American Studies

Interim Chair
• Thomas P. Oates

Undergraduate major: American studies (BA)
Undergraduate minor: American studies
Graduate degrees: MA in American studies; PhD in American studies
Faculty: https://americanstudies.uiowa.edu/people
Website: https://americanstudies.uiowa.edu/

The Department of American Studies provides an interdisciplinary introduction to American culture, past and present. It helps students acquire a broad familiarity with the dynamics of cultural experience and explore aspects of life in the United States, such as sport, popular and fine arts, institutions, values, gender and ethnic relations, artifacts, and the everyday life of a diverse citizenry.

The department offers undergraduate programs of study in American studies as well as graduate programs of study in American studies, with a sport studies subprogram available in the PhD program of study.

The department also is the administrative home of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Program, which offers an undergraduate minor and undergraduate and graduate certificates; see Native American and Indigenous Studies in the catalog.

Programs

Undergraduate Programs of Study

Major
• Major in American Studies (Bachelor of Arts)

Minor
• Minor in American Studies

Graduate Programs of Study

Majors
• Master of Arts in American Studies
• Doctor of Philosophy in American Studies

Courses

• American Studies Courses [p. 1]
• Sport Studies Courses [p. 5]

American Studies Courses

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.

AMST:1060 Sex and Popular Culture in America 3 s.h.
AMST:1076 Rock and Roll 1980 to the Present 3 s.h.
AMST:1074 Inequality in American Sport 3 s.h.
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.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMST:1290</td>
<td>Native American Foods and Foodways 3 s.h.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMST:1600</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:1700</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:1800</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMST:2000</td>
<td>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: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMST:2025</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2084</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2100</td>
<td>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 &quot;American.&quot;</td>
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<td>AMST:2101</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2150</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2160</td>
<td>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 ideas—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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2230</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2292</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2300</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2700</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td>AMST:2847</td>
<td>Hawkeye Nation: On Iowa and Sport</td>
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<td>AMST:3050</td>
<td>Topics in American Cultural Studies</td>
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<td>AMST:3053</td>
<td>The Civil Rights Movement</td>
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<td>AMST:3078</td>
<td>Archiving Women's History</td>
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<td>AMST:3095</td>
<td>Central America and Its Diaspora</td>
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<td>AMST:3100</td>
<td>Critical Race Theory: Culture, Power, and Society</td>
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<td>AMST:3171</td>
<td>Baseball in America</td>
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<td>AMST:3178</td>
<td>History of Sport in the United States</td>
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<td>AMST:3179</td>
<td>Twentieth-Century American Sport</td>
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<td>AMST:3205</td>
<td>American Cultural History</td>
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<td>AMST:3249</td>
<td>Midwestern History</td>
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<td>AMST:3251</td>
<td>The Office: Business Life in America</td>
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<td>AMST:3264</td>
<td>Technology in American Culture and Society</td>
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<td>AMST:3265</td>
<td>American Monuments</td>
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<td>AMST:3410</td>
<td>Undocumented America: Citizenship, Race, and Immigration</td>
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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:7077.

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: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.
Sport Studies Courses

**SPST:1000 First-Year Seminar** 1-2 s.h.  
Small discussion class taught by a faculty member; topics chosen by instructor; may include outside activities (e.g., films, lectures, performances, readings, visits to research facilities). Requirements: first- or second-semester standing.

**SPST: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 AMST:1074, GWSS:1074.

**SPST:2077 Sport and Religion in America** 3 s.h.  
Sport as a religion; religiosity in sports; examination of religion and sport as connected in important ways in American society. Same as RELS:2877.

**SPST:2078 Women, Sport, and Culture** 3 s.h.  
Feminist analysis of girls’ and women’s sports experiences, including reproduction of gender through sport, recent changes in women’s intercollegiate athletics, media representations of women’s sport, feminist critiques, alternatives to sport. Same as GWSS:2078.

**SPST:2079 Race and Ethnicity in Sport** 3 s.h.  
Structural and ideological barriers to racial and ethnic equality in sport, with focus on African American sport experiences; historical and contemporary issues, media representations. Same as AFAM:2079.

**SPST:2081 Theory and Ethics of Coaching** 3 s.h.  
Philosophical bases, ethical issues; theoretical, practical applications.

**SPST: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 AMST:2084, JMC:2084, SMC:2084.

**SPST: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 AMST:2101, JMC:2101, SMC:2101.

**SPST:2170 Sport and Globalization** 3 s.h.  
Sport as both a global and local phenomenon; influence of global economic, political, and cultural forces on local sporting expressions, experiences, and identities; global sporting cultures from cricket to capoeira; global sporting spectacles from the Olympics and Paralympics to the FIFA World Cup; global sporting celebrities and athlete migrants from Maria Sharapova and Christiano Rinaldo to Yao Ming and Dominican Republic baseball; global sporting production, consumption, and development from global labor and environmental concerns to sport for development and peace. GE: Sustainability. GE: International and Global Issues.

**SPST:2500 Sport and Technology** 3 s.h.  
Connections between sport and technology; performance enhancement to Paralympians, sex testing to scientific racism, Fitbits to e-sports, data analytics and journalism; cultural approaches to understanding how science, medicine, and technology impact active bodies, sporting industries, and infrastructure; debates regarding risks and responsibilities; exploration of various roles (e.g., athletes, administrators, architects, engineers, programmers, trainers) in creating and sustaining past, present, and future of sports. Same as SMC:2500.

**SPST: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 AMST:2847.

**SPST: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 AMST:3078, GWSS:3078, MUSM:3078.

**SPST: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 AMST:3171.

**SPST:3172 Football in America** 3 s.h.  
Forces that influenced political, economic, and cultural development of college and professional football in the United States; rise of the National Football League and its relationship to college football and commercial media interests.

**SPST:3173 Cultures of Basketball** 3 s.h.  
Exploration of different ways basketball has been played, marketed, and celebrated in the United States and globally. Recommendations: background in U.S. history and/or African-American history.

**SPST:3175 Sport and the Media** 3 s.h.  
Examination of sport and media’s intimate relationship; aesthetic, cultural, political, economic, and industrial factors that shape it. Same as JMC:3183.

**SPST:3176 Sport and Nationalism** 3 s.h.  
Role of sport in the phenomenon of nationalism; selected theories; case studies on Ireland, Australia, British West Indies, Cold War United States, and fascist Europe.

**SPST:3177 Sport in the Western World** 3 s.h.  
Development of Western sport; relation to social, political, economic, intellectual factors.

**SPST: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 AMST:3178.
SPST: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 AMST:3179.

SPST:3181 The Business of Sport Communication  3 s.h.
Critical and practical approach to understanding contemporary sports media and business practices that mark it; focus on sports media industries and institutions; branding, marketing, demographic, public relations, and promotional factors that shape content. Same as JMC:3540, SMC:3540.

SPST:3182 Sport, Scandal, and Strategic Communication in Media Culture  3 s.h.
Use of sport scandal to consider relationship between sport and media in American and global popular culture; broad range of case studies used to consider what constitutes a sport scandal, how this definition shifts in different circumstances; crucial roles media play in creating, communicating, and diffusing these crises; how phenomenon of sports scandal has intensified along with emergence of cable television, internet, and social media. Same as JMC:3182, SMC:3182.

SPST:3184 Narrative Sports Journalism  3 s.h.
Historical review of long-form sports journalism to understand development of subjects, form, and technique of sports coverage and long-form nonfiction writing; students read several long-form articles and books that incorporate reporting about sports, and propose an original long-form work about sports. Same as JMC:3184, SMC:3184.

SPST:3193 Independent Study  1-3 s.h.
Problem in a specific area.

SPST:3500 The Olympics  3 s.h.
Real-time analysis and evaluation of current Winter or Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games; cultural history of modern Olympic Games (1896 to present); economics and politics of mega-events (e.g., cancellations, boycotts, protests); amateurism, professionalism, and athlete migrants; commercialization, broadcasting rights, and branding; nationalism, internationalism, and (post)colonialism; social and cultural impacts and controversies (e.g., social and environmental sustainability); Olympic bids, committees, and hosts; sex, gender, and racial discrimination; doping; technology, television, and social media.

SPST:4999 Honors Project  1-3 s.h.

SPST: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 AMST:5002.

SPST:6010 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I  3 s.h.
Operational and financing aspects of nonprofit management; mission and governance of organization; strategic planning for effective management, including finance, budget, income generation, fund-raising. Same as HMP:6360, MGMT:9150, PBAF:6278, RELS:6070, SSW:6247, URP:6278.

SPST:6010 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness II  3 s.h.
Qualities for leadership of nonprofit organizations, including relationships with staff and volunteers; relationship of nonprofit and outside world; marketing, public relations, advocacy strategies for nonprofits. Same as HMP:6365, MGMT:9160, PBAF:6279, RELS:6075, SSW:6248, URP:6279.

SPST:6072 Seminar in Cultural Studies of Sport  3 s.h.
Current theoretical debates in sport studies; applications of critical cultural studies theories to critical analysis of sport.

SPST:6074 Seminar in Sport History  3 s.h.
Topics in sport history; theoretical and methodological issues. Same as AMST:6074.

SPST:7070 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 AMST:7077.


SPST:7940 Independent Study  arr.