

AMERICAN CATHOLIC STUDIES

The Francis and Ann Curran Center for American Catholic Studies (CACS) offers an honors undergraduate certificate program in American Catholic studies. The six-course certificate offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of American Catholic culture, history, and theology. This interdisciplinary study is achieved through a sequence of required and elective courses offered in the art history, English, history, Latin American and Latino studies, music, philosophy, political science, sociology and anthropology, and theology departments of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Gabelli School of Business.

The CACS certificate program offers undergraduates an opportunity to study the complex reality of American Catholic culture from a rigorously interdisciplinary standpoint, in the process helping students to hone their critical and analytical skills in analyzing often diverse ideological, racial and ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographical loyalties all claiming to be genuinely “American” and “Catholic.”

Program Activities

The Discernment Seminar

All concentrators are required to participate in the Discernment Seminar. These monthly seminars, inspired in structure by the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, have two aims: to encourage students to reflect deeply and critically on the challenges that confront the contemporary world and to ask them to consider how they might deploy their intellectual abilities and other talents in the service of a more just and humane society. In this process, students learn how to communicate effectively, efficiently, and memorably their views on the multifaceted global issues of our time. The goal is that concentrators will emerge from these seminars not only more aware of the needs of the world but also more capable of contributing to their resolution. Recent topics have included the shortage and unequal distribution of economic resources, public apathy in an age of renewed nuclear proliferation, and strategies for communicating clearly about highly complex topics. In the second semester of their junior year, concentrators will have the opportunity to begin to prepare applications for such nationally and internationally prestigious fellowships as the Rhodes, Marshall, Gates, and Jack Kent Cooke scholarships. Those concentrators who elect to do so will work closely with the Curran Center’s associate director of Prestigious Fellowships and Fordham’s St. Edmund Campion Institute as they proceed through the application process.

Lectures and Symposia

The center hosts lectures, symposia, and readings each semester. These often feature speakers, scholars, and artists of national and international reputation.

Communitas Discussion Dinners

Each semester, the Curran Center convenes a discussion dinner hosted by an invited speaker who brings to the table expertise in a topic of interest to CACS students and faculty.

Receptions, Networking, and Conviviality

To aid its students in their educational and career goals, the center offers receptions to bring students into contact with scholarship donors as well

as alumni currently working in the academic, legal, business, and not-for-profit fields.

For more information

Visit the American Catholic Studies Center web page.