

# American Studies Courses (AMST)

## AMST Courses

This is a list of courses with the subject code AMST. For more information, see American Studies (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences) in the catalog.

- AMST:1000 First-Year Seminar** 0-1 s.h.  
Small discussion class taught by a faculty member; topics chosen by instructor; may include outside activities (e.g., films, lectures, performances, readings, field trips). Requirements: undergraduate first-year standing.
- AMST:1010 Understanding American Cultures** 3 s.h.  
The United States in historical, contemporary, and transnational perspective; social and cultural diversity and conflict in American life; debates on concepts of America, the American Dream, national culture, citizenship. GE: Values and Culture.
- AMST:1030 Introduction to African American Culture** 3 s.h.  
Examination of Black cultural experiences in the United States and the African diaspora; focus on literature, music, film, comics, anime, popular culture, and visual/performing arts. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as AFAM:1020.
- AMST:1049 Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies** 3 s.h.  
Exploration of past, present, and future of American Indians in the United States and beyond through film, art, music, and comedy. GE: Values and Culture. Same as HIST:1049, NAIS:1049.
- AMST:1060 Sex and Popular Culture in America** 3 s.h.  
Critical and historical introduction to representation of human sexuality in American popular culture from World War II to the present. GE: Values and Culture. Same as ENGL:1410, GWSS:1060.
- AMST:1074 Inequality in American Sport** 3 s.h.  
Cultural meanings of sport in contemporary U.S. culture; sport experiences, inclusion, and exclusion as affected by social class, gender and sexuality, age and ability, race and ethnicity, and religion. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as GWSS:1074, SPST:1074.
- AMST:1075 American Popular Music: Rock and Roll to 1980** 3 s.h.
- AMST:1076 Rock and Roll 1980 to the Present** 3 s.h.  
From the beginning, rock and roll subcultures have deliberately challenged and changed the values, attitudes, and behaviors of the mainstream (as well as the music itself); during the past 40 years, movements such as punk, hip hop, and electronica have confronted conventional notions of race, gender, sexual identity, social justice, and economic disparities in ways that reveal much about the underlying tensions of American life; using music as a lens, students examine these aspects of the nation's social history from 1980 to the present; materials are drawn from music, films, music videos, popular magazines, newspapers, and books.
- AMST:1080 American Political Humor** 3 s.h.  
How political humor reflects and influences American attitudes regarding government institutions, elected officials, the democratic process; how humor works; examples from Revolutionary War present and from varied media, including cartoons, fiction, film, television, internet.
- AMST:1154 Food in America** 3 s.h.  
Cultural significance of production, distribution, and consumption of food in the United States. GE: Values and Culture.
- AMST:1290 Native American Foods and Foodways** 3 s.h.  
Native Americans as original farmers of 46% of the world's table vegetables; examination of food as a cultural artifact (e.g., chocolate, tobacco); food as a primary way in which human beings express their identities; environmental, material, and linguistic differences that shape unique food cultures among Native peoples across the Western Hemisphere; close analysis of Indigenous foods, rituals, and gender roles associated with them; how colonization transformed Native American, European, and African American cultures. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as GHS:1290, HIST:1290, NAIS:1290.
- AMST:1600 War Stories** 3 s.h.  
Exploration of the history of U.S. conflicts from Vietnam to the War on Terror through novels, film, and other cultural forms; specific focus on how U.S. social structures influence experiences of war. Same as LATS:1600, SJUS:1600.
- AMST:1700 Fake News: A History of Misinformation in the United States** 3 s.h.  
Fake news is sometimes imagined as a recent phenomenon, but misinformation campaigns have a long history in the United States; students survey some of the most significant instances of misinformation in U.S. history from the 18th century to present, explore the historical context that motivated the attempt at misinformation, consider how people sought to combat it, and reflect on outcomes and implications of these campaigns; tools to effectively identify and combat misinformation in contemporary life. Recommendations: basic knowledge of U.S. history.
- AMST:1800 American Gothic: Film, Literature, and Popular Culture** 3 s.h.  
Gothic eruptions of the uncanny in 19th- through 21st-century American literature, film, and mass culture; how ghosts, vampires, and visitants from the dark side call attention to fluid or liminal social space while communicating information and anxieties about repressed histories, economic change, and unstable intersections of gender, sexuality, race, religion, and class identities; special attention given to modernity and post-modernity of American gothic as an artifact of U.S. consumer culture and mass visual media. GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.
- AMST:2000 Introduction to American Studies** 3 s.h.  
Variety of historic and contemporary sources, such as literature, law, photography, painting, film, TV, music, fashions, environments, events of everyday life. GE: Values and Culture.
- AMST:2025 Diversity in American Culture** 3 s.h.  
History and variety of American identities, examined through citizenship, culture, social stratification; conflict and commonalities among groups according to race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality; how art, literature, music, film, photography, and other cultural artifacts represent diversity of identities. GE: Diversity and Inclusion.

- AMST:2084 Sport and Film** 3 s.h.  
Sport films as means of exploring contemporary ideas about sport in the U.S.; focus on narrative structure, characterization, historical, and political contexts; formal aspects of film analysis (e.g., editing, lighting, cinematography). Same as JMC:2084, SMC:2084, SPST:2084.
- AMST:2100 This is America: The Cultural Politics of Popular Music** 3 s.h.  
Cultural politics of U.S. popular music and broader soundscape of Americana; students examine how race, class, gender, and power factor into what sounds "American."
- AMST:2101 Digital Media and the Future of Sport** 3 s.h.  
Emergence and significance of internet blogs, social media, convergence journalism, video games, and fantasy sports; economic, regulatory, and cultural forces that shape new media sport journalism and entertainment. Same as JMC:2101, SMC:2101, SPST:2101.
- AMST:2150 Money, Capitalism, and Culture** 3 s.h.  
Investigation of novels, film, and art that represent complicated social and cultural life of money; how money's movement through American society shapes and is shaped by gender, race, and class dynamics; social origins and historical consequences of money, capital, and stock market; how novelists, filmmakers and artists come to terms with capitalism's ever-expanding reach.
- AMST:2160 Love and Romance in America** 3 s.h.  
Exploration of the role of love and romance in the American experience; analysis of love and romance in their association with American ideals—pursuit of happiness, upward mobility, and liberation of self, nation, and world; history of romance as a genre; contemplation of picket fences, free love, bromance, valentines, green cards, desperate housewives, break-ups, hook-ups, and (un)happily ever after. Same as GWSS:2160.
- AMST:2165 Native Peoples of North America** 3 s.h.  
History, culture of American Indian peoples; emphasis on North America. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as ANTH:2165, NAIS:2165.
- AMST:2230 Fame and Celebrity in U.S. History** 3 s.h.  
Cultural history of the meanings and implications of fame and celebrity in America; conception of fame in the 18th century as something earned through great deeds and conferred by future generations; rise of a culture of celebrity in 19th- and 20th-century America; focus on theater, sports, movie, and musical stars; use of celebrities to sell products; implications for presidential campaigns; instant and ephemeral celebrity generated by television and the internet. Same as HIST:2230.
- AMST:2292 Native American Law and Policy: A History** 3 s.h.  
Native Americans are citizens of governments that predate the U.S.; what it means to be a citizen of a federally recognized tribe within the U.S.; exploration of the peculiar status of Native nations and their citizens since 1789. Same as HIST:2292, NAIS:2292.
- AMST:2300 Native Americans in Film** 3 s.h.  
Representations of Native Americans in film from the western to science fiction and animation. Same as NAIS:2300.
- AMST:2700 The Black Image in Sequential Art: Comics, Graphic Novels, and Anime** 3 s.h.  
Provides a foundation to critically interpret the representation of people of African descent in sequential art; primary focus on serial comic strips, gags, comic books, graphic novels, video games, animation, anime, Manga, film, zines, and televisual examples of Blackness; emphasis of readings and viewing materials on gender, sexualities, economics, ethnicity, the transnational circulation and commodification of the Black image, fandom communities, independent and mainstream sequential art producers. Same as AFAM:2700.
- AMST:2847 Hawkeye Nation: On Iowa and Sport** 3 s.h.  
Identity, community, and place explored within local frameworks: the University of Iowa, Iowa City, State of Iowa; how sport, literature, film, other cultural institutions forge connections to community and shape Iowa's image in the public imagination; identity and community as complex and contested issues; local rituals, sites of memorialization, acts of erasure, management and use of public and private space such as UI athletic complex, Field of Dreams, Iowa Writers' Workshop, Iowa Avenue Literary Walk, Blackhawk Park; interdisciplinary approaches grounded in American studies, sport studies, Native American and Indigenous studies, literature, history. Same as SPST:2847.
- AMST:3050 Topics in American Cultural Studies** 3 s.h.  
Special topics in American history, literature, culture.
- AMST:3053 The Civil Rights Movement** 3 s.h.  
History of the American civil rights movement. Same as AFAM:3053, HIST:3253.
- AMST:3078 Archiving Women's History** 3 s.h.  
Exploration of girls' and women's history in Iowa through collections at the Iowa Women's Archives; introduction to archival research, digital humanities, and Omeka (a digital collection and exhibit platform) with focus on sport-related collections; guided individualized research and exhibit development. Same as GWSS:3078, MUSM:3078, SPST:3078.
- AMST:3095 Central America and Its Diaspora** 3 s.h.  
What makes the U.S. Central American experience distinct from other Latina/o/x groups? The first part of the course will explore the social structures, histories, and cultures of a number of Central American countries; the second part of the course will dig into the specificities of the U.S. Central American experience including the challenges they face from other Latinx groups, changing immigration regimes, their relationship to their "home" countries, and the cultures and communities they build once they arrive. Same as LATS:3095.
- AMST:3100 Critical Race Theory: Culture, Power, and Society** 3 s.h.  
Examination of the historical context of race and racism in U.S. history; focus on how social structures perpetuate longstanding patterns of racial inequality. Same as AFAM:3100, SOC:3100.
- AMST:3171 Baseball in America** 3 s.h.  
Forces that influenced political, economic, and social development of professional baseball in the United States; rise of major league baseball, its relationship to the minor leagues, and development of organized baseball industry. Same as SPST:3171.
- AMST:3178 History of Sport in the United States** 3 s.h.  
Historic development of sport in the United States between 1700 and 2000; economic forces, professionalization, growth of media, increasing opportunities, and ongoing challenges for various sporting populations. Same as SPST:3178.

- AMST:3179 Twentieth-Century American Sport 3 s.h.**  
Historic development of sport in the United States between 1900 and 2000; economic forces, professionalization, growth of media, and increasing opportunities and ongoing challenges for various sporting populations. Same as SPST:3179.
- AMST:3205 American Cultural History 3 s.h.**  
Nineteenth- and twentieth-century U.S. history from a cultural perspective; culture defined broadly to encompass paintings, sculpture, theater, novels, and newer forms of entertainment made available by lithography, photography, cinema, the phonograph, radio, and television; rather than assume Americans were passive consumers of commercial culture, students examine how Americans expressed themselves through foodways, home decor, clothing fashions, or slang; how Americans drew on these cultural forms in social/political struggles over race, gender, class, and sexuality. Same as HIST:3205.
- AMST:3249 Midwestern History 3 s.h.**  
People of Iowa and surrounding Midwestern states—a land where people work hard, are practical, down to earth, and honest; the idea of a place in the heartland as real or simply a myth; history of Midwestern states from Native American occupation to present; how reality, ideas, and images are portrayed. Same as HIST:3249.
- AMST:3251 The Office: Business Life in America 3 s.h.**  
History of business life in America from birth of Wall Street to rise of Silicon Valley; modes of managing and regulating office workers; changing designs of office buildings, furniture, gadgets; corporate response to rise of class inequalities and growing gender and racial diversity in workforce; portrayal of businessperson in novels, movies, television, art, photography. Same as HIST:3251.
- AMST:3264 Technology in American Culture and Society 3 s.h.**  
Social and cultural history of technology in the United States from cotton gin to smartphone; how technologies have shaped and been shaped by American culture, society, and politics—encompassing technologies of production, communication, transportation, entertainment, warfare, voting, surveillance, and more; economic forces spurring technological innovation and ways in which ordinary users re-appropriate technologies; cultural responses to new technologies (e.g., writers, artists, filmmakers, critics) ranging from fear to celebration; utopian and dystopian imaginings of future technologies. Same as HIST:3264.
- AMST:3265 American Monuments 3 s.h.**  
History of public monuments in America from the inception of first major monuments in the 1820s to the latest incarnations (e.g., counter-monuments such as the 9/11 Memorial, spontaneous and temporary monuments, online memorials); how monuments have depicted Indians, Blacks, Southern confederates, women, and other groups; how monuments have commemorated wars, Indian massacres, lynchings, and political movements (e.g., civil rights, women's suffrage); how monuments have been reinterpreted through popular protests and depositing of artifacts; why monuments have attracted so much controversy, culminating in recent events at Charlottesville. Same as HIST:3265.
- AMST:3410 Undocumented America: Citizenship, Race, and Immigration 3 s.h.**  
Examination of how literature and culture responds to and rearticulates culture, history, legal logic, and economic parameters that frame who is "legal" and "illegal" and how undocumented immigrants document and contest their lack of rights; how designations of immigrant's illegal or undocumented status depend on and maintain U.S. discourse about race and ethnicity. Same as LATS:3410.
- AMST:3415 Latina/o/x Protest, Movement, Resistance 3 s.h.**  
Examination of history, form, and function of protest, social movement, and resistance by Latina/o/x peoples in the United States. Same as LATS:3415, SJUS:3415.
- AMST:3420 Latinas/os/x and the Law 3 s.h.**  
Introduction and survey of Latina/o/x legal history; topics include segregation, educational rights, immigration, voting rights, citizenship, and the criminal justice system. Same as LATS:3420, POLI:3427, SJUS:3420.
- AMST:3430 Women on Stage 3 s.h.**  
Examination of how and why women in the United States have expressed themselves through theatre and performance from 1776 to present; students study plays as performed events in specific times and places for specific audiences through works by African American, Asian American, European American, Latina, Native American, and lesbian/queer writers; what the theater—as a public, embodied art form—offers female writers; how stakes differ for women of diverse backgrounds in using this often suspect and uniquely powerful medium in particular historical moments; how changing definitions of gender and sexuality come into play; prior background in theater not required. Same as GWSS:3430, THTR:3430.
- AMST:3450 Queer Latina/o/x Studies 3 s.h.**  
Relationship of Latina/o/x culture with gender, sexuality, and queerness. Same as LATS:3430, SJUS:3430.
- AMST:3600 Digitizing Blackness 3 s.h.**  
Examination of Black cultural experiences in digital spheres, including digital humanities and new information technologies; focus on Afrofuturism, gaming, augmented reality, digital mapping, podcasting, social media, and digital cultures; exposure to digital tools and methods. Same as AFAM:3600.
- AMST:3900 Seminar in American Cultural Studies 3 s.h.**  
Interdisciplinary perspectives on a single theme or period.
- AMST:3994 Independent Study arr.**
- AMST:4800 Latina/o/x Popular Culture 3 s.h.**  
Role of Latina/o/x popular culture as a site of contemporary social practice and cultural politics in both local and global contexts; specific attention to notions of citizenship, identity, and culture. Taught in English. Same as LATS:4800.
- AMST:4999 Honors Project arr.**  
Independent interdisciplinary research, writing.
- AMST:5000 Interdisciplinary Research in American Cultures 3 s.h.**  
Research, theories, and methods in the interdisciplinary study of American cultures.
- AMST:5002 Critical Theories and Cultural Studies 3 s.h.**  
Exploration and application of critical theories to contemporary sport; feminism, Marxism, critical race theory, whiteness studies, queer theory, postcolonial theory, postmodernism, and poststructuralism. Same as SPST:5002.

**AMST:6050 Seminar: Topics in American Studies 3 s.h.**

American cultural history; urbanization, mass media, pluralism, assimilation.

**AMST:6074 Seminar in Sport History 3 s.h.**

Topics in sport history; theoretical and methodological issues. Same as SPST:6074.

**AMST:6140 Engaged Scholarship in the Humanities 0,3 s.h.**

Survey of literature on community-engaged scholarship (CES) in the humanities; exploration of the pioneering work of engaged scholars in Native American, Latino, and African American studies; students write a research prospectus that is consistent with CES methodologies. Same as HIST:6140.

**AMST:6300 Writing for Learned Journals 1-4 s.h.**

Seminar that supports graduate students in bringing written work to publishable form; analysis of target journals' audiences, interests, and citation politics; submission and the publication process; response to reader reports and criticism; best writing and research practices; discussion of knowledge cultures and discourses in disciplines and the contemporary academy. Same as GRAD:6300, GWSS:6300, RHET:6330.

**AMST:6500 Critical Readings in Cultural Studies: Stuart Hall's Legacy and Influences 3 s.h.**

Exploration of the scholarship of Stuart Hall along with theories, methods, and history of cultural studies; focus on major areas of Hall's work including Marxist thought and the political economy, diasporas and globalization, cultural production and popular culture, film and cinema studies, race, ethnicity, identity, and difference; key theorists that influenced Stuart Hall (e.g., Marx, Foucault, Fanon, Gramsci, Althusser) and scholars in cultural studies that have made appropriate use of Hall's writings and theories in their own work; role of theory in everyday life and the critical role of public intellectuals. Same as AFAM:6500, ENGL:6050.

**AMST:7077 Sport Studies Workshop 1 s.h.**

Development of individual research projects for group discussion. Requirements: graduate standing in American studies or sport studies. Same as SPST:7070.

**AMST:7085 Dissertation Writing Workshop 1 s.h.**

Dissertation preparatory work with peer and faculty critiques, including preparation of a prospectus, research activities, and chapter writing. Requirements: American studies graduate standing with postcomprehensive examination status.

**AMST:7090 PhD Thesis arr.****AMST:7146 Temporality in History: United States and Beyond 1,3 s.h.**

Introduction to growing field of temporal history; how time has been measured, regulated, experienced, and imagined in the West and non-West from antiquity to present with emphasis on 19th- and 20th-century United States; topics include time discipline (e.g., factory, slave plantation, corporate office), standard time, and deep time; focus on changing technologies of time (e.g., clocks, calendars) and to temporal impact of other technologies (e.g., cinema); application of temporal perspective to political revolution, warfare, nation building, class formation, gender relations, slavery, and urbanization. Same as HIST:7146.

**AMST:7559 Race, Science, and Nature in Latin America arr.**

Analysis of the history of United States and Latin America relations in the 20th century through the lens of scientific and agricultural change; how plant breeding, agrochemicals, heavy machinery, and irrigation systems set in motion trends that made the 20th century exceptional; possibility of feeding an unprecedented growing global population and transition of human species from being primarily rural to primarily urban in less than a hundred years; analysis of how a network of scientists, businesses, and governments made proliferation of agribusinesses possible to emphasize Indigenous and Mestizo peasants' role in that process. Same as GEOG:7559, HIST:7559.

**AMST:7994 Independent Study arr.**