AMERICAN STUDIES, PH.D.

American Studies is the study of American society and cultures in all their diversity. What sets this field apart from other academic disciplines is its interdisciplinary approach to analyzing the past and the present, combining the study of history, literature, art and visual culture, and the material world. The discipline is based on the idea that the culture around us — film, food, TV, buildings, fiction and the landscape — is as essential for understanding the world as written historical texts.

Saint Louis University’s American studies curriculum has the flexibility for students to pursue their own focused interests, and to connect their work with scholarly communities and public institutions. The Department of American Studies maintains a strong commitment to the sound, ethical and broad professional development of every student.

American studies students have access to excellent library and computer facilities, the extensive audio and visual equipment of the Instructional Media Center, training and certification by the Reinert Center for Teaching Excellence, and grant and scholarship assistance from the Office of Research Services.

Curriculum Overview

The Doctor of Philosophy is the terminal research degree in American studies. A total of 45 credits of coursework beyond the B.A. degree, plus 12 credits of dissertation writing, is required. Students with M.A. degrees may be able to count up to 18 credits of their previous relevant coursework.

Fieldwork and Research Opportunities

Graduate students benefit from the rich archival and institutional resources available in St. Louis itself, including relationships with sites such as the Missouri Historical Society, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, Circuit Court Records Project, Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, Sheldon Galleries, Contemporary Art Museum, Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri Botanical Garden and Historic Landmarks Association.

Careers

Graduates have gone on to careers in libraries, museum administration and public humanities, as well as educational administration, university teaching or study of the law.

Admission Requirements

Undergraduate degree or equivalent in a humanities or social science area; additional prerequisite work may be required at the discretion of the department. Students with relevant M.A. degrees may transfer some credits, but all Ph.D. students will receive an M.A. as well.

Standardized test scores are considered as well as GPA and TOEFL (if applicable).

Application Requirements

• Application form and fee
• Transcript(s)
• Three letters of recommendation
• GRE scores
• Résumé
• Goal statement
• Writing sample
• Interview (strongly recommended)

Requirements for International Students

All admission policies and requirements for domestic students apply to international students along with the following:

• Demonstrate English Language Proficiency (http://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/office-admission/undergraduate/english-language-proficiency)
• Proof of financial support must include:
  • A letter of financial support from the person(s) or sponsoring agency funding the time at Saint Louis University
  • A letter from the sponsor’s bank verifying that the funds are available and will be so for the duration of study at the University
• Academic records, in English translation, of students who have undertaken postsecondary studies outside the United States must include the courses taken and/or lectures attended, practical laboratory work, the maximum and minimum grades attainable, the grades earned or the results of all end-of-term examinations, and any honors or degrees received. WES and ECE transcripts are accepted.

Assistantship Application Deadline

Students who want to be to be considered for an assistantship must submit their application by early February.

American Studies Application Review Process

All applications are reviewed by the entire faculty.

Scholarships, Assistantships and Financial Aid

For priority consideration for graduate assistantships and tuition scholarships, applicants should complete their applications by the program admission deadlines listed. Fellowships and assistantships provide a stipend and health insurance for the duration of the award.

For more information, visit the student financial services office online at http://www.slu.edu/financial-aid.

Learning Outcomes

1. Graduates will have knowledge of historical development of American cultures and ideas.
2. Graduates will have knowledge of diversity of American cultures and experiences.
3. Graduates will have knowledge of relationships to global cultures.
4. Graduates will be able to use interdisciplinary research methods.
5. Graduates will be able to interpret a wide variety of American cultural texts: e.g. material, visual, literary.
6. Graduates will be able to employ knowledge in public life and broader contexts.
7. Graduates will be able to apply knowledge and methods to questions of social justice and solidarity.

Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASTD 5000</td>
<td>Perspectives in American Studies</td>
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</table>
**ASTD 5900** Practice of American Studies

4000-level course in foreign language translation, literature or translation examination

**Elective Courses**

Select eleven of the following: 33

- **ASTD 5100** Early American Photography
- **ASTD 5300** Cultures of the American South
- **ASTD 5400** Tocqueville's America
- **ASTD 5500** American Autobiographies
- **ASTD 5700** Metropolitan America
- **ASTD 5800** Workshop in the American Metropolis
- **ASTD 5900** Practice of American Studies
- **ASTD 5020** Frontiers & Borderlands: Contact & Conquest in the American Imagination
- **ASTD 5030** Women's Lives
- **ASTD 5010** African American Politics, Culture & Identity
- **ASTD 6000** Myth Busting and Myth Making in Recent American Studies Scholarship
- **ASTD 6200** Visual Culture Theory
- **ASTD 6300** Jazz, Cities, and Social Movements
- **ASTD 6400** Transnational America
- **ASTD 6500** Visions of U.S. Empire
- **ASTD 6600** Topics in American Urbanism
- **ASTD 6700** From Satchmo to Strangelove: Cold War Cultural Politics and the 'American Century'
- **ASTD 6800** Edibles are Fun to Think With: American Food & Culture
- **ASTD 6900** Public Art & Memory
- **ASTD 6010** American Studies Interdisciplinary Seminar
- **ASTD 6020** American Political Thought
- **ASTD 6030** Leadership & Culture

**Dissertation Research**

**ASTD 6990** Dissertation Research

Total Credits 36

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### Non-Course Requirements

**Qualifying Exam**

At the end of the second semester of coursework, students will take a three-hour qualifying exam to demonstrate the growing knowledge of the field. The exam consists of essay questions provided by American studies course instructors. Students must answer two of the questions: one covering material from **ASTD 5000 Perspectives in American Studies** (3 cr), and the other chosen from questions about materials covered classes taken during the first-year semester when **ASTD 5000 Perspectives in American Studies** (3 cr) was not offered.

**Written Exam**

After completing the qualifying exam, students will create a three-person committee (one chair and two additional faculty readers). Working closely with the committee members, students will develop two papers: one literature review and one portfolio paper.

**Literature Review**

The literature review is based in extensive reading in three subject areas. The portfolio paper is generally a revised and expanded version of a seminar paper, written as a publishable article. Both should be connected to the area of future dissertation research and demonstrate extensive knowledge in the student's fields.

**Oral Exam**

After the three-person committee has accepted final drafts of the written exam, students will schedule a 90-minute oral exam. In general, full-time students aim to take their oral exams at the end of their third year. Funded students must complete the comprehensive exam within one calendar year of completing coursework.

**Continuation Standards**

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in all graduate/professional courses.

**Roadmap**

Roadmaps are recommended semester-by-semester plans of study for programs and assume full-time enrollment unless otherwise noted.

Courses and milestones designated as critical (marked with !) must be completed in the semester listed to ensure a timely graduation. Transfer credit may change the roadmap.

This roadmap should not be used in the place of regular academic advising appointments. All students are encouraged to meet with their advisor/mentor each semester. Requirements, course availability and sequencing are subject to change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<td><strong>Year One</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ASTD 5000</strong></td>
<td>Perspectives in American Studies (Required)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two additional American Studies grad seminars</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Three American Studies grad seminars</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>Qualifying Exam</td>
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<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
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<td>Three American Studies grad seminars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify an MA advisor and project</td>
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<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ASTD 5900</strong></td>
<td>Practice of American Studies</td>
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<td>Two additional American Studies grad seminars</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete Checklist for MA graduation</td>
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<td>Complete MA Portfolio Paper and Defense</td>
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<td>Total Credits</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year Three</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2-3 American Studies grad seminars</td>
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<td>6-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Select Literature Review topics and advisors; Begin to put reading lists together</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Credits</td>
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<td>6-9</td>
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### Spring

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<td>Practice of American Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or ASTD 6100</td>
<td>or Dissertation Colloquium</td>
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</table>

Prepare literature reviews for oral exams 6

| Credits | 3 |

### Year Four

#### Fall

Defend Literature reviews in Oral Exams

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASTD 6990</td>
<td>Dissertation Research</td>
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Prepare Prospectus

| Credits | 6 |

#### Spring

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<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASTD 6100</td>
<td>Dissertation Colloquium (Required if not taken semester six))</td>
<td>3</td>
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| Credits | 9 |

#### Summer

Remaining semesters are dedicated to dissertation research and writing.

| Credits | 0 |

**Total Credits** 60-63

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1. Over their coursework, students must take at least two 5000 level (reading) and two 6000 level (research) seminars. Up to two courses outside of the department may be substituted for ASTD seminars, with the approval of the advisor and Grad Coordinator.

2. Last week of classes or during Exam Week.

3. Department deadlines for spring are announced each fall.

4. Required (must take when offered in 2nd or 3rd year)

5. Required (must take 6100 in 3rd or 4th year).

These two required courses are offered alternate spring semesters.

6. Oral Exams must be completed within two semesters of completing coursework, not including ASTD 6100 Dissertation Colloquium (3 cr) which is sometimes taken after orals.

**Program Notes:** Students can, but are not required to use the summers to take their foreign language requirement, taken an outside course or pursue an internship for credit, or work on their oral exams.