AMERICAN STUDIES (BA IN AMERICAN STUDIES)

The American Studies Program

The American Studies program engages students in the examination of the culture and society of the United States, past and present, and asks students to consider the United States of America in a national, hemispheric (the Americas), and global context. As a nation born of immigration and encounter, the United States has always embraced diverse racial and ethnic groups in mutual encounter and conflict. It has also undergone endless change, through transformations wrought by geographical expansion, democracy, industrialization, urbanization, and the pressures of war and international politics. These forces ranged from the removal of Native Americans from their lands, and enslavement of Africans and their descendants, to the most intimate realms of life, such as the relations between men and women in the home and attitudes toward the body, gender, and sexuality.

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 the civil rights movements of the 20th and 21st centuries, 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. 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 across the Americas 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, immigrant communities and their experiences in and effects on the cultures and politics of the United States, or the American experience of industrial capitalism as a variant on a general model around the world.

Required Credit Hours: 33

The 33 credit hours must include the following:

Major Writing Requirement

A student who satisfies all requirements for the major in American Studies will also satisfy the Major Writing Requirement.

Core Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
AMST 200	Rethinking America: Questions, Debates, Futures	4
AMST 370	Junior Seminar: America and the Americas	4
At least 3 credits in an advanced seminar, chosen from:		
AMST 470	Topics American Studies	
AMST 490	Advanced Topics in American Studies	
a 400-level seminar approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies		
The American Studies capstone:		
AMST 410	Williamsburg Documentary Project	4

Electives:

American Studies majors may take elective courses in American Studies or other courses outside of American Studies that carry the AMST subject attribute. Such courses may be in—but not limited to—Africana Studies, Anthropology, Art History, English, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, Global Studies, Government, History, Religious Studies, Sociology, etc. Students may also seek approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies to have an elective count toward the American Studies major.

Note:

- Of the 33 credit hours, at least 17 must be in courses numbered 300 and above.
- 15 credits must be taken in residence at William & Mary, at the W&M in Washington Program, and/or in William & Mary faculty-led and faculty-assisted study abroad programs.
- A maximum of three courses may be counted toward the COLL requirements and toward the American Studies major
- A maximum of eight credits can be counted toward both of two majors or toward a major and a minor.