student opportunities and resources from your college and department as well as across campus, each map includes curated suggestions for planning your studies, engaging outside the classroom, and pursuing your career goals in a timeline format.

Use the major map below to explore potential paths and design your own unique undergraduate experience:

View the American Studies Major Map. (<https://discovery.berkeley.edu/getting-started/major-maps/american-studies/>)

American Studies

AMERSTD 5 Keywords in American Studies 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 2016 10 Week Session, Summer 2016 3 Week Session

Inspired by Raymond Williams' classic text, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, and the recent *Keywords of American Cultural Studies* (Burgett and Hendler), this course will provide a short and focused introduction to central terms and debates in American Studies. The goal is: (1) to enable each student to develop a critical understanding of a key concept such as "Race," "Representation," "Class," and "Democracy"; (2) allow students to become familiar with some of the major scholarly works on the keyword; and (3) introduce students to the kind of interdisciplinary inquiry that characterizes our American Studies program.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 9 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 10 Introduction to American Studies 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Summer 2025 Second 6 Week Session, Spring 2025

American culture and cultural change, with attention to the multicultural basis of American society and emphasis on the need for multiple methods of analysis. The course will consistently draw on the arts, material culture, and various fields affecting cultural production and meaning. Those areas include literature, film, history, architecture, history of art, religion, music, engineering, environmental studies, anthropology, politics, economics, law, and medicine. This course may include discussion sections depending on available funding. Some versions of this course need four in-class contact hours because of the extensive use of media.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for American Studies 10 after completing American Studies 10AC. A deficient grade in American Studies 10 may be removed by taking American Studies 10AC.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5-10 hours of lecture and 0-2.5 hours of discussion per week

8 weeks - 6-7.5 hours of lecture and 0-2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Formerly known as: Undergraduate Interdisciplinary Studies 10

AMERSTD 10AC Introduction to American Studies 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2013, Spring 2012, Fall 2011

American culture and cultural change, with attention to the multicultural basis of American society and emphasis on the need for multiple methods of analysis. The course will consistently draw on the arts, material culture, and various fields affecting cultural production and meaning. Those areas include literature, film, history, architecture, history of art, religion, music, engineering, environmental studies, anthropology, politics, economics, law, and medicine.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for 10AC after taking 10 or Undergraduate and Interdisciplinary Studies 10. A deficient grade in American Studies 10 or Interdisciplinary Studies 10 may be removed by taking American Studies 10AC.

Requirements this course satisfies: Satisfies the American Cultures requirement

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD C10 Introduction to American Studies: Hollywood: the Place, the Industry, the Fantasy 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2013

This course will introduce students to the interdisciplinary field of American Studies, taking the "Hollywood Dream Factory" as the central theme. Focusing on both parts of that phrase, the course will proceed along a double path. We will examine the historical and geographical development of the motion picture industry from the rise of the studio system to the "new" entertainment economy of the 1980's and we will examine ways Hollywood is represented in literature and film.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Moran

Also listed as: L & S C40T

AMERSTD 15 Introductory Seminar in American Studies 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

This course examines contemporary aspects of American society, politics, economics, and culture, examining the ways in which today's issues emerge from wider historical and place-based contexts.

To give our explorations focus, we will look at the concept of technology and design as a set of practices, processes, and theories of meaning. Through close reading of diverse texts (including both primary and secondary sources) we will work towards developing an approach that enables us to analyze critically the process involved in the ongoing creation, maintenance, and transmission of cultural meaning within American society.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring:

15 weeks - 4 hours of seminar per week

15 weeks - 4 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 24 Freshman Seminar 1 Unit

Terms offered: Fall 2019, Fall 2017, Fall 2009

The Freshman Seminar Program has been designed to provide new students with the opportunity to explore an intellectual topic with a faculty member in a small seminar setting. Freshman seminars are offered in all campus departments, and topics vary from department to department and semester to semester. Enrollment limited to 15 freshmen.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1 hour of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 98 Directed Group Study 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

Written proposal must be approved by sponsoring faculty. Seminars for the group study of selected topics, which will vary from year to year. Topics may be initiated by students.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Open only to freshmen and sophomores. Consent of instructor

Credit Restrictions: Enrollment is restricted; see the section on Academic Policies-Course Number Guide in the Berkeley Bulletin.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of directed group study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

AMERSTD 99 Supervised Independent Study and Research 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2001, Fall 2000, Spring 2000

Independent study and research by arrangement with faculty.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Restricted to freshmen and sophomores; consent of instructor

Credit Restrictions: Enrollment is restricted; see the section on Academic Policies-Course Number Guide in the Berkeley Bulletin.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

AMERSTD 101 Examining U.S. Cultures in Time 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2025 Second 6 Week Session, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

This course examines how U.S. cultures are constructed, reinforced, and changed, and how those cultures act simultaneously at a given time. To help students develop skills in cultural analysis, lectures will contrast various methods and perspectives as they apply to the study of a particular year or decade. Topics will vary from semester to semester. This course may include discussion sections depending on available funding. Some versions of this course need four in-class contact hours because of the extensive use of media.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 101AC Examining U.S. Cultures in Time 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2023, Summer 2021 First 6 Week Session

This course examines how U.S. cultures are constructed, reinforced, and changed, and how those cultures act simultaneously at a given time. To help students develop skills in cultural analysis, lectures will contrast various methods and perspectives as they apply to the study of a particular year or decade. Topics will vary from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for AMERSTD 101AC after completing EDUC 130, ISF 103, EDUC C130, or UGIS 101. A deficient grade in AMERSTD 101AC may be removed by taking AMERSTD 101.

Requirements this course satisfies: Satisfies the American Cultures requirement

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture and 0 hours of discussion per week

8 weeks - 5.5 hours of lecture and 0 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 102 Examining U.S. Cultures in Place 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

This course examines how U.S. cultures are constructed, reinforced, and changed--particularly in reference to place and material culture. Qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis drawn from several disciplines will help students develop skills in cultural interpretation. Case studies may focus on a neighborhood, a city, or a region. Topics will vary from semester to semester. This course may include discussion sections depending on available funding. Some versions of this course need four in-class contact hours because of the extensive use of media.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 102AC Examining U.S. Cultures in Place 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2024, Summer 2024 Second 6 Week Session, Fall 2023

This course examines how U.S. cultures are constructed, reinforced, and changed--particularly in reference to place and material culture. Qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis drawn from several disciplines will help students develop skills in cultural interpretation. Case studies may focus on a neighborhood, a city, or a region. Topics will vary from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Requirements this course satisfies: Satisfies the American Cultures requirement

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4-3 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 10-7.5 hours of lecture and 0-2.5 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 110 Special Topics in American Studies 3 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

This course is designed primarily to allow faculty to develop focused interdisciplinary courses which address specific issues, themes, or problems in American society. Topics vary from semester to semester. Students should consult the department's webpage for current offerings before the start of the semester.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5-10 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 6-8 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 110AC Special Topics in American Studies--American Cultures 3 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Summer 2015 First 6 Week Session, Summer 2015 Second 6 Week Session

This course is designed primarily to allow faculty to develop focused interdisciplinary courses that address specific issues, themes, or problems in American society and American cultures. Topics vary from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Requirements this course satisfies: Satisfies the American Cultures requirement

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 5.5-7.5 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD H110 Honors Seminar: Special Topics in American Studies 3 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2022

This course is designed to introduce honors students (those who have achieved a minimum overall GPA of 3.3) to the history and theory of American studies as an interdisciplinary field and to explore current themes, debates, and research problems in American studies.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor may be required

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of seminar per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5-10 hours of seminar per week

8 weeks - 6-8 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

AMERSTD C111A Architecture in Depression and War 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2010

The Great Depression and World War II are arguably the two most influential events for the development of the built environment in the 20th century. Not only did they alter the socio-economic and political landscape on which architecture and urban planning depend, but they also led to technological innovations and vital debates about the built environment. This course examines the 1930's and 1940's topically, studying the work of the New Deal, corporate responses to the Depression and war, the important connections between architecture and advertising, the role of the Museum of Modern Art in the promotion of Modernism, the concept of the ideal house, and key texts, theories, and projects from the period.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture and 0-2.5 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Shanken

Also listed as: ARCH C174

AMERSTD C111E Topics in American Studies 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024

A course on the intellectual, cultural, historical, and social backgrounds to American literature. Topics will vary from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes. Students may enroll in multiple sections of this course within the same semester.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-4 hours of lecture and 1-0 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: ENGLISH C136

AMERSTD C112 The American Landscape: Place, Power and Culture 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

What is America as a landscape and a place, and how do we know it when we see it? This course seeks to address such questions, to introduce ways of seeing and interpreting American histories and cultures, as revealed in everyday built surroundings—homes, highways, farms, factories, stores, recreation areas, small towns, city districts, and regions. It does so through the lens of cultural geography, an interdisciplinary practice that developed, in part, here at Berkeley. Our goal in this course is thus twofold: First, to develop literacy in the role of space and place in American culture, and second to develop a working knowledge of cultural geography as a practice.

Objectives & Outcomes

Course Objectives: . To introduce students to the central themes and practices of cultural geography;

To explore the interaction of landscape (space, place, and the built environment) with American economics, politics, and culture;

To reinforce and further develop advanced skills in seeing, thinking, researching, and writing.

To teach students how to “read” landscapes as records of past and present social relations, and to form their own speculations from evidence about the cultural meanings of those landscapes;

Upon completion of this course, it is hoped that students will appreciate the way that the American landscape both shapes and is given shape by economics, politics and culture. In studying practices of cultural geography, as well as undertaking their own experiments through course assignments, students will emerge with a better grasp of how to examine landscapes in an intellectually rigorous manner, and how to use the landscape as evidence for scholarship.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Craghead

Also listed as: GEOG C160

AMERSTD C112A American Cultural Landscapes, 1600 to 1900 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2014, Fall 2013, Fall 2012, Fall 2011

Introduces ways of seeing and interpreting American histories and cultures, as revealed in everyday built surroundings-- houses, highways, farms, factories, stores, recreation areas, small towns, city districts, and regions. Encourages students to read landscapes as records of past and present social relations and to speculate for themselves about cultural meaning.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Groth

Also listed as: ENV DES C169A/GEOG C160A

AMERSTD C112B American Cultural Landscapes, 1900 to Present 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2017, Spring 2015, Spring 2014

Introduces ways of seeing and interpreting American histories and cultures, as revealed in everyday built surroundings--homes, highways, farms, factories, stores, recreation areas, small towns, city districts, and regions. Encourages students to read landscapes as records of past and present social relations, and to speculate for themselves about cultural meaning.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Groth

Also listed as: ENV DES C169B/GEOG C160B

AMERSTD C112F The American Forest: Its Ecology, History, and Representation 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2012, Spring 2011, Spring 2007, Fall 2004

The American forest will be examined in terms of its ecology, history, and representations in paintings, photographs, and literary essays. This examination seeks to understand the American forest in its scientific and economic parameters, as well as the historic, social, and ideological dimensions which have contributed to the evolution of our present attitudes toward the forest.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructors: Lovell, McBride

Also listed as: ESPM C191/HISTART C189/UGIS C136

AMERSTD C115 The American Detective in Fiction, Film, and Television 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

This course considers how the American detective is represented in fiction, film, and popular culture. We will examine how representations of the American detective are affected by diverse historical and socio-cultural factors, including the ideology of American individualism, paradigms of investigation and ordered knowledge, and competing discourses of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. After a brief consideration of early American detectives and detectives in the classic American hardboiled tradition, we will focus on many detectives from traditionally understudied groups, including female detectives, African American detectives, Chicana detectives, Asian American detectives, Native American detectives, and gay and lesbian detectives. This course may be used as an elective in the American Studies major.

Hours & Format

Summer: 8 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Dresner

Also listed as: FILM C115

AMERSTD 121 Photography in America 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 1996 10 Week Session

The topic of this course is the history of photography in the United States, from the introduction of the medium in 1839 to the present decade. We will consider the medium chronologically as well as thematically, focusing on the following kinds of issues: the photograph as document and as fine art, the "language" and intentionality" of photography, work and image in photographically illustrated media, the social role of the photograph, photography and gender. This course may be used as an elective in the American studies major.

Hours & Format

Summer: 8 weeks - 6.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Graham

AMERSTD 132Y Native American Indian Autobiographies 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 1995 10 Week Session

This course considers several autobiographies written by Native American Indians. The lectures, discussions, and required books focus on various cultural themes and theories of autobiography; a comparative review of diverse tribal experiences and narratives. Theories of cultural simulations and literary forms of representation in autobiographical literature will receive general attention in the course. Students will be required to participate in class discussions and complete two hours review papers and a final examination.

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Vizenor

AMERSTD C132B Intellectual History of the United States since 1865 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2015, Fall 2014, Spring 2014, Fall 2012

In this course we will be discussing key developments in U.S. thought since the middle of the nineteenth century, roughly beginning with the reception of Darwin. The broader story told in the class weaves together in the history of science and engineering, the arts and popular culture, philosophy, and education. Our goal is to trace how ideas, whether they are dominant, challenging, or look back, have affected the ways in which Americans live together. We will look at how intellectual life has empowered and expanded the capacity of Americans to understand their world and achieve goals more effectively. We will also consider how intellectual theories have contributed to inequality and injustice.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for C132B after taking 132B.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of lecture and 0-1 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: HISTORY C132B

AMERSTD C134 Information Technology and Society 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2017, Fall 2016, Fall 2015, Fall 2014

This course assesses the role of information technology in the digitalization of society by focusing on the deployment of e-government, e-commerce, e-learning, the digital city, telecommuting, virtual communities, internet time, the virtual office, and the geography of cyber space. The course will also discuss the role of information technology in the governance and economic development of society.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Laguerre

Also listed as: AFRICAM C134

AMERSTD 138AC From Civil Rights Era to the New Gilded Age 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2016

World War II lifted the U.S. from the Great Depression and launched a long economic boom that helped underwrite and propel efforts on behalf of greater racial equality and economic equity. As that boom began to fade in the late 1960s, America's march toward greater racial equality foundered, while its march toward greater economic equity began to reverse course. The Civil Rights Era gave way to the New Gilded Age. This course will explore the political, legal, and economic history of America's struggles for racial equality and economic equity – and the relationship between them.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture and 2.5 hours of discussion per week
8 weeks - 6 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: BRILLIANT

Also listed as: HISTORY C139D

AMERSTD 139AC Civil Rights and Social Movements in U.S. History 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Summer 2018 Second 6 Week Session

Beginning with the onset of World War II, America experienced not a singular, unitary Civil Rights Movement -- as is typically portrayed in standard textbook accounts and the collective memory -- but rather a variety of contemporaneous civil rights and their related social movements. This course explores the history, presenting a top-down (political and legal history), bottom-up (social and cultural history), and comparative (by race and ethnicity as well as region) view of America's struggles for racial equality from roughly World War II until the present.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week
8 weeks - 5.5 hours of lecture and 2 hours of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: HISTORY C139C

AMERSTD 142Y Community Development in the Bay Area 1 Unit

Terms offered: Summer 1995 10 Week Session

This course will provide students with opportunities to discuss and observe in action the most recent theories and practices pertaining to community development in the urban United States. Readings and discussion will be rooted in field trips and interviews with community activists, executive staff and nonprofits, professional planners and designers in the Bay Area. Students will have opportunities to take their own field trips and conduct interviews based on their own interests.

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Morris

AMERSTD C152 Native American Literature 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

An analysis of the written and oral tradition developed by Native Americans. Emphasis will be placed on a multifaceted approach (aesthetic, linguistic, psychological, historical, and cultural) in examining American Indian literature.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: 151 is recommended but not required

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: NATAMST C152

AMERSTD 170AC Race and Representation in US Culture 3 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2015 10 Week Session, Summer 2015 3 Week Session, Summer 2014 3 Week Session

This course will explore the history of race, ethnicity and representation across the 20th century by considering the overlapping histories of African Americans, Native Americans and Whites through the study of film, photography and art, and humor.

This course satisfies the American Cultures requirement by combining the following 1-unit courses:

American Studies 181B - Race Photography, and Art; American Studies 180D - Race and American Humor ; and American Studies 184I - Race and American Film.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive 2 units for American Studies 170AC after taking American Studies 180D, 181B, or 184I. Not repeatable for credit with American Studies 178AC or American Studies 179AC. If student is enrolled in 170AC then they will receive no credit if they enroll separately and coterminously in 184I, 181B, or 180D.

Requirements this course satisfies: Satisfies the American Cultures requirement

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 15 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD C171 The American Designed Landscape Since 1850 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

This course surveys the history of American landscape architecture since 1850 in four realms: 1) urban open spaces--that is squares, plazas, parks, and recreation systems; 2) urban and suburban design; 3) regional and environmental planning; 4) gardens. The course will review the cultural and social contexts which have shaped and informed landscape architecture in the United States since the advent of the public parks movement, as well as, the aesthetic precepts, environmental concerns, horticultural practices, and technological innovations of American landscapes. Students will complete a midterm, final, and a research assignment.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Mozingo

Also listed as: LD ARCH C171

AMERSTD C172 History of American Business 3 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2019

This course will examine selected aspects of the history of American business. Included will be discussions of the evolution of the large corporation, the development of modern managerial techniques, and the changing relationship of business, government, and labor.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Instructor: Rosen

Formerly known as: American Studies C172, Business Administration C172

Also listed as: UGBA C172

AMERSTD C174 Visual Autobiography 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2008, Fall 2007, Fall 2003, Spring 2002

Since visual and literary studies have historically been viewed as separate disciplines, we will use theories from both to study those forms of self-representation that defy disciplinary boundaries, or what we call "visual autobiography." The course aims to help students become conversant with the elements of alphabetic literacy (reading and writing) and visual literacy (observing and making) in order to develop a third distinctive textual/visual literacy.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 6 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

Also listed as: ENGLISH C143V/UGIS C135/VIS STD C185A

AMERSTD 178AC Race and Ethnicity in American Culture: Film, Music, and Advertising 3 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2009 10 Week Session, Summer 2009 3 Week Session

This course will examine the politics of racial representation and expression in popular music as well as film and advertising. This course combines 180C, 184I, and 188F.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for AMERSTD 178AC after passing AMERSTD 179AC, AMERSTD 180C, AMERSTD 184I, and AMERSTD 188F.

Requirements this course satisfies: Satisfies the American Cultures requirement

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 15 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 179AC Representing Race and Ethnicity in American Culture 3 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2008 10 Week Session, Summer 2008 3 Week Session

This course offers students a unified course experience that examines the politics of visual representation and ways of "seeing" race and ethnicity in the U.S. in a comparative way. This course satisfies the American Cultures requirement by combining the following 1-unit courses: American Studies 180C - The Politics of Advertising in the United States: Race, Ethnicity, and Representation; American Studies 181B - Writing Narratives of Race and Gender: Photography and Art; and American Studies 184I - Race and American Film.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit or partial credit for 179AC after taking 180C, 181B, or 184I.

Requirements this course satisfies: Satisfies the American Cultures requirement

Hours & Format

Summer: 3 weeks - 15 hours of lecture and 1 hour of discussion per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam required.

AMERSTD 189 Research and Writing in American Studies 1 - 3 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023

This course is designed to encourage research skills, critical thinking, and effective writing. An intensive reading and research seminar, the course will assist students in the development of skills fundamental to advanced research in the humanities, social sciences, and cultural studies. In addition to examining some topics in current American studies scholarship, students will conduct semester-long research projects. The effort entails identification of research topics, cultivation of interdisciplinary methodologies, compilation of annotated bibliographies, and completion of a literature review, which may serve as the first portion of the American studies senior thesis. The course is strongly recommended for those who have been out of touch with the conventions of academic research and writing or who might wish to pursue a graduate degree in the future.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Intended for American studies majors

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Final exam not required.

AMERSTD 190 Senior Thesis 4 Units

Terms offered: Summer 2021 Second 6 Week Session, Spring 2021, Fall 2020

All American Studies majors must satisfy the senior thesis requirement. Three options are available: AS 190-Senior Thesis, AS 191-Senior Seminar, or students may (with prior Faculty Advisor approval) enroll in an upper division seminar appropriate to their concentration for which they write a substantial research paper. Students planning to enroll in AS 190 must complete the "Thesis Proposal/Adviser Agreement" (available in the departmental office) prior to the semester in which the thesis is written.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for AMERSTD 190 after completing AMERSTD 191. A deficient grade in AMERSTD 190 may be removed by taking AMERSTD 191.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 6 weeks - 10 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

AMERSTD 191 Senior Thesis Seminar 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Students will meet in seminar weekly and will be required to write individual research papers based on their individual Area of Concentration, with guidance and support from the seminar instructor.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Declared majors with senior standing

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

AMERSTD H195 Senior Honors Thesis Seminar 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

This is a required course for students wishing to graduate with honors in American studies. Entails writing a bachelor's thesis pertaining to the student's individual area of concentration within the American studies major. The completed thesis will be read by the thesis supervisor and one other faculty member.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Senior-standing major in American studies; completion of 101 and 102, 3.51 overall GPA, and 3.65 GPA for classes in the major

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Letter grade. Alternative to final exam.

AMERSTD 198 Directed Group Study for Advanced Undergraduates 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024

Seminars for the group study of selected topics not covered by regularly scheduled courses. Topics will vary from semester to semester. Students must have completed 60 units in order to be eligible to enroll.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Regulations set by College of Letters and Science

Credit Restrictions: Enrollment is restricted; see the section on Academic Policies-Course Number Guide in the Berkeley Bulletin.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of directed group study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.

AMERSTD 199 Supervised Independent Study and Research for Upper Division Majors 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Directed individual study on special topics approved by an American studies faculty member. Enrollment restrictions apply; see the Introduction to Courses and Curricula section of this catalog.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Enrollment is restricted; see the section on Academic Policies-Course Number Guide in the Berkeley Bulletin.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1-4 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: American Studies/Undergraduate

Grading/Final exam status: Offered for pass/not pass grade only. Final exam not required.