

Northeastern State University 2020-21 NSU Graduate Catalog

American Studies, M.A.

OSRHE Program Code: 112

CIP Code: 050102

Major Code: 9855

(36 Semester Hours)

Purpose

The Master of Arts in American Studies is an interdisciplinary study of the American experience and culture. The program approaches American culture from many directions with a desire to view America as a whole rather than from the perspective of a single discipline. The program draws upon the expertise in a wide range of fields and programs, including:

- Anthropology
- Cherokee and Indigenous Studies
- Communication
- Criminal Justice
- English
- Geography
- History
- Political Science
- Sociology
- Women's and Gender Studies

The Master of Arts in American Studies consists of two (2) core courses in the scope and methods of American Studies. Students then work with a faculty committee to develop an individualized course of study in the following concentrations: American Cultural Studies, American History, or American Politics.

Graduates of the program find careers in a variety of areas such as education (high-school and community college level), government or civil service, museums, law, communication, and business.

Learning Outcomes

The following learning outcomes have been established for students earning an MA in American Studies:

1. Students will develop an interdisciplinary interpretive framework for studying the American experience,

- enabling the student to solve practical and theoretical problems.
2. Students will develop an understanding of the theoretical and methodological approaches used in American Studies and interdisciplinary scholarship.
 3. Students will acquire an advanced knowledge of the major movements in the American experience.
 4. Students will design and implement an interdisciplinary research project that contributes to the field of American Studies; or apply American Studies perspectives beyond the classroom and scholarly community through an internship.
 5. Students will communicate research findings through clear, well-organized written and oral presentations.

Admission

Admission to the American Studies program requires:

1. An earned bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
2. An approved Application for Graduate Admission.
3. Official transcripts of all previous coursework sent directly from the school to the Graduate College office.
4. A grade point average of 2.5 based on a 4.0 scale on all undergraduate coursework attempted; or a 2.75 based on a 4.0 scale in the last 60 semester hours of undergraduate coursework attempted.
5. A writing sample (a recent paper, minimum 5 pages in length, of original documented research) and a statement of purpose (1-2 pages, identifying the student's reasons for pursuing graduate study).

Admission requirements must be met prior to the student's first enrollment.

Advisement

An advisor is assigned by the Graduate College when the student is admitted to the program. The student should schedule an appointment with the advisor prior to first enrollment. The advisor counsels the student and assists in the selection of classes. The advisor and student will also select an advisory committee for continued advisement.

Graduate Advisory Committee

The student's program will be under the direction of the graduate committee. This committee shall consist of 2-3 graduate faculty members representing at least 2 disciplines in the American Studies program. The responsibilities of the committee are as follow:

1. To develop a plan of study with the student consistent with the student's career interests;
2. To monitor the student's progress in the program;
3. To evaluate the thesis, if the thesis option is chosen;
4. To monitor the public internship, if the public internship option is chosen;
5. To administer the comprehensive examination(s) required prior to graduation.

Plan of Study/Statement of Understanding

The plan of study (degree plan) will be prepared by the advisory committee in conference with the student. The degree plan is signed by the student, an advisor, and forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate College for approval. All courses approved for the student's degree plan except those indicated, will focus predominately on some aspect of the American experience. Courses of a technical nature and those stressing methodology, administrative

procedures, or development of occupational or professional skills do not fall within the scope of the program even if they deal exclusively with American topics.

The Statement of Understanding is reviewed and explained to the student when the degree plan is made and must be signed by the student and an advisor. It is sent with the signed degree plan to the Graduate College. After approval by the Dean of the Graduate College, copies of the Statement of Understanding and degree plan are sent to the advisor and student. Degree plans remain in effect throughout a student's graduate program providing the student enrolls in at least three hours of coursework for two of the three semesters (summer, fall, and spring) of each academic year until the degree is awarded.

Any changes in the student's plan of study require written approval of an advisor and Dean of the Graduate College.

Degree Requirements

The candidate for the Master of Arts in American Studies degree must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Complete 36 semester hours of graduate credit applicable to the American Studies program;
2. Achieve a "B" average in all graduate coursework attempted, with no grade below a "C" applicable to the degree;
3. Satisfactorily complete the comprehensive oral examination covering coursework and thesis, if the thesis option was chosen;
4. Satisfactorily complete the written and oral examinations over all coursework including the internship, if the public internship option was chosen.

Program of Study

The Master of Arts in American Studies degree consists of 36 semester hours of graduate study, six (6) of which are specified below. These two courses should be taken early in the student's program. Students must choose a minimum of 3 credit hours from each concentration. Students may focus remaining hours in the concentration(s) of their choice. Students may petition the program director for permission to count courses not on the approved list.

The student who chooses the thesis option will be required to complete 30 hours of coursework. For the remaining 6 hours, the student will enroll in an appropriate number of thesis hours per semester until completed. Before enrolling in the thesis hours the student must have completed 21 hours of graduate coursework toward the degree. Students who have selected the thesis option must pass an oral exam focusing on defense of the thesis but which may also involve discussion of coursework. These examinations will be administered by the student's graduate advisory committee and may include additional faculty members representing the various subjects in the student's program.

Student who choose the public internship option will complete 33 hours of coursework. For the final 3 hours, they enroll in American Studies 5993 and complete a public internship. They will also be required to pass comprehensive written and oral examinations. These exams cover all coursework completed for the degree, including the internship. Before enrolling in the internship the student must have completed 21 hours of graduate coursework toward the degree.

Program Checklist

1. Apply for admission to Graduate College thirty days prior to first enrollment for graduate studies.
2. Receive advisor assignment when admitted.
3. Complete admission requirements to the American Studies program before first enrollment.
4. Interview with advisor prior to each enrollment.
5. Enroll for classes as specified in the Schedule of Classes.
6. Select advisory committee within the first 18 hours of graduate studies.
7. Complete American Studies 5003 and 5833 early in the program.
8. Develop and file an approved degree plan within the first 18 hours of graduate studies.
9. Complete additional six hours of graduate coursework when applicable.
10. Request degree check prior to the semester of expected graduation.
11. Apply for degree at the beginning of the semester of final enrollment, except summer graduates should apply by March 1.
12. Complete thesis and present final copy to the advisory committee 60 days prior to the end of the semester; two approved copies must be presented to the Graduate College four weeks prior to the end of the semester.
13. Complete oral examination six weeks prior to the end of the regular semester.
14. Complete written examination eight weeks prior to the end of the regular semester for students not selecting the thesis option.

Program Outline:

I. Required Courses: 6 hours

- [AMST 5003 - Theory and Practice in American Studies](#)
- [AMST 5833 - American Studies in Perspective](#)

II. Electives: 24-27 hours

Choose 24-27 hours from the following concentrations. Students, in consultation with their advisory committee, must choose a minimum of 3 credit hours from each area of concentration. Students may focus remaining hours in the concentration(s) of their choice. Students may petition the program director for permission to count hours not on the following list.

A maximum of nine hours may be completed from advisor-approved courses offered at the 4000 level. A grade of B or better must be earned in any applicable 4000-level courses.

A. American Cultural Studies

- [AMST 5213 - Seminar in American Cultural Studies](#)
- [AMST 5923 - Seminar in American Studies](#)
- [COMM 5523 - Rhetoric of U.S. Women's Movements](#)
- [CR J 5033 - Crime Theory](#)

- [CR J 5063 - The Criminal Justice System](#)
- [CR J 5073 - Constitutional Criminal Law](#)
- [CR J 5143 - Special Topics in Criminal Justice](#)
- [CR J 5233 - Native American Law & Justice](#)

B. American History

- [AMST 5413 - Seminar in American Historical Studies](#)
- [AMST 5853 - Literature and American History](#)
- [AMST 5923 - Seminar in American Studies](#)
- [HIST 5403 - Contemporary American History](#)
- [HIST 5430 - Seminar: U.S. History](#)

C. American Politics

- [AMST 5013 - Seminar in American Politics](#)
- [AMST 5023 - Seminar in American Philosophy and the Law](#)
- [AMST 5033 - Seminar in American Policy](#)
- [AMST 5613 - Seminar in American Political Studies](#)
- [AMST 5923 - Seminar in American Studies](#)
- [MS 5753 - Media and Politics](#)

III. Thesis (6 hours) or Public Internship and Comprehensive Exam (3 hours):

3-6 hours. A student pursuing the Master of Arts in American Studies must either write a thesis or complete a public internship in American Studies.

A. Thesis

The student who chooses the thesis option will be required to complete 30 hours of coursework. For the remaining 6 hours, the student will enroll in an appropriate number of thesis hours per semester until completed. A student must enroll in a minimum of 6 thesis hours. Before enrolling in the thesis hours the student must have completed 21 hours of graduate coursework toward the degree. Students who have selected the thesis option must pass an oral exam focusing on defense of the thesis but which may also involve discussion of coursework. These examinations will be administered by the student's graduate advisory committee which may include additional faculty members representing the various subjects on the student's program.

Students must follow the guidelines and timelines required by the Graduate College for the submission of the thesis.

- [AMST 5980 - Thesis](#)

B. Public Internship Option and Comprehensive Examination

The student who chooses the public internship option will be required to complete 33 hours of coursework. For the final 3 hours, they will enroll in American Studies 5933, in which they will complete a public internship. They will also be required to pass comprehensive written examinations. These exams will cover all coursework completed for the degree, including the internship. Before enrolling in the internship the student must have completed 21 hours of graduate coursework toward the degree.

- [AMST 5993 - Public Internship in American Studies](#)
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