

Faculty of Arts and Sciences Departments of Instruction

American Studies

PROFESSORS **Aday, Blakey** (NEH Professor of Anthropology and American Studies), **Donaldson** (NEH Professor of English and American Studies), **Gundaker, R. Price** (Duane A. and Virginia S. Dittman Professor of American Studies and Anthropology; on leave Fall 2008), **S. Price** (Duane A. and Virginia S. Dittman Professor of American Studies and Anthropology; on leave Fall 2008), **Scholnick**, and **Wallach** (Ralph H. Wark Professor of Art and Art History; on leave Fall 2008), **Webster** (Mahoney Professor of Art and Art History). ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS **Barnes** (Director of Undergraduate Studies), **Brown** (on leave Fall 2008), **Fitzgerald** (Director of American Studies), **Knight** (Robert F. and Sarah M. Boyd Term Distinguished Associate Professor of English and American Studies), **McGovern** (Director of Graduate Studies), **Meyer** (Class of 1964 distinguished Associate Professor of American Studies and History), **Phillips** (Dean of Education Policy, Frances L. and Edwin L. Cummings Professors of American Studies and History), **Weiss, Wulf** (on leave 2008-2009). ASSISTANT PROFESSOR **Gamber** (on leave Spring 2009). VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSORS **Allegro, Barnard**.

The American Studies Program

The American Studies program engages students in examination of the culture and society of the United States, past and present. As a nation of immigrants, the United States has always been a pluralistic society, embracing diverse racial and ethnic groups in mutual encounter and conflict. It has also been a society in endless change, owing to transformations wrought by geographical expansion, democracy, industrialization, urbanization, and the pressures of war and international politics. These forces for change have uprooted whole peoples, such as the forcible removal of Native Americans from their lands, and have touched the most intimate realms of life, such as the relations between men and women in the home.

Yet, in the midst of these large movements of history, many Americans have forged distinctive cultures—ways of thinking, feeling and acting—that express their basic values and give meaning to their institutions and everyday social practices. Such cultures reflect, in part, the different experiences of people, according to their race, gender, and class. But they may also attest to Americans' participation in a larger ideological heritage, shaped by ideals of democracy and equality that have been affirmed in major political movements, such as the American Revolution, and articulated in art, literature, music, and films.

The American Studies program offers an opportunity to explore the commonalities and differences among Americans through an interdisciplinary course of studies. All students are expected to develop a solid grounding in history as a basis and context for their other investigations of American life. Working closely with their advisor, students will assemble a set of courses, designed both to represent the diversity of cultures and social forms within the United States and to pursue significant themes or questions in depth. In developing the major, students may also take up comparative perspectives on the United States, considering, for example, African American life within the context of the black diaspora, or the American experience of industrial capitalism as a variant on a general model in the West.

Requirements for Major

Required Credit Hours: 37

Major Computing Requirement: AMST 370

Major Writing Requirement: AMST 370 and AMST 470

Core Requirements: At least 24 of the required 37 credits must be in courses numbered 300 and above, in courses on American topics distributed among the following areas:

- a) AMST 201, 202, 203 or 205 (4 credits), or 204 (3 credits);
- b) at least 6 approved credits in History;
- c) at least 9 approved credits from English, Art and Art History, Dance, Kinesiology, Music, and Theatre (AMST 240, 241, 271, 273, 343, 350, 409, 421, 422, 433, 445, 451 may be used to fulfill this area);
- d) at least 6 approved credits from Anthropology, Economics, Government, Philosophy, Religion, and Sociology (AMST 235, 341, 350, 423, 434, 435 may be used to fulfill this area);
- e) AMST 370 (4 credits);
- f) two topics courses, AMST 470 (6 credits); g) one semester of independent study (2-3 credits) or a two semester honors project (6 credits).

The list of approved courses is available from the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Requirements for Minor

Required Credit Hours: 20

Core Requirements: At least 13 of the required 20 credits must be in courses numbered 300 and above. Students will take AMST 201, 202 or 203 (4 credits), AMST 370 (4 credits) and one topics course (AMST 470). They will also take at least 3 credit hours each from approved courses in requirements b), c), and d) above.

Description of Courses

150W. Freshmen Seminar.

Topics for Fall 2008 or Spring 2009

Native American Film & Literature

Fall (3) Gamber.

Students will read and watch examples of American Indian stories—stories by Native people from the oral tradition as well as more recently adopted media, as well brief looks film and television stories about Native people by non-Indians. The goals of this course include familiarizing students with recent representations of and by Native people in film and literature.

We will begin with some examples of dominant U.S. cultural portrayals of Native people from film and television representations in the form of Westerns, including the Lone Ranger and John Ford's *The Searchers*, *Pocahontas*, etc. These texts are important particularly because they formed many of the misconceptions of American Indians in the United States and because so many Native authors and filmmakers respond to them either directly or obliquely in their work. We will then turn our attention to some authors of the so-called Native American Renaissance, including selections James Welch, N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, and move to more contemporary selections from Louise Erdrich, Leanne Howe, and Louis Owens. We will also screen films written by Native people, including *Smoke Signals*, *Skins*, *Powwow Highway*, *Naturally Native*, outside of class.

Global Struggles for Racial Justice.

Spring (4) Phillips.

Literature and Medicine*Fall (4) Scholnick.*

Although medicine is constantly being transformed by scientific advances, it remains both art and science, devoted to the health of the whole person. We will explore the healing relationship through writings by American physicians, including Williams, Saks, Selzer, Verghese, and Groopman. This course satisfies the Freshman Writing Requirement.

Artists and Cultures*Spring (3) S. Price.*

This course will explore the artistic ideas and activities of people in a variety of cultural settings. Rather than focusing primarily on formal qualities (what art looks like in this or that society), it will examine the diverse ways that people think about art and artists, and the equally diverse roles that art can play in the economic, political, religious, and social aspects of a cultural system. Materials will range from Australian barkcloth paintings to Greek sculptures, from African masks to European films. 201. American Popular Culture and Modern America.

201. American Popular Culture and Modern America.*(GER 4A) Fall (4) McGovern. (Not offered 2008-2009)*

This course introduces and examines forms of popular culture that emerged after 1865. It considers popular culture within the context of social, political, and economic changes in the U.S., such as migration, industrialization, technology, and globalization of capitalism.

202. Introduction to American Studies: Cinema and the Modernization of U.S. Culture, 1914-1945.*(GER 5) Spring (4) Barnard.*

This course will introduce students to the forms and techniques of cinema. At the same time, it will examine how cinema, America's most popular and powerful entertainment, both reflected and participated in the social, cultural, and political upheavals of the inter-war period.

203. Introduction to American Studies: American Medicine: A Social and Cultural History.*(GER 4A) Spring (4) Scholnick.*

An overview of American medicine from the 18th century to the present. Subjects include the changing understanding of disease; the social role of the physician; and society's response to such public health crises as cholera and AIDS.

204. The American Way of War.*Fall (3) Brown. (Not offered 2008-2009)*

This course will examine the social and cultural history of Americans at war from the latter part of the 17th century to the present. Course readings will concentrate on primary sources: fiction, memoirs, and historical accounts drawn from three centuries of American experiences in combat.

205. Sexuality In America.*Fall (4) Meyer.*

The course will introduce students to the study of American culture through history, popular culture, multiple media, and scientific literature concerned with sexualities in America. The course will also show how normative sexualities are articulated distinctly depending on race, class, ethnicity, immigrant status, and other factors related to specific American communities.

206. Black Popular Culture in the Americas: From the Folk to the New Hip Hop.*(GER 4C, 5) Spring (4) Phillips.*

Course compares black culture from the early 20th c. folk practices to 21st c. Hip Hop in the US and the Caribbean. It considers these expressions in political, social, and economic contexts. Course materials include literature, film, music, and art.

240. The History of Modern Dance.*(GER 5) Spring (3) Glenn.*

An introduction through films and lectures to the field of modern dance, which is rooted in American culture, with emphasis on the stylistic approach and aesthetic of the artists who have contributed to its development in the twentieth century. (Cross listed with DANC 220)

241. History of American Vernacular Dance.*(GER 5) Fall (3) Glenn.*

An introduction through films and lectures to dance in U.S. popular culture with an emphasis on its development from roots in African dance to the vernacular forms of tap, ballroom, and jazz by examining the movement styles found in concert jazz, musical theatre, and popular social dances. (Cross listed with DANC 230)

271. American Popular Music.*(GER 4A) Spring (4) Staff.*

This course treats the traditions of vernacular musics in the United States, specifically those commonly known as religious, popular, folk, jazz, rock, and country. It will survey the literature of these musics' expression and consider questions of cultural meaning. (Cross listed with MUSC 171)

273. Jazz.*(GER 4A, GER 5) Fall (4) Scales.*

A survey of jazz from its origins to the present, focusing on the most influential improvisers and composers. Issues of race, class, and gender will arise as we examine the attitudes of listeners, jazz musicians and promoters. (Cross listed with MUSC 273)

275W. University Seminar.*Fall and Spring (4) Staff.*

A reading-, writing-, and discussion-intensive seminar. Topics vary by semester and by instructor. Restricted to transfer students and co-enrolled students. Students receiving a grade of "C-" or better in the seminar will have satisfied the lower-division writing requirement. This course does not fulfill the Freshman Seminar requirement.

341. Artists and Cultures.*(GER 4C) Fall (3) S. Price. (Freshmen Seminar Spring 2009)*

This course will explore the artistic ideas and activities of people in a variety of cultural settings. Rather than focusing primarily on formal qualities (what art looks like in this or that society), it will examine the diverse ways that people think about art and artists, and the equally diverse roles that art can play in the economic, political, religious, and social aspects of a cultural system. Materials will range from Australian barkcloth paintings to Greek sculptures, from African masks to European films. (Cross listed with ANTH 364)

343. American Ethnic Literature and Culture.*(GER 5) Fall (3) Weiss. (Not offered 2008-2009)*

The course aims to increase students' understanding of the rich complexity of American life by studying multi-ethnic American literature and culture. We will explore some of the theoretical problems associated with race and ethnicity. For the most part, however, we will work outward from certain key texts, pursuing the questions that emerge in and from them. We will consider such matters as the evolution of immigration law, the problems of identity and dual identity, and the question of assimilation versus cultural separatism. We will also emphasize the achievement of these texts as literary documents that need to be understood as responding to local cultural practices even as they speak more broadly to Americans as a whole.

350. Topics in American Culture.*Fall and Spring (1-4, 1-4) Staff.*

Selected topics in the study of American culture. The topics to be considered will be announced prior to the beginning of the semester. May be repeated for credit.

The Idea of Race.

Spring (3) *Blakey*.

This course follows the history of the concept of race in Western science and society. The course examines racist ideas in biological anthropology and cognate fields that are reflected in the broader society. This subject helps students understand the origins and manifestations of American racism, to develop an appreciation of ways in which culture can systematically influence scientific results, and to critically evaluate all theories of the interactions of biology and behavior. (Cross listed with ANTH 371)

Music and Film.

Fall (4) *Preston*.

An introduction to the world of sound and music as utilized in film. Materials introduced chronologically, with units on late 19th-century musical theater, music of "silent" films, early sound films (1930s), the studio system, compilation scores, electronic techniques, reintroduction of orchestral scores (1970s), and developments since the 1980s. Course content is primarily non-technical, but students should be familiar with film-studies and music-studies terms and concepts.

Introduction to African American History.

Fall (3) *Allegro*.

A survey of African American history from the colonial period to the present. The course divides at emancipation. (Cross listed with BLST 306 and AMST 350)

370. Major Seminar: America and the Americans.

Fall & Spring (4) *Weiss*. Prerequisite: AMST 201, 202, 203, 204, or consent of instructor.

By exploring theoretical, methodological and historical approaches to a range of cultural materials, students will critically engage with how American Studies and its related disciplinary fields have addressed the politics and culture of national identity in the U.S. (Non-majors may enroll with consent of the instructor.)

402. Exploring the Afro-American Past.

Fall (3) *R. Price*. (Not offered 2008-2009)

A study of the commonalities and differences across African America from the U.S. to Brazil. Works in anthropology, history, and literature will be used to explore the nature of historical consciousness within the African diaspora and diverse ways of understanding and writing about Afro-American pasts. (Cross listed with ANTH 429 and HIST 345)

410. Williamsburg Documentary Project.

Spring (3) *Knight*.

In this course students will learn a variety of interdisciplinary methods e.g., oral history collection, archival research, material cultural analysis—for doing American Studies research. They will then apply these methods practically to the study of Williamsburg in the 20th century. (Non majors may enroll with consent of instructor.)

412. Maroon Societies.

Spring (3) *R. Price*. (Not offered 2008-2009)

An exploration of the African American communities created by escaped slaves throughout the Americas, from Brazil through the Caribbean and into the southern United States. Emphasis on the processes by which enslaved Africans from diverse societies created new cultures in the Americas, on the development of these societies through time, and on the present-day status of surviving maroon communities in Suriname and French Guiana, Jamaica, Colombia, and elsewhere. (Cross listed with ANTH 432 and HIST 340)

421. Nineteenth-Century American Art.

Fall (4) *Wallach* (Not offered 2008-2009)

A study of major movements—Romanticism, Realism, Modernism, and figures Allston, Cole, Church, Eakins, Homer, Sargent, Whistler, Cassatt—focusing on issues of iconography, representation, and historical context.

422. Twentieth-Century American Art.

Fall (4) *Wallach*. Consent of instructor required. (Not offered 2008-2009)

A study of major movements including Regionalism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop and figures Sloan, Sheeler, O'Keefe, Benton, Pollock, and Warhol focusing on such issues as modernism, abstraction and representation, and problems of historical context.

423. The Museum in the United States.

Spring (3) *Wallach*. (Not offered 2008-2009)

This seminar will study specific museums while focusing on basic questions having to do with the social forces that gave rise to museums and the roles museums have played and continue to play in U.S. society.

434. Ethnographic History.

Spring (3) *R. Price*.

Critical readings of recent works by anthropologists and historians, with an emphasis on cross-disciplinary theory and method. (Cross listed with ANTH 472 and HIST 336)

445. The Making of a Region: Southern Literature and Culture.

Spring (3) *Donaldson*.

An interdisciplinary examination of 19th- and 20th-century southern texts within the cultural context of self-conscious regionalism. Emphasis is on the interaction between literature and the social configurations of slavery, abolitionism, southern nationalism, racism, traditionalism, and the civil rights movement.

470. Topics in American Studies.

Fall and Spring (1-4, 1-4) *Staff*.

Selected topics in the study of American studies. The topics to be considered will be announced prior to the beginning of the semester. May be repeated for credit.

American Performance Cultures.

Fall (3) *Knight*.

An intensive examination of ideas and practices of performance, especially as they intersect with identity categories like race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, and citizenship.

20th Century American Women Writers.

Fall (3) *Donaldson*.

20th Century American Women Writers. A survey of American women's writing in the twentieth century, from critiques of traditional women's roles emerging in narratives like Edith Wharton's "The House of Mirth" and Willa Cather's "A Lost Lady" to iconoclastic poetic and narrative experiments undertaken by poets, novelists, and autobiographers in the second half of the century. We'll examine female versions of literary modernism, poetic and narrative revisions of masculine literary traditions, and the emergence of multiculturalism and postmodernism at the turn into the twentieth century.

Introduction to Classical Asian Performance.

Fall (3) *Staff*.

Intro to Classical Asian Performance Styles. Introductory cultural, historical, and practical study of artistic process and performance technique of selected classical indigenous Asian performance traditions. For Fall 2008, students will learn Kecak, Gambuh Prembon & Topeng Pagegan tradi-

tions of Bali, Indonesia and Kuchipudi classical dance of Andhra Pradesh, India. Students will improvise original performance pieces from the Ramayana epic utilizing learned rasas, mudras, steps, stances, expressions, and chants.

Thea/Soc 20th Century America.

Fall (3) Palmer.

Theatre and Society in 20th-Century America. A lecture-discussion course on the significant theatrical formations of the century, including African American, feminist and commercial musical comedy theatres, with an emphasis on the changing relations among performances and social-political contexts.

Revolution & African American Culture.

Fall (3) Piper.

Is it Nation Time?: Revolution and African American Culture. African Americans have incorporated ideas of revolution in ways that both affirm and critique American culture. This course will approach the concept of revolution broadly, and investigate its many meanings ranging from the use of familiar symbols of American nationhood as part of an argument for African American citizenship, to Cultural Nationalisms that redefine both American and Black, to militant separatisms based in Pan-African consciousnesses that seek complete reorganization of American political and economic systems. We will focus on various historic moments from early America to the present that reveal unique crystallizations of African American revolutions in a number of cultural forms. Readings and course texts will cover a variety of disciplines.

Social Movement of the Past.

Fall (3) Neidenbach.

Social Movement of the Past, Civic Engagement for today. After an exploration of foundational and theoretical text on ideas of American citizenship and democracy, the class will consider social movement through four broad categories: Abolition, Women Suffrage, Labor, and Civil Rights. Students will develop a final project that looks at a social movement in the local Williamsburg's community.

America and Vietnam.

Fall (3) Cordulack.

This class will explore America's involvement with Vietnam over the course of the twentieth century. We will examine American foreign policy, social and political history, and cultural text, such as literature, film, and music, to investigate how Americans have interacted with, an imagine, the places, peoples, and cultural of Vietnam.

Civil Rights and the America Gothic Tradition.

Fall (3) Gaines.

Civil Rights and the America Gothic Tradition. This course examines the evolution of the American gothic tradition and how it informs on-going contests over citizenship. It situates the gothic as more than a genre of fright or suspense and analyzes it as a contested storytelling concerned with the interdependent relationship between persecution and entitlement. Our interest, therefore, lies in testing out the strategies—either imposed or self-directed—that various populations within the nation have used to narrate their right to adequate freedom and protection under the law. We will examine film, television, literature, and graphic novels, along with a wide variety of critical and theoretical perspectives.

Introduction to American Visual Culture.

Spring (3) Wallach.

Students will learn to analyze cultural artifacts ranging from Hiram Powers' Greek Slave, Timothy O'Sullivan and Carleton Watkins' western photographs, and Winslow Homer's wood engravings for Harper's Magazine to Grant Wood's American Gothic, Norman Rockwell's covers for The Saturday Evening Post, and Jean-Michel Basquiat's paintings as a means of understanding how visual culture shapes the shifting meanings of both private and collective American identities.

Women and Art in Colonial Latin America.

Spring (3) S. Webster.

This course explores the variety of ways that women were represented in the visual arts of colonial Latin America, particularly in the viceregal centers of Mexico and Peru. We will investigate the nature and history of depictions of women, from the indigenous tradition of the codices through female saints, nuns, portraiture, allegory, and genre, in terms of the ways that these images reflect the roles, perception, and activities of women during the colonial era. A short section of the course will consider some of the ways that colonial images of women resonate today in the work of modern and contemporary Latin American and Chicana/o artists. Readings will be drawn from a broad range of disciplines and methodologies, including art history, anthropology, archaeology, gender studies, literature, and religious studies.

***480. Independent Study.**

Fall and Spring (2-3, 2-3) Staff.

A program of extensive reading, writing, and discussion in a special area of American Studies for the advanced student. Students accepted for this course will arrange their program of study with an appropriate faculty advisor. This course may be repeated for credit.

†495-496. Honors.

Fall, Spring (3, 3) Barnes.

Students admitted to Honors study in American Studies will be enrolled in this course during both semesters of their senior year. Each candidate will be responsible for (a) formulating a program of study in consultation with a faculty advisor; (b) preparation and presentation of an Honors essay two weeks before the last day of classes, spring semester; (c) satisfactory performance in a comprehensive oral examination which focuses on the subject matter of the Honors essay. Students who wish to write an honors essay in the senior year must write a brief proposal outlining the project. This proposal must be approved by the faculty advisor and the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the semester before work on the project begins. For College provisions governing the Admission to Honors, see catalog section titled Honors and Special Programs.

†498. Internship.

Fall and Spring (3,3) Barnes.

This course is designed to allow students to gain knowledge through experience in a setting relevant to the study of America. Students will be supervised by a faculty advisor. The internship includes readings in related areas of theory and research as assigned by the supervising faculty. Internships must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. This course may be repeated for credit.