

UNIVERSITY
OF MIAMI



American Studies

Fall 2017



American Studies Program

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American Studies

The Program in American Studies at the University of Miami fosters the interdisciplinary study of American culture and society, and explores the place of the United States in an increasingly interconnected world. Our faculty come from a wide range of fields, including history, literature, religion, art, philosophy, law, music, ethnic studies, architecture, sociology, communications, and education. What unites them is the commitment to examining the U.S. from multiple perspectives, highlighting the diversity of people, cultures, and experiences that have shaped the past and present United States. The Program places analysis of globalization at its center, and offers a hemispheric perspective that allows students and faculty to explore interests in the United States, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Pacific Rim, and other border crossings.

The undergraduate curriculum in American Studies encourages students to bridge the divide between disciplines by examining specific themes and topics in an engaging, dynamic, interdisciplinary manner. By exposing students to courses that place questions of cultural diversity, regional difference, ethnic and racial identity, gender and sexuality, class dynamics, and popular culture at the forefront of intellectual investigation, the **Program in American Studies** enables them to situate their own experiences in a wider context. It also exposes them to a multiplicity of perspectives that inform our understanding of the United States and its place in a global society. The Program strongly encourages its majors to study abroad, and faculty members help students plan their curriculum to make that option feasible.

MAJOR in American Studies (30 credits)

1. Introduction to American Studies (**AMS 101**). Specific topics for this course may change annually; its purpose will be to acquaint beginning students with the approaches and areas of inquiry common to the field.
2. **AMS 310**: The United States in the World.
3. At least two advanced seminars in American Studies at the 300-level or above.
4. At least one course in American history and at least one course in American literature.

Three courses, chosen in consultation with an American Studies advisor, in a specialized area of American Studies (200 level or higher). Students may work in areas including, but not limited to, ethnic

studies, Caribbean Studies, Latino/a Studies, environmental studies, communication studies, women's literature, urban studies, African American studies, religious studies and material culture studies. Students must take courses from at least three different departments in order to fulfill the requirements for the major.

AMS 501: Senior Project. In addition, all majors must complete AMS 501: *Senior Project*. This capstone course can take the form of an individual research project or an internship at a local cultural or civic institution. For the research option, students will identify an appropriate faculty member to supervise and grade the project, and then obtain approval from the program director before proceeding with the project. The student must produce a substantial written report or research paper, the format of which will be determined by the faculty member and student in consultation with the program director. For the internship option, students will partner with any number of local institutions and produce a creative and/or scholarly project for evaluation. The internship will be arranged through the program director, in consultation with the Butler Center. The final product will be evaluated by the program director.

American Studies majors with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 in AMS courses and an overall GPA of at least 3.0 may earn departmental honors by completing AMS 505: Honors Thesis. Candidates for departmental honors are responsible for finding a faculty member to serve as thesis advisor. Students then must complete a thesis proposal of approximately 500 words that must be approved by the thesis advisor and the program director. The format and length of the thesis will vary according to the nature of the project. Students would take AMS 501 in the fall semester of the senior year and AMS 505 in the spring to complete the honors thesis.

MINOR in American Studies (15 credits)

1. Introduction to American Studies (**AMS 101**).
 2. **AMS 310:** The United States in the World
 3. At least one course in American history or American literature.
 4. Advanced seminar in American Studies (**300-level or higher**).
- Five electives (300 level or higher).

For an advising appointment, please contact the Program Director.

Fall 2017

AMS 101- Introduction to American Studies

Contemporary Issues in the United States

Section R: TR 2:00pm-3:15pm

Instructor: Catherine Ariail

"The purpose of this course is to explore significant issues in American cities in a global frame. Topics will include immigration, race, social activism, practices of urban renewal and anti-gentrification movements. Although we will attend to several metropolitan spaces, there will be a primary focus on New York City and Miami. Our multidisciplinary approach will draw from popular cultural representations as well as history, literature, film, and photography. By engaging with theories and practices of local and digital activist communities, we will develop a specialized vocabulary for explaining how issues of race, opportunity, and metropolitan space are connected. In what ways do cities figure as a locus of multiethnic experience? Students will also engage with the city around them to consider local examples of cultural and political expression."

AMS 101- Introduction to American Studies

American Popular Culture

Section U: TR 6:25pm-7:40pm

Instructor: Aldo Regalado

This course explores the significance of popular culture in the United States. The course works from the assumption that popular culture is not a trivial form of low-brow entertainment, but rather a terrain for articulating and contesting social and cultural meaning. As such, popular culture both reflects and shapes the lived experience of individuals as well as society as a whole. The course will invite students to examine the ways in which popular culture intersects with technology, economics, politics, race, class, gender and other social realities. It also introduces students to various theoretical approaches used by scholars to interpret popular culture, and asks them to apply those methods in their own analysis of various popular culture forms. Students will be expected to read in preparation for in-class discussion on a weekly basis, and will complete writing assignments throughout the semester.

AMS 301- Topics in American Studies

Section UV: T 6:25pm-9:05pm

Instructor: Patrick McCarthy, Donald Spivey

This course presents the culture and history of the 1960s in the United States through writings, film, music, and the experiences of faculty members who participated in important events during this era of major conflict and change. We are less concerned about the precise time frame than the atmosphere of a period associated with the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, the Antiwar Movement, widespread college campus activism, urban unrest, and the Women's Movement. This also was a period when anxiety about nuclear war was prominent, the Space Race was in full swing, and concerns about ecology became widespread. Accordingly, we also will offer some discussion of international events during the period. In addition to examining primary documents, fiction, film, and the music of the 1960s, students will have the opportunity to hear the personal accounts of U.M. faculty and staff who witnessed dramatic episodes during this time of war, tumultuous political, gender, and racial upheaval, and momentous changes in the academy. We also will endeavor to make connections between the ideas and events of the 1960s and more recent developments both inside and outside the academy. Additionally, as part of our effort to make connections between the ideas and events of the 1960s and contemporary life outside the academy, we will offer students the option to fulfill part of the course requirements through service-learning work in a variety of settings away from the U.M. campus. There will be no effort to exclude anyone of any political persuasion either past or present. Indeed, opposing points of view are encouraged. We think that something as complex and multifaceted as "The Sixties" requires a range of personal perspectives and interpretations, for even today the era of "The Sixties" provokes passionate responses from those who were there as well as those who were not.

Combined with HIS 372 and ENG 389

AMS 322- Topic in American Studies- Literature

Section C: MWF 10:10am-11:00 am

Instructor: Anthony Barthelemy

This semester we will look at some classics from the African American literary canon that are still provocative and relevant today. Issues to be discussed include artistic and political responses to racism and racial oppression, gender and sexual identity, family and family life, economics and racial uplift. Works will include Richard Wright's *12 Million Black Voices*, Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave*, Nella Larson's *Passing*, Ernest Gaines' *A Lesson Before Dying*, Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, August Wilson's *Fences*, and selected poems of Langston Hughes and Gwendolyn Brooks.

Combined with ENG 260 C and AAS 290 C

AMS 322- Topic in American Studies- Literature

Section D: MWF 11:15am-12:05 pm
Instructor: Peter Schmitt

A survey course in the development of American literature from the mid-19th C. to the present. Cultural and social history is a vital context to this evolving native tradition, but equal weight will be given to the meanings of the individual works themselves—close explication will reveal the choices each writer has made, how the stories and poems “work” on their own, how they speak to us today. Writers studied include Whitman, Dickinson, Chesnutt, Crane, Chopin, Eliot, Frost, Cather, Wharton, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner, O’Connor, and Wolff.

Combined with ENG 214 D

AMS 322- Topic in American Studies- Literature

Section E: MWF 12:20pm-1:10 pm
Instructor: Joseph Alkana

The primary goal of this course is to help you develop an understanding of pre-Civil War literary history in the United States and its relationship to cultural, social, and intellectual developments. The material covered in the course should enhance your enjoyment and comprehension of literature by improving your critical reading skills. We will read short fiction, non-fiction, and poetry by such writers as Anne Bradstreet, Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Herman Melville, Henry David Thoreau, Edgar Allan Poe, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Walt Whitman. In addition, we will read one of the great novels of the period by Nathaniel Hawthorne as well as Frederick Douglass’s classic slave narrative. We will discuss concepts which arose in the literature that remain important, such as visions of the ideal American society. You will have the opportunity to develop your thoughts about the literature in several short writing assignments, a pair of essays, and a final examination.

Combined with ENG 213 E

AMS 322- Topic in American Studies- Literature

Section O: TR 9:30am-10:45 am
Instructor: John Funchion

Edgar Allan Poe has remained a fixture of popular American culture since the nineteenth century. The circulation of his stories coincided with the rise of a new form of mass media: the periodical. Fittingly, Poe continues to surface in the mass media of our own age, as evinced by *The Simpson’s* popular rendition of “The Raven” and James McTeigue’s movie *The Raven*. Yet Poe’s place in American literary history is vexed. In the early twentieth century, a respected intellectual historian, V.L. Parrington, declared that “so much only need be said” about Poe because his work “lies outside the main current of American thought.” Conversely, Toni Morrison noted that “no early American writer is more important to the concept of American Africanism than Poe” because his work controversially revolves around the terror of blackness. Across the Atlantic, on the other hand, French writers and intellectuals from Baudelaire to Derrida have long displayed an infatuation with in his work. This course will invite students

to revisit these many readings of Poe and to explore their own interpretations. Readings will include Poe's prose and poetry, some popular adaptations of his work, and relevant writing by his contemporaries and later authors indebted to his work. This course will help students develop their critical thinking and writing skills by requiring active participation in class discussions, several informal writing responses, two short formal papers, one long formal paper, and a final exam.

Combined with ENG 345 O

AMS 322- Topic in American Studies- Literature

The end of the American Century

Section Q: TR 12:30pm-1:45pm

Instructor: Lindsay Thomas

What does the end of empire look and feel like? And how does the end change our understanding of what that empire was? This course examines U.S. literature from WWII to the present, or from a period that has been termed the "American century" because of the dominant role the U.S. played in shaping global politics and culture during this time. However, as many recent events have demonstrated, this period of dominance may now be drawing to a close. While we will emphasize how the fiction and poetry we read address many different historical, political, and social issues important to this era, we will pay special attention to how these works negotiate and challenge the global power and dominance of the U.S. during this period. We will also consider what the so-called "American century" looks like from the other side, after the end of empire

Combines with ENG 485 Q

AMS 325- Topic in American Studies- Law
Intolerance Contemporary American Studies

Section J: MWF 5:00pm-6:15pm

Instructor: Sanford Bohrer

When it comes to people who look, believe, or act differently from you, are you a "tolerant" person? What does that mean to you? We hear a lot of talk about "tolerance" and "intolerance" of those who are different from some of us, most recently brown-skinned Muslims from the Middle East. Tolerance, in this context, means I don't like you, I'm suspicious of you, you disgust me, or I'm watching you, but I'll let you live and work here. The two words – tolerance and intolerance - seem to define the debate. But by allowing these two words to define the debate, we have limited our thinking. We do not talk about "understanding" these different people or "accepting" them. As George Orwell noted in his once famous and now famous again 1984, by manipulating the language itself, the government altered the public's way of thinking. The goal, he wrote, was to so limit language as to make different thinking impossible because people will lack the words to conceptualize it. This class explores these issues as they relate to religious and cultural differences here in America.

AMS 325- Topic in American Studies- Law

Section R: TR 2:00pm-3:15pm

Instructor: Sybil Lipschultz

The development of legal thought and practice in the context of American politics, economy and ideology during the twentieth century. Special consideration will be given to social movements and their treatment under the rule of law.

Combined with HIS 376 and INS 310

AMS 327- Topic in American Studies- Film

Section D: MW 11:15am-12:30pm

Instructor: Kerli Kirch

Women, Media, and Popular Culture examines gender representation in film, television, and other American media from the perspective of feminist theory and cultural studies. The course is taught from a cultural studies perspective where students will gain skills in critical analysis and media literacy. In addition to exploring how gender is portrayed in media texts, the course will also introduce how gender issues are studied through production and reception analysis. As a result of this course, the students will explore the many ways that women have been portrayed – and how they have portrayed themselves – within popular culture. Furthermore, they will also become familiar with the ways in which Hollywood representation has been shaped by formal systems and institutional forces.

Combined with CIM 408 and WGS 350

AMS 330- Topic in American Studies- Sociology

Section O: MW 9:30am-10:45am

Instructor: Marvin Dawkins

This course examines the origin and evolution of the "ghetto" as a concept and the social and historical significance of the ghetto in understanding the development of black community life in urban America

Combined with SOC 388 O and AAS 390

AMS 334- Topic in American Studies- Ethnic

Section S: TR 3:30pm-4:45pm

Instructor: Rachel Panton

Upon entry into the U.S., black slave women introduced their African foodways into American culture as evidenced by the Gullah Geechee culture in the Carolinas. At the same time, slave women who were sold further inland lost much of their indigenous foodways and were forced to make do with the scraps (hog maws, fatback, pig ears, pig feet, chitterlings, etc.) from their owners. In both cases, black slave women were central to the survival of black communities whether they were cooking in the kitchen in the big house, growing their own crops, controlling the poultry market, or prescribing herbs and tonics for healing through rootwork. Today, many Black women face high numbers of diabetes, hypertension, cancer and a host of other diseases, which many blame on a post-slave diet or a loss of indigenous cuisine. Through slave narratives, academic articles, and contemporary commercial memoirs we will trace the culinary agency of black women and examine our current state of affairs.

Combined with AAS 390 , WGS 350, and ENG 306

AMS 337 – Topic in American Studies- Culture

Caribbean History I

Section Q: TuTh 12:30pm-1:45pm

Instructor: Katherine Ramsey

This course will introduce students to major topics, debates, and themes in Caribbean history from the fifteenth to the early nineteenth centuries. Areas of focus will include the dynamics of fifteenth-century Amerindian societies; the Columbian “encounter” and Spanish conquest of the Caribbean; piracy in the Spanish Caribbean by the British, French, and Dutch; the establishment by those powers of permanent colonial settlements in the region and the institution of the plantation complex based on the production of sugarcane through the labor of enslaved Africans. We will closely examine histories of slave resistance and rebellion, focusing in particular on the insurrection in the French colony of Saint-Domingue that in 1804 culminated in the founding of Haiti, the second independent nation in the Western hemisphere after the United States. We will explore the shifting ways in which the Caribbean can be defined as a region over the course of these histories, and examine the centrality of the Caribbean to larger world histories of colonialism, capitalism, slavery and emancipation, migration, religious transformation, republicanism, and nation-state formation — in short to the making of the modern world. On two occasions the class will visit the UM Libraries Cuban Heritage Collection and Special Collections to examine and discuss archival resources connected to our studies.

Combined with AAS 290; LAS 301; INS 310; HIS 317

AMS 401 – Seminar in American Studies

Religion, Evolution, and the U.S. Constitution

Section M: M 5:00pm-7:30pm

Instructor: Susan Haack

An interdisciplinary course including topics in history, religion, law, philosophy, and biology: the Religion Clauses of the U.S. constitution, with special focus on the Establishment Clause, and specifically its application to the teaching of evolution in public high schools.

AMS 501- Senior Project

Section 05: Arranged

Instructor: Donette Francis