American Studies

Interim Chair

• Travis T. Vogan

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/

Courses

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American Studies Courses

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AMST:1000 First-Year Seminar
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
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
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

AMST:1060 Sex and Popular Culture in America
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
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
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
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
Cultural significance of production, distribution, and consumption of food in the United States. GE: Values and Culture.

AMST:1290 Native American Foods and Foodways
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
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
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
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: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 reinvented through popular protest 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 GWS:3430, THR: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 AFAIM: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
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: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 Slavery 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.

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 contemporaneous 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:6020 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.