

Faculty of Arts and Sciences Departments of Instruction

American Studies

PROFESSORS Aday, Blakey¹, R. Price², S. Price², Scholnick, and Wallach³. ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS Barnes, Brown, Fitzgerald⁴, Gundaker, Knight, McGovern, Meyer⁵, Phillips⁶, Weiss, Wulf. ASSISTANT PROFESSOR Gamber. VISITING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR Allegro.

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.

¹ NEH Professor of Anthropology and American Studies

² Duane A. and Virginia S. Dittman Professor of American Studies and Anthropology; on leave Spring 2008

³ Ralph H. Wark Professor of Art and Art History

⁴ Director of Undergraduate Studies

⁵ On leave Fall 2007

⁶ Director of American Studies

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 or 203 (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 2007 or Spring 2008

American Landscape

Fall (4) Wallach.

Literature and Medicine

Fall (4) Scholnick.

Material Identities

Spring (4) Gundaker.

201. American Popular Culture and Modern America.

(GER 4A) Fall (4) McGovern.

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) Staff. (Not offered 2007-2008)

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.*

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.

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.

341. Artists and Cultures.*(GER 4C) Fall (3) S. Price. (Not offered 2007-2008)*

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.*

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.

Topics for Fall 2007:**The Idea of Race. (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 01)

Music and Film. (4) Preston. (Offered alternate years)

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.

Revolutionary Music and Art in Mexico (1900-1950) (4)

The Mexican Revolution (c. 1910-1920) was not waged on the battlefield alone. It was also fought through the narrative corridos that paid homage to revolutionary leaders and the cartoons and sketches printed in contemporaneous newspapers. After the fighting ended, visual artists such as Diego Rivera, Clemente Orozco, and David Alfaro Siqueiros and composers such as Carlos Chávez, Silvestre Revueltas, and José Pablo Moncayo helped reshape Mexican national identity through their works. Students in this 300-level course will have the opportunity to study cultural life in Mexico through the visual and musical art of the Revolution. (Cross-listed with MUSC 365)

Faulkner. (3) Donaldson.

An examination of selected novels and short stories by William Faulkner within the context of modernism and its conjuncture with twentieth-century southern culture. Required texts include *Flags in the Dust*, *Sanctuary*, *The Sound and the Fury*, *Selected Short Stories*, *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *The Hamlet*, and *Go Down, Moses*. (Cross-listed with ENGL 419)

Immigration and Religion. (3) Fitzgerald.

A course evaluating the major themes and issues of immigrants and their religions from the 19th through early 21st centuries. (Cross-listed with RELG 308)

Introduction to African American History. (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 (4) Fitzgerald. 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.

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 2007-2008)

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 2007-2008)

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 2007-2008)

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 2007-2008)

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. (Not Offered 2007-2008)

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 region-

alism. 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.

Topics for Fall 2007:**Crime and Justice in America.** (3) Aday.

This interdisciplinary seminar draws from American literature, history, public policy, anthropology, and sociology to examine the American experiences of crime and justice. Both crime and justice are understood as social inventions that take shape and change within the dynamics of political, historical, cultural, and social forces. (Cross-listed with SOCL 433)

Arts of the African Diaspora. (3) S. Price.

An exploration of artistic creativity in the African Diaspora. Consideration of tradition and art history, the articulation of aesthetic ideas, cross-fertilization among different forms and media, the role of gender, the uses of art in social life, the nature of meaning in these arts, and continuities with artistic ideas and forms in African societies. (Cross-listed with ANTH 582, AMST 582)

Material Life in African America. (3) Gundaker.

This seminar explores the world of things that African Americans have made and made their own in what is now the United States from the colonial era through the present. Topics include landscapes of enslavement and freedom, labor practices, architecture, foodways, objects, aesthetics, contexts of production and use, and the theories of material life, expression, and culture through which these topics are studied. (Cross-listed with ANTH 430 and BLST 306)

Writing and Reading Culture. (3) R. Price.

Trends in Ethnography (and Ethnographic History), during the past two decades. Students will begin with a classic monograph go on to read about the crisis in representation as depicted in Clifford and Marcus, and then devote themselves to a critical analysis of a range of more recent work. (Cross-listed with HIST 339 and ANTH 490)

Topics for Spring 2008:**Ethnicity and American Modernism.** (3) Weiss.

This course will consider major and marginal American writers in an anthropological and sociological perspective, with an emphasis on the problems of "identity" and "otherness" in American culture. We will also examine the relationship between "ethnic" literature that is literature by immigrants or first-generation Americans, and the racial formal innovations of High Modernism. Readings include literary works by Gertrude Stein, Mary Antin, Jean Toomer, Henry Roth, Eugene O'Neill, Amiri Baraka, Maxine Hong Kingston, and others.

***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) Fitzgerald.

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) Fitzgerald.

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.