

AMERICAN STUDIES

American studies is the interdisciplinary study of the United States. Majors and minors analyze American history and experience through a variety of disciplines in order to gain insight into the multiplicity of cultures, ideas, and institutions that make up the nation. They draw on departments and programs such as African and African American studies, American Catholic studies, art history and music, English, history, Latin American and Latino studies, philosophy, political science, urban studies, and sociology. Those majoring or minoring in American studies have in common, however, the desire to link these perspectives into a complex view of the nation and its culture.

American studies is a small program, and admission is competitive based on grades, a writing sample, and a faculty reference. Students seeking to enter the program meet with the director to obtain an application and entrance information. We have about 15 to 20 majors and minors per class.

Program Activities

The American studies program presents a variety of activities for its students. We take city excursions, such as faculty-led tours of New York City's waterfronts, the New-York Historical Society, Green-Wood Cemetery, and El Museo del Barrio. We sponsor guest lecturers and performers, such as Darren Dochuk, author of *Anointed with Oil*; Judith Sloan and Warren Lehrer, authors of *Crossing the BLVD: Strangers, Neighbors, and Aliens in a New America*; historian Mae Ngai, author of *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*; journalist Philip Gourevitch, author of *The Ballad of Abu Ghraib*; and performance artist Patrick Johnson, who wrote *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South*. Many of these events give students an opportunity to make their voices and opinions heard, such as our open forums and salon discussions on topics such as the presidential election, "Wal-Mart: the Price of Doing Business in America," and "Democracy and the Media: The Effects of Journalism on Past and Present Elections." Perhaps the most highly anticipated day of the year is the Senior Thesis presentation every December. These events, along with social gatherings each semester, allow American studies students opportunities to socialize with one another and with their faculty.

For more information

Visit the American Studies program webpage.