

AMERICAN STUDIES (MA IN AMERICAN STUDIES)

Degree Requirements

Students will take two semesters of course work and will prepare and defend a thesis. Most full-time students will complete the requirements within one year. Students should consult the American Studies Graduate Handbook, available at the Program website, for a fuller account of program requirements.

Course Requirements

Twenty-four course credit hours are required, including 6 credits of AMST 695 Dir Thesis Master's Research. In addition, 6 credits of thesis preparation under AMST 700 Thesis are required. The total of 30 required credits will be distributed as follows:

Code	Title	Hours
AMST 661	Intro American Studies	3
Select courses from the following list: ¹		15
AMST 590	Topics in American Studies	
AMST 690	Directed Research	
AMST 715	Topics in American Studies	
AMST 695	Dir Thesis Master's Research ²	6
AMST 700	Thesis ²	6
Total Hours		30

¹ Graduate level seminars offered by the Department of History or the Department of Anthropology can substitute for one or more of these courses, with permission from the Program Director of Graduate Studies.

² 3 credits each semester for a total of 6 credits

At least 12 credit hours (4 courses) must be earned in courses numbered 600 or above, including AMST 695 Dir Thesis Master's Research and excluding AMST 700 Thesis.

Thesis Requirement

Students pursuing the M.A. complete a thesis based on original research that makes a contribution to the study of American life. The M.A. thesis consists either of a portfolio containing two significant research papers that usually total between 35 and 65 pages or one substantial, long essay of the same length. Students should consult with their advisor and the director of graduate studies if they wish to include a digital component in their M.A. portfolio.

Exam Requirement

The thesis, supplemented by an oral defense before a faculty committee, will serve as the M.A. field examination in American Studies.

Language Requirement

There is no language requirement for students seeking the terminal M.A.

Satisfactory Progress

All full-time M.A. students should finish their coursework in one academic year. All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within six years from the first term of enrollment in the master's program, excluding periods of approved leave and military service. Requests for extension beyond the six-year limit must be filed following the procedures outlined in Time Limits for Degrees and Extensions in the Graduate Arts & Sciences Catalog.

To be eligible to graduate, students must achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale in courses undertaken for graduate credit at William & Mary after admission to a degree program. A student who receives a grade of C+ (2.3) or lower in a course may repeat that course one time for credit, upon approval of both the instructor of the course and the graduate director for the student's program. When such a repeat attempt is approved, the grades for both attempts will count in the cumulative GPA, but only the most recent attempt will count toward the degree. No credit toward a degree will be allowed for a course in which a student receives a grade below C (grade point = 2.0).

Students whose grade point average falls below 3.3 are put on academic probation the following semester. If at the end of the following probationary semester the grade point average remains below 3.3, funded students will lose their funding, and students - funded or not - may be suspended from the Program.

Graduate students in American Studies are expected to finish all courses for which they are registered by the close of each semester in which they are taking these classes. If, because of illness or other extenuating circumstances, a student must postpone work for a course, they may request a grade of I (incomplete) from the course instructor. A grade of I will convert to an F at the end of the semester after the class was taken if the postponed work has not been completed. A grade of I may be extended only under extraordinary circumstances and only with the consent of the instructor and the approval of the student's Director of Graduate Studies and the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies. For further information refer to the Arts & Sciences policy regarding incomplete grades.

For a student enrolled in a master's program in the College of Arts & Sciences who subsequently advances to candidacy in the doctoral program in the same field, the terms of enrollment in the master's program will count towards the seven-year limit for the doctoral degree unless otherwise stated in the letter of admission to the Ph.D. program.