

DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN STUDIES (GRAD)

The Department of American Studies offers a Ph.D. in American studies and an M.A. in folklore as well as a graduate minor in either American studies or folklore for students pursuing a graduate degree in other departments.

Ph.D. in American Studies

The Ph.D. degree in American studies provides rigorous training in interdisciplinary methods dedicated to the understanding of the complex cultures and history of the United States and its place in the world. Program graduates will be prepared both to teach at the college and university levels in American studies and related fields, including Southern studies, American Indian studies, literature, history, art history, cultural studies, and folklore, and to pursue professional opportunities in museums, historical sites, archives, or related fields requiring interdisciplinary perspectives and methodologies.

Admission

Students will be admitted to the Ph.D. in American studies from a range of academic programs, some with an undergraduate degree, some with a master's degree in American studies or another relevant discipline. Candidates for admission should be firmly grounded in the humanities, social sciences, or the arts. The best qualified students should articulate an interest in American history, literary, expressive and/or material culture, and/or critical theory; should show some familiarity with library, web-based, and/or ethnographic research methods; and should offer a specific rationale for their interest in the UNC–Chapel Hill graduate program. In addition to The Graduate School application form, candidates for admission will present one or two writing samples, a statement of purpose, three letters of recommendation, official transcripts, and a curriculum vitae. Transfer credits may be awarded at the department's discretion on the basis of course equivalencies.

Applications will be accepted in December for matriculation the following August. Consult the website of The Graduate School (<http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/>) for details, specific deadlines, and a link to the online application system.

M.A. in Folklore (<https://americanstudies.unc.edu/areas-in-american-studies/folklore/>)

The M.A. program in folklore (<https://americanstudies.unc.edu/areas-in-american-studies/folklore/>) focuses on the study of creativity and aesthetic expression in everyday life and on the social and political implications of this expression as it unfolds in contested arenas of culture. Not bound to traditional definitions of folklore, and committed to preparing students for ethical practice in a multicultural world, the program offers a flexible M.A. curriculum that readies students for both public practice and further academic study.

Admission

Applications will be accepted in December for matriculation the following August. Consult the website of The Graduate School (<http://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/>) for details, specific deadlines, and a link to the online application system.

The Department of American Studies also offers a Ph.D. in American studies; however, admission to the M.A. in folklore does not constitute admission to the Ph.D. in American studies.

Ph.D. in American Studies

The Ph.D. program in American studies balances flexibility and a focus on students' own areas of interest with requirements designed to insure knowledge of key issues and texts in the interdisciplinary study of American culture. Ph.D. students must complete 20 courses (60 hours). Those who enter the program with an M.A. may count up to 9 hours of previous study toward the degree. Three specific courses—AMST 700, AMST 701, and AMST 902—are required to be completed between the first and third year. Students supplement that core institutional track with other courses offered by American Studies core faculty and those in a variety of associated graduate programs, such as anthropology, English, geography, history, music, or religious studies. Students pursuing the Ph.D. take two comprehensive exams, one in American studies (which is fulfilled by completion of AMST 700 and AMST 701) and another in an area of specialization developed in consultation with their advisors before beginning their dissertation work. They are also expected to participate actively in the departmental colloquium.

Students who join the department with a master's degree can expect to spend less time on coursework than those who enter with an undergraduate degree, although students admitted with a master's degree in a field other than American studies may need to take some additional courses as they progress toward the American studies Ph.D. The graduate studies committee will make the determination on an individual basis. Students who enter with an undergraduate degree may choose to earn the M.A. at the end of their second year, upon completion the portfolio project, before proceeding to preparation for comprehensive examinations and the dissertation.

Research Proficiency Certification

Each Ph.D. candidate is expected, as a condition of advancing to candidacy, to select and develop an individualized proficiency that will improve the quality and impact of their research and enhance the capacity they will wield in their professional lives. This empowers students to add value to their education by defining and pursuing an enabling skill set that can deepen the dimensions of their research, practice, and service.

Examples of useful proficiencies might include:

- the study of a relevant language other than English;
- ethnographic field work;
- oral history interview and recording techniques;
- digital modes of coding, mapping, and visualization;
- training in the processes of public planning and policy;
- facility in survey methods and quantitative analysis;
- skills in documentary production; or
- archival curation and museum programming.

The proficiency must be in addition to or extend the skill set that students bring with them at matriculation. Certification of this proficiency is met by two requirements:

- the completion of at least one course or an equivalent process of training; or

- a practical demonstration of its acquisition and documentation of at least 100 hours of training.

Incoming doctoral students have the responsibility to work with their preliminary advisor to select a proficiency and prepare a plan for its attainment before they complete their prospectus and become candidates for the Ph.D. A written application on a departmental form will spell out which skill set they will acquire to meet this certification, describe the extent of their present competency, explain why it is relevant to their research, and outline how their plan enables them to gain proficiency. Incoming students will submit their proposal to the Graduate Studies Committee by October 1 of their first semester. This committee will meet to approve or suggest alternations to this proposal by November 15. At the end of the fall of the second year, the director of graduate studies will follow up and confirm with students and their dissertation directors whether the benchmarks of attainment have been fulfilled, and if not, what plan is in place to complete the requirement.

Colloquium

All students enrolled in the American studies graduate program are expected to participate throughout their graduate careers in a monthly colloquium in which faculty and M.A. and Ph.D. candidates will offer presentations of their work-in-progress. The colloquium exposes graduate students to the research interests of faculty in American studies and allied fields and more advanced students, provides opportunities for sharing discourses and ideas, and may also include visiting graduate students and faculty from international partner institutions. The colloquium is the collegial wellspring of the program, the intellectual and social center of the American Studies community. The conversation occurring there will naturally both inform and be informed by classroom work, particularly in AMST 700 and AMST 701 will help to shape, against the backdrop of individual specializations, a common discourse; and will provide a site for the formation of the American studies social and intellectual community.

Comprehensive Exams

All students, regardless of whether they enter with a B.A. or M.A., undertake their comprehensive exams in the fall of their third year. Students and faculty members will work collaboratively, with the aim of integrating the best work with the most current scholarship in particular fields. Each student will assemble a three-person examination advisory committee (often consisting of three faculty members from the Department of American Studies or two such faculty members and one from a related department). Students who complete AMST 700 and AMST 701 are considered to have passed their American Studies exam. The field exam tests an area of specialization chosen by the student in consultation with their advisor. With input from their advisor and their two other committee members, the student will develop a reading list for the field exam, which will test an area of specialization. Shortly after passing the written exams, each student will undergo an oral exam covering both American Studies and their selected field. Students are expected to receive passing evaluations on the written and oral exams. Any student who fails one or more sections of the exam may repeat the failed section(s) only once, no sooner than three months following the exam.

Teaching and Professional Development

All students will be expected to teach as part of their service requirement for financial aid. Students will most often serve as teaching assistants in undergraduate courses taught by members of the faculty. More advanced

students may have the opportunity to develop and teach undergraduate courses in their areas of specialization.

Doctoral Dissertation and Defense

The dissertation constitutes an original contribution to knowledge that advances the interdisciplinary understanding of American culture. It may be based upon archival research, analysis of texts and/or cultural artifacts, ethnographic research, or a combination. The student will assemble a five-person doctoral advisory committee, which must include three faculty members from the Department of American Studies. The student ordinarily completes the dissertation prospectus and refines it with the advice of the doctoral advisory committee at the end of their fifth semester, in the Fall of their third year. The prospectus must be approved by the committee following a prospectus defense no later than the January of their third year. Upon completion of the dissertation at the end of their fifth year, all degree candidates must successfully defend their dissertation before their doctoral advisory committee.

M.A. in Folklore

The M.A. program in folklore balances flexibility and a focus on students' own areas of interest with requirements designed to insure knowledge of key issues and texts in the discipline. Master's students must complete 10 courses (30 hours). Two specific courses—Approaches to Folklore Theory (FOLK 850) and The Art of Ethnography (FOLK 860)—are required, and students must take three additional courses offered by core faculty. Students take the remainder of their courses in a variety of associated graduate programs, including American studies, anthropology, communication, English, history, music, and religious studies, or they may take advantage of the opportunity to enroll in courses at neighboring universities, particularly those offered at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. Students pursuing an M.A. must compile a critical literature review at the beginning of their third semester and must complete and defend a thesis at the end of their second year of study.

Graduate Minor in American Studies

The American studies graduate minor serves students admitted in a variety of departments, including art, communications studies, English, history, music, and religious studies. Interdisciplinary training in the study of American culture can enhance scholarly and teaching capabilities for these students. The object of study is American culture in all its diversity, and the methodologies include historical, literary, and visual analysis as well as ethnography, sociology, economics, and political science as appropriate. To apply, contact the director of graduate studies.

The graduate minor consists of five courses, to be selected with the advice of the chair or director of graduate studies in American studies. These courses should include AMST 700 or AMST 701 and at least two other graduate courses with an AMST designation. Additional courses may be chosen from related departments. These courses must be in addition to those required for the degree in the student's major field of study.

Graduate Minor in Folklore

Students pursuing the Ph.D. in another department at UNC—Chapel Hill may qualify for a minor in folklore by completing six courses, chosen in consultation with the coordinator of the folklore program. These courses must be in addition to those required for the degree in the student's major field of study.

Professors

Daniel Cobb, American Indian and Indigenous Studies, American Indian History, Politics and Activism, Ethnohistorical Methods, Biography and Memory, Global Indigenous Rights

Amanda Cobb-Greetham, American Indian and Indigenous Studies, American Indian History, Museum Design and Curation

Elizabeth Engelhardt, Southern Cultures, Food, Appalachia, Feminism, Literature, Region and Place

Sharon Holland, Critical Race Theory, Feminist Theory, Queer Theory, Sexuality Studies, Animal Studies

Blair Kelley, Director, Center for the Study of the American South, Public History, African American experience

Timothy Marr, 19th-Century American Literary and Cultural History, Transnational American Studies, Islam in/and America, Herman Melville

Associate Professors

Gabrielle Berlinger, Material Culture, Ritual, Jewish Folklore and Ethnology, Ethnography, Public Folklore, Museum Anthropology¹

Seth Kotch, Digital Humanities, Modern South, Oral History, Criminal and Social Justice

Michelle Robinson, 19th- and 20th-Century United States Religious History, 19th- and 20th-Century American Literature, U.S. Cinema

Patricia Sawin, Narrative, Discourse, Festival, Culture of Adoption¹

Assistant Professors

Kelly Alexander, Food Studies, Ethnographic Methods, Documentary Studies, Feminism

Ben Bridges, Folklore, Art-making, Environmental Humanities, Indigenous peoples in Alaska

Amanda Martinez, Race and Ethnicity; Cultural History; History of Capitalism; Business and Labor History; Country Music Industry

Soham Patel, Asian American Cultural Studies, South Asian Diaspora, Social Movements, Anticolonial Thought, Migrant Histories

Antonia Randolph, Black Masculinity, Popular Culture (Hip-Hop), Music, Race Theory, Education, Sexuality

Adjunct Faculty in American Studies

Daniel Anderson (English and Comparative Literature), Digital Humanities, Rhetoric, Alt-Scholarship

Fitzhugh Brundage (History), American History since the Civil War, Southern History, Historical Memory

Maggie Cao (Art History), Art and Technology, Landscape, Material Culture, Ecocriticism

Claude Clegg (African, African American and Diaspora Studies; History), African American History, Modern U.S. History, Migrations and Diaspora, Nationalism, Social Movements

Kathleen DuVal (History), Early America, Cross-Cultural Relations on North American Borderlands

Philip Gura (English and Comparative Literature), American Literature, American Studies

Glenn D. Hinson (Anthropology), Ethnography, African American Expressive Culture, Belief Systems, Vernacular Art, Public Folklore, American South¹

Heidi Kim (English and Comparative Literature), Director, Asian American Center

Jocelyn Neal (Music), 20th-Century Music Theory, Popular Music¹

Michael Palm (Communication), Technology and Everyday Life, Politics and Economics of Media Culture, Telecommunications History, Work, Labor and Consumption Studies

Eliza Richards (English and Comparative Literature), 19th-Century American Literature, Gender Studies, American Poetry

Jane Thraikill (English and Comparative Literature), 19th-Century American Literature, Medical Humanities

Timothy Tyson (Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University), American Christianity, Southern Culture, Civil Rights, African American History

Ariana Vigil (Women's and Gender Studies), Latina/o Literature, Militarization, Gender and Sexuality Studies

¹ *Core members of the folklore program*

For a complete list of adjunct and affiliated faculty, click here (<https://americanstudies.unc.edu/people-pages/faculty/>).

Retired Professors

Robert Allen, Digital Humanities, American Cultural History, Family History

Marcie Cohen Ferris, Southern Jewish History, Food Studies, Southern Studies

William Ferris, Southern Music and Literature, Documentary Studies, American South

John Kasson, American Intellectual and Cultural History, Technology and Society, Art and Literature, Popular Culture

Joy Kasson, American Visual Culture, Literature, Popular Culture, Cultural History

Daniel W. Patterson, Ballads, American Folksong, Religious Folklife, Gravestones, American South

Theda Perdue, Native American History

Rachel Willis, Global American Studies, Transportation Planning, Labor Economics, Education

AMST

Advanced Undergraduate and Graduate-level Courses

AMST 439. Meaning and Makers: Indigenous Artists and the Marketplace. 3 Credits.

This course examines how indigenous artists have negotiated, shaped, and pursued markets and venues of display ranging from "fine" art markets, galleries, and museums to popular markets associated with tourism.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 440. American Indian Poetry. 3 Credits.

This course explores the relation of American Indian poetry and music in English to the history and culture of indigenous communities and their relation to the United States.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 475. Documenting Communities. 3 Credits.

Covers the definition and documentation of communities within North Carolina through research, study, and field work of communities. Each student produces a documentary on a specific community. Previously offered as AMST 275. Honors version available.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 483. Seeing the USA: The Film Director as Public Intellectual. 3 Credits.**

Examines the ways in which films communicate the values of American culture and raise questions about American experiences.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH, RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 486. The Jewish South: Race, Region, and Religion. 3 Credits.**

This course explores ethnicity in the South and focuses on the history and culture of Jewish Southerners from their arrival in the Carolinas in the 17th century to the present day.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-PAST or FC-POWER.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: JWST 486.

AMST 487. Early American Architecture and Material Life. 3 Credits.

This course explores, through lecture and discussion, the experiences of everyday life from 1600 through the early 19th century, drawing on the evidence of architecture, landscape, images, and objects.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 489. Writing Material Culture. 3 Credits.**

A reading seminar that examines multiple critical perspectives that shape the reception and interpretation of objects, with a particular emphasis on things in American life.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH or FC-KNOWING.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 493. Internship. 1-3 Credits.**

Permission of the department and the instructor. Internship. Variable credit.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** HI-INTERN.

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 6 total credits. 6 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 498. Advanced Seminar in American Studies. 3 Credits.

Graduate or junior/senior standing. Examines American civilization by studying social and cultural history, criticism, art, architecture, music, film, popular pastimes, and amusements, among other possible topics.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit; may be repeated in the same term for different topics; 9 total credits. 3 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 510. Federal Indian Law and Policy. 3 Credits.**

This course gives an introduction to the American government's law and policy concerning tribal nations and tribal peoples. We examine a number of legal and political interactions to determine how the United States has answered the "Indian problem" throughout its history and the status of tribal peoples and nations today.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-POWER.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 511. American Indians and American Law. 3 Credits.**

This course explores the history of Native interaction with the American legal system in order to understand how the law affects Native peoples and others today. Students are encouraged (but not required) to take AMST 510 before enrolling in this course.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-POWER.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 512. Race and American Law. 3 Credits.**

This class will explore the intersection between race and American law, both in a historical and contemporary context. It will ask how both of these major social forces have informed and defined each other and what that means for how we think about race and law today.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-KNOWING or FC-POWER.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **AMST 575. The American Cookbook in Theory and Practice. 3 Credits.**

This advanced seminar and food-writing workshop focuses on the in-depth study of archival American cookbooks and the production of an original cookbook as the final project. Designed for advanced undergraduate and graduate students, the course emphasizes in-depth research, recipe development, and food writing. Each student will produce four well-researched, kitchen-tested recipes with accompanying headnotes based on fieldwork (e.g., interviews, archival research at Wilson Library). Students will also write an extensive introduction and include visual elements such as photographs or illustrations. Weekly seminar sessions will explore fieldwork methods, recipe writing, and narrative techniques, with peer feedback and practical food writing exercises.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-CREATE or FC-KNOWING, RESEARCH.

Requisites: Prerequisite, AMST 375 or AMST 275.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 671. Introduction to Public History. 3 Credits.

Introduces the theory, politics, and practice of historical work conducted in public venues (museums, historic sites, national parks, government agencies, archives), directed at public audiences, or addressed to public issues.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: HIST 671.

AMST 691H. Honors in American Studies. 3 Credits.

Directed independent research leading to the preparation of an honors thesis and an oral examination on the thesis. Required of candidates for graduation with honors in American studies who enroll in the class once permission to pursue honors is granted.

Rules & Requirements

IDEAs in Action Gen Ed: RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 692H. Honors in American Studies. 3 Credits.

Directed independent research leading to the preparation of an honors thesis and an oral examination on the thesis. Required of candidates for graduation with honors in American studies who enroll in the class once permission to pursue honors is granted.

Rules & Requirements

IDEAs in Action Gen Ed: RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Graduate-level Courses**AMST 700. The History and Practices of American Studies. 3 Credits.**

This course will acquaint students with the texts, contexts, issues, and controversies in American Studies as a field of study. It is required for most American studies graduate students and open to graduate students in other departments.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 701. Interdisciplinary Research Methods. 3 Credits.

This course will focus on techniques of American studies investigation. Various faculty members will make presentations highlighting approaches including Southern studies, American Indian studies, Material Culture studies, and new media.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 702. Readings in American Studies. 3 Credits.

This course takes a specific topic to explore in depth, and through this investigation critically examines contending perspectives on the field. Topics will change depending on faculty interest.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 714. Incarceration in America. 3 Credits.

This course explores the theoretical underpinnings, history, and contemporary controversies around incarceration in the United States. It begins by exploring early articulations of the need for imprisonment as punishment, examines how that history unfolded in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, and engages with contemporary debates about mass incarceration and its impacts on American communities.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 715. Community Histories and Public Humanities. 3 Credits.

Community Histories and Public Humanities explores how communities have been, are, and might be preserved, documented, represented, and remembered. Focuses on the use of digitized primary sources and tools to engage communities in public history/humanities initiatives using interdisciplinary approaches informed by American Studies and Folklore. Participants have opportunity to work on ongoing community history/archiving projects. Project-based work is supported by reading in memory studies, representation, sites of trauma, community archiving, and oral history.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 6 total credits. 2 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 720. Fugitive Philosophies: The Intellectual Tradition of Forced Movers. 3 Credits.

Seminar traces the intellectual tradition of refugees, migrants, and forced movers transiting the United States. Beginning in the 19th century and progressing to the 21st century, we will examine the works of anticolonial thinkers, Caribbean philosophers, journalists of the African American and Latinx traditions, labor movement musicians, activists in the Long Civil Rights Movement, Marxist organizers, and social and political reformers. We analyze how their dislocations and multi-sited lives have created spaces for philosophical interventions.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 775. Graduate Seminar in Critical Food Studies: Interdisciplinary Research. 3 Credits.

This seminar introduces graduate students to critical food studies—a dynamic, interdisciplinary subfield that uses food as a lens to examine systems of power, measures of social belonging, and concerns about environmental sustainability. Drawing on methods from anthropology, literature, history, public health, and beyond, we engage with diverse readings—including ethnographies, biographies, farm records, community and chef cookbooks, novels, oral histories, and documentaries—to investigate American food communities as well as the uses and meanings of food within them. Rather than defining food studies, we explore its interdisciplinary questions and methods while reflecting on the ethical responsibilities of researchers in this evolving field.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 795. Digital Humanities Field Experience. 1-3 Credits.

An opportunity for students to translate theory into practice as they make meaningful contributions to digital humanities projects. Field experience can be tailored to fit the intellectual and professional needs of individual students, who may choose to work on projects in cultural heritage institutions or within academic departments on campus.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 6 total credits. 2 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 820. Critical Ethnic Studies (CES): New Perspectives. 3 Credits.

This course is devised to provide graduate students interested in theoretical interdisciplinary work with a sense of prevailing questions and critiques important to CES. CES takes on the more difficult questions of intersectional work, as it thinks through sovereignty and emancipation, identity and ontology, place, space and temporality. Each iteration of the course works itself through new perspectives in the field, challenging students to create new methodologies for their own work.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: COMM 820, WGST 820.

AMST 840. Digital Humanities/Digital American Studies. 3 Credits.

This course, explores the application of digital technologies to the materials, questions, and practices of humanities scholarship, particularly as related to enduring topics in American Studies scholarship and community engagement. Students will work on group digital history projects in collaboration with local cultural heritage organizations.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 850. Digital Humanities Practicum. 3 Credits.

This practicum blends graduate seminar discussions with hands-on training in the digital humanities. Students will work in the Digital Innovation Lab, contributing to real-life projects while developing their own professional development goals. Students will emerge with a deeper understanding of and experience with digital humanities approaches, practices, and issues.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 6 total credits. 2 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 878. Readings in Native American History. 3 Credits.

Readings in and discussions of the major works in Native American history.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: HIST 878.

AMST 880. American Film and Media History. 3 Credits.

Topically focused examination of social and cultural aspects of cinema and media history in the United States, including cinema/media audiences, reception, and historiography.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 890. Seminar in American Studies. 3 Credits.

Graduate seminar exploring selected topics in the theory and practice of American Studies.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 895. Directed Readings. 3 Credits.

Permission of the instructor. Independent reading programs for graduate students.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 900. Directed Studies. 0.5-15 Credits.

Permission of the instructor. Topics and credit hours vary according to the needs and interests of the individual student and the professor supervising the research project.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 901. Ph.D. Prospectus Design and Writing. 3 Credits.

This is the last required course for PhD students in the Department of American Studies. It is intended to scaffold you into "ABD" status: the concentrated period of research and writing that leads you to the completion of dissertation research and writing. This seminar supports you through the design and writing of your dissertation prospectus, to be completed and defended by the end of the fall term.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

AMST 948. Research in Native American History. 3 Credits.

This course introduces graduate students to research methods in Native American history, including the methodology of ethnohistory and the techniques of compiling a source base, taking notes, and outlining.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: HIST 948.

AMST 992. Master's (Non-Thesis). 3 Credits.

Non-Thesis Option

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

AMST 993. Master's Research and Thesis. 3 Credits.

Master's Thesis

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

AMST 994. Doctoral Research and Dissertation. 3 Credits.

Individual work on the doctoral dissertation, pursued under the supervision of the Ph.D. advisor.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

FOLK

Advanced Undergraduate and Graduate-level Courses

FOLK 424. **Ritual, Festival, and Public Culture. 3 Credits.**

This course explores rituals, festivals, and public cultural performances as forms of complex, collective, embodied creative expression. As sites of popular celebration, conflict resolution, identity definition, and social exchange, they provide rich texts for folkloristic study. We consider how local and global forces both sustain and challenge these forms.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-KNOWING or FC-VALUES, RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 424.

FOLK 428. **Religion and Anthropology. 3 Credits.**

Religion studied anthropologically as a cultural, social, and psychological phenomenon in the works of classical and contemporary social thought. Honors version available.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 428, RELI 428.

FOLK 429. **Culture and Power in Southeast Asia. 3 Credits.**

The formation and transformation of values, identities, and expressive forms in Southeast Asia in response to forms of power. Emphasis on the impact of colonialism, the nation-state, and globalization.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-GLOBAL or FC-POWER.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 429, ASIA 429.

FOLK 470. **Medicine and Anthropology. 3 Credits.**

This course examines cultural understandings of health, illness, and medical systems from an anthropological perspective with a special focus on Western medicine.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 470.

FOLK 472. **Traditions in Transition: Jewish Folklore and Ethnography. 3 Credits.**

This seminar examines Jewish stories, humor, ritual, custom, belief, architecture, dress, and food as forms of creative expression that have complex relationships to Jewish experience, representation, identity, memory, and tradition. What makes these forms of folklore Jewish, how do source communities interpret them, and how do ethnographers document them? Previously offered as FOLK 380/FOLK 505/JWST 380/JWST 505.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH or FC-KNOWING, RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: JWST 472.

FOLK 473. **Anthropology of the Body and the Subject. 3 Credits.**

Anthropological and historical studies of cultural constructions of bodily experience and subjectivity are reviewed, with emphasis on the genesis of the modern individual and cultural approaches to gender and sexuality.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 473.

FOLK 476. **Graffiti, Gods, and Gardens: Urban Folklore. 3 Credits.**

What is the relationship between distinctive features of urban environments and the expressive forms found in those settings? This course explores the impact of the urban setting on folk traditions. We examine how people transform urban spaces into places of meaning through storytelling, festival, ritual, food, art, music, and dance.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH or FC-POWER, RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 480. **Vernacular Traditions in African American Music. 4 Credits.**

Explores performance traditions in African American music, tracing development from African song through reels, blues, gospel, and contemporary vernacular expression. Focuses on continuity, creativity, and change within African American aesthetics. Previously offered as FOLK 610/AAAD 432.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH or FC-POWER.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: AAAD 480.

FOLK 481. **Jewish Belonging/s: The Material Culture of Jewish Experience. 3 Credits.**

What makes an object "Jewish"? This seminar examines how we think about, animate, repurpose, and display "Jewish" objects in the public realm, cultural institutions, religious spaces, and the home. We consider how makers and users negotiate objects' various meanings within the domains of prayer, performance, entertainment, and exhibition. The class curates a final group exhibition of Jewish material culture based on original fieldwork.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH or FC-CREATE, RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: JWST 481.

FOLK 484. **Discourse and Dialogue in Ethnographic Research. 3 Credits.**

Study of cultural variation in styles of speaking applied to collection of ethnographic data. Talk as responsive social action and its role in the constitution of ethnic and gender identities.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 484, LING 484.

 **FOLK 487. Everyday Stories: Personal Narrative and Legend. 3 Credits.**

Oral storytelling may seem old-fashioned, but we tell true (or possibly true) stories every day. We will study personal narratives (about our own experiences) and legends (about improbable, intriguing events), exploring the techniques and structures that make them effective communication tools and the influence of different contexts and audiences.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH or FC-KNOWING.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ENGL 487.

FOLK 490. Topics in Folklore. 3 Credits.

Topics vary from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit; may be repeated in the same term for different topics; 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 495. Field Research. 3 Credits.

Research at sites that vary.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit; may be repeated in the same term for different topics; 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 496. Directed Readings in Folklore. 3 Credits.

Permission of the department. Topic varies depending on the instructor.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

 **FOLK 502. Myths and Epics of the Ancient Near East. 3 Credits.**

An examination of Babylonian, Canaanite, Egyptian, Hittite, and Sumerian texts from the prebiblical era, focusing on representative myths, epics, sagas, songs, proverbs, prophecies, and hymns. Honors version available.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** FC-AESTH or FC-PAST.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: RELI 502.

FOLK 537. Gender and Performance: Constituting Identity. 3 Credits.

Examines the culturally and historically variable ways in which individuals constitute themselves as cis- or transgendered subjects, drawing upon extant expressive resources, modifying them, and expanding options available to others. Performance of self as the product of esthetically marked or unmarked, everyday actions.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 537, WGST 438.

 **FOLK 562. Oral History and Performance. 3 Credits.**

This course combines readings and field work in oral history with the study of performance as a means of interpreting and conveying oral history texts. Honors version available.

Rules & Requirements

 **IDEAs in Action Gen Ed:** HI-PERFORM.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: COMM 562, HIST 562, WGST 562.

FOLK 571. Southern Music. 3 Credits.

Explores the history of music in the American South from its roots to 20th-century musical forms, revealing how music serves as a window on the region's history and culture.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: HIST 571.

FOLK 587. Folklore in the South. 3 Credits.

An issue-oriented study of Southern folklore, exploring the ways that vernacular artistic expression (from barns and barbecue to gospel and well-told tales) come to define both community and region.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 670. Introduction to Oral History. 3 Credits.

Introduces students to the uses of interviews in historical research. Questions of ethics, interpretation, and the construction of memory will be explored, and interviewing skills will be developed through field work.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: HIST 670.

FOLK 675. Ethnographic Method. 3 Credits.

Intensive study and practice of the core research methods of cultural and social anthropology.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 675.

FOLK 688. Observation and Interpretation of Religious Action. 3 Credits.

Permission of the instructor. Exercises (including field work) in learning to read the primary modes of public action in religious traditions, e.g., sermons, testimonies, rituals, and prayers.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 688, RELI 688.

FOLK 690. Studies In Folklore. 3 Credits.

Topic varies from semester to semester.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit; may be repeated in the same term for different topics; 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 691H. Honors Project in Folklore. 3 Credits.

Permission of the instructor. For honors candidates. Ethnographic and/or library research and analysis of the gathered materials, leading to a draft of an honors thesis.

Rules & Requirements

IDEAs in Action Gen Ed: RESEARCH.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 692H. Honors Thesis in Folklore. 3 Credits.

Writing of an honors thesis based on independent research conducted in FOLK 691H. Open only to senior honors candidates who work under the direction of a faculty member.

Rules & Requirements

IDEAs in Action Gen Ed: RESEARCH.

Requisites: Prerequisite, FOLK 691H.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Graduate-level Courses**FOLK 790. Public Folklore. 3 Credits.**

A graduate seminar addressing theory and praxis in public sector cultural work. Focusing on public folklore, this course explores broad issues of representation, cultural politics, and cultural tourism.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 841. Performance Ethnography. 3 Credits.

This seminar focuses on methods of ethnography and fieldwork ethics. Performance as theory and practice informs methodological inquiries as well as the analysis of specific ethnographic texts and case studies.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: COMM 841.

FOLK 842. Seminar in Performance and Cultural Studies. 3 Credits.

This course focuses on performance-related issues in the emergent field of cultural studies.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: COMM 842.

FOLK 843. Seminar in Contemporary Performance Theory. 3 Credits.

An advanced graduate seminar, this course will address recent developments and problems in performance theory. It will consider cross- and multidisciplinary approaches to performance as sites for consideration and debate.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: COMM 843.

FOLK 850. Approaches to Folklore Theory. 3 Credits.

A systematic overview of the major issues and theoretical perspectives that have informed the study of folklore historically and that are emerging in contemporary scholarship.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 860. Art of Ethnography. 3 Credits.

A field-based exploration of the pragmatic, ethical, and theoretical dimensions of ethnographic research, addressing issues of experience, aesthetics, authority, and worldview through the lens of cultural encounter. Field research required.

Rules & Requirements

Grading Status: Letter grade.

Same as: ANTH 860.

FOLK 890. Seminar in Folklore. 3 Credits.

Graduate seminar exploring selected topics in the theory and practice of Folklore.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 895. Directed Readings. 3 Credits.

Permission of the instructor. Independent reading programs for graduate students.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit. 12 total credits. 4 total completions.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 900. Directed Studies. 0.5-15 Credits.

Permission of the instructor. Topics and credit hours vary according to the needs and interests of the individual student and the professor supervising the research project.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

Grading Status: Letter grade.

FOLK 993. Master's Research and Thesis. 3 Credits.

Research in a special field under the direction of staff members.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat Rules: May be repeated for credit.

Contact Information**Department of American Studies**

Visit Program Website (<https://americanstudies.unc.edu/>)

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