



Bachelor of Arts in American Studies

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Why should I major in American studies at Cal State Fullerton?

American studies provides a rich liberal arts education that develops critical thinking and writing skills essential to success in any profession. Time spent as a major in American studies will not only contribute to your professional and academic growth, it will also provide you with an interdisciplinary background and a fuller understanding of the richness and diversity of American culture.

The Department of American Studies at Cal State Fullerton has earned a national reputation for excellence. We offer an extensive selection of courses taught by a professionally active faculty who are accessible to students and committed to their intellectual development.

What are the research interests of the faculty?

Our full-time faculty, who have a wide range of research interests and teaching specialties, include:

ALLAN AXELRAD, (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) Landscape, the mythic West, concepts of community. (1976)

JESSE BATTAN, (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles) Gender and sexuality, Victorian culture, film and society. (1980)

CARRIE LANE CHET, (Ph.D., Yale University) Cultural meaning of work, ethnography, business and labor history. (2005)

WAYNE HOBSON, (Ph.D., Stanford University) Images of crime and violence, public memory, religion and culture. (1973)

JOHN IBSON, (Ph.D., Brandeis University) American manhood, visual culture, sexual identity. (1972)

ELAINE LEWINNEK, (Ph.D., Yale University) Urban culture, historical development of suburbia. (2005)

KAREN LYSTRA, (Ph.D., Case Western Reserve University) Gender and sexuality, family history, cultural theory. (1973)

TERRI SNYDER, (Ph.D., University of Iowa) Gender studies, early American history, the visual arts. (1989)

MICHAEL STEINER, (Ph.D., University of Minnesota) Regional and folk studies, built environment, environmental history. (1975)

PAMELA STEINLE, (Ph.D., University of California, Irvine) Literature and culture, television studies, cultural theory. (1980)

LEILA ZENDERLAND, (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) History of the social sciences, popular culture, culture of the South. (1986)

What is American studies?

American studies is an interdisciplinary field which examines culture – the shared system of beliefs, behavior, symbols, and material objects through which Americans have given meaning to their lives. Our courses examine American cultural life in the past and present, always with the aim of helping students better understand their experiences and society. We study how Americans have thought about and experienced such matters as gender, ethnic, racial and regional identities; humor; religion; crime and violence; childhood; family life; the built environment; community; mental health and illness; cultural ideals and cultural criticism.

What types of career opportunities are available?

Students with degrees in American studies enter a variety of professions. According to a recent survey, the majority of our graduates have pursued careers in business, law, government service and teaching. Because American studies is interdisciplinary, the major provides an excellent preparation for **elementary school teaching** and **secondary teaching** in the social sciences or history. Students interested in a teaching career should work closely with their advisor.

What courses are required for a major in American studies?

The undergraduate major program consists of 36 units: 12 units of American studies core courses plus 24 units of upper-division electives tailored to the interests and goals of the individual student.

Core Requirements (12 units)

American Studies 201 Introduction to American Studies

American Studies 301 American Character

American Studies 350 Seminar in Theory and Method of American Studies

American Studies 401T Proseminar in American Studies (Topics include Mark Twain and His World; American Culture and Nature; American Culture Through Social Science; Sexual Orientations in American Culture.)

Upper-Division Electives (24 units)

In close consultation with a department adviser, students select 24 units of upper-division courses and may follow either Plan A or Plan B.

Plan A

Take courses entirely within the American Studies Department, or combine course work in American studies with appropriate classes in one or two other related fields such as Afro-Ethnic studies, anthropology, Asian-American studies, Chicano studies, communications, criminal justice, English, geography, history, political science, psychology, sociology, and women's studies.

Plan B

Focus on particular issues of interest that pertain to the American experience, working outside the American Studies Department as an adviser deems appropriate.

Second Language Graduation Requirement

Students in the Bachelor of Arts in American Studies program who enter Cal State Fullerton as first-time freshmen in fall 2006, or who enter a community college in fall 2006 with intent to transfer to Cal State Fullerton, will be required to show proficiency in a second language as a condition of graduation with a bachelor's degree. (See "Graduation Requirements for the Bachelor's Degree in the 2005-2007 University Catalog.")

What are some courses offered in American studies?

In addition to required core courses, a sample of department undergraduate offerings include: American Studies 300 *Introduction to American Popular Culture*, American Studies 312 *Multicultural Identities and Women's Experience*, American Studies 318 *Hollywood and America: Using Film as a Cultural Document*, American Studies 346 *American Culture Through Spectator Sports*, American Studies 377 *Prejudice and American Culture*, American Studies 395 *California Cultures*, American Studies 402 *Religion and American Culture*, American Studies 405 *Images of Crime and Violence in American Culture*, American Studies 407 *American Humor*, American Studies 413 *The American Male*, American Studies 416 *Southern California Culture: A Study of American Regionalism*, American Studies 419 *Love in America*, American Studies 420 *Childhood and Family in American Culture*, American Studies 433 *Visual Arts in Contemporary America*, American Studies 438 *American Minds: Images of Sickness and Health*, American Studies 439 *American Photographs*, American Studies 442 *Television and American Culture*, American Studies 449 *The American West in Symbol and Myth*, American Studies 450 *Women in American Society*, American Studies 460 *Bohemians and Beats: Cultural Radicalism in America*, American Studies 465 *The Culture of the American South*, American Studies 468 *1960s America*.

Is it possible to have a double major?

The American studies major serves as a rewarding complement to many other majors, often providing a broad and useful perspective on work done in other fields. A double major is often easy to arrange since the American studies major allows some course work in at least one other department and because

12 units of course work used to complete the requirements of one major also can be used to meet the requirements of a second major.

What courses are required for a minor in American studies?

The minor is designed for students who want to complete some structured work in the field and have that work officially recognized on a transcript and a diploma. The minor requires completion of 21 units: American Studies 201, American Studies 301 or American Studies 345, and American Studies 401T, plus 12 units of electives. Three of the elective units may be taken in a related department upon approval of an American Studies Department advisor. At least six of the elective units must be upper-division. Courses taken to meet general education requirements may be used toward completion of the minor.

What scholarships are available?

We award \$500 per semester for the David Jon Vaca Memorial Scholarship, which is given to an undergraduate major in American studies based on need and academic achievement. Application information and deadlines are announced early each semester.

What activities are available for American studies majors?

The American Studies Student Association is an active group that sponsors academic and social gatherings such as lectures, parties, field trips and symposia. In addition to the faculty advisers for the Student Association, other faculty members actively participate in these events. Faculty and students also work together to publish *The American Papers*, an annual journal of the best papers submitted in American studies classes. In addition, the Department maintains an alumni association that sponsors cultural and intellectual events.

Where can I get advisement?

The American Studies faculty take pride in their accessibility to students and enjoy talking with students outside of the classroom. Every member of the faculty is available to students for advisement, and students are encouraged to meet with their advisers on a regular basis.

How can I learn more?

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. Our department's website (<http://hss.fullerton.edu/amst>) introduces our faculty members, describes our courses, and provides information on upcoming professional events and student and alumni activities.

You can also contact the Department of American Studies at (714) 278-2441, visit us on campus in University Hall 313, or write to us at California State University, Fullerton, P.O. Box 6868, Fullerton, California, 92834-6868.