

# American Studies

Sponsored by the five undergraduate Claremont Colleges, American Studies is a multidisciplinary major that encourages students to think critically and creatively about American culture. The American Studies Program is coordinated by an intercollegiate faculty whose aim is to introduce students to the complexity of the American experience.

Majors take courses in a variety of disciplines such as literature, history, sociology, anthropology, government, music, and the visual arts. In addition, majors take multidisciplinary courses that use materials from different disciplines to explore a particular issue in American life. The interdisciplinary approach to this major prepare majors for many career choices, including law, library science, journalism, business, and museum curatorship.

An essential component of the American studies curriculum is *American Studies 103. Introduction to American Culture*, a required introductory course that is team-taught by members of the intercollegiate faculty in the spring semester. This course is an excellent introduction to the themes, concerns, and methodologies of American studies. Majors should meet with a member of the intercollegiate faculty to plan their individual program of courses in the sophomore year. Students interested in a number of disciplines are encouraged to consider a dual or double major which combines American studies with disciplines such as history, literature, religion, philosophy, government, and international relations.

CMC students should discuss their program with the CMC member of the intercollegiate committee, Professor Selig. The courses listed below are a sample of appropriate courses. For semester offerings consult the *Fall 2007* or *Spring 2008 Schedule of Courses* and the website: <http://www.scrippscol.edu/~dept/AmStudies/amst.html>.

## Major Requirements

The major in American studies requires nine courses, distributed as follows:

- 1. American Studies 103. Introduction to American Culture**
- 2. A two-semester survey of U.S. History** (for example *History 80. Forging a New Nation, America to 1865*, and *81. Modern America, 1865 to Present*)
- 3. One other survey-level course focusing on the United States** in another discipline, such as art history, literature, government, music, or sociology (for example *Literature 60. American Writers to 1900*, or *Government 20. Introduction to American Politics*)
- 4. One course in Asian American Studies, Black Studies, or Chicano Studies**
- 5. American Studies 180. American Studies Seminar**; this seminar course is normally taken in the fall of the junior year
- 6. Three upper-division or seminar courses in a single discipline**, for example literature, history, or government. This requirement gives the program depth as well as breadth.

## Senior Thesis in American Studies

The senior thesis is a general education requirement and the capstone experience of a student's undergraduate education. Students must complete a senior thesis in at least one of their majors under supervision of a faculty reader who teaches within that major, unless granted a special exception.

Students interested in receiving honors in American studies are required to complete a two-semester project. These students register for an independent study or research course in the first semester and the senior thesis in the second semester. The senior thesis and any thesis research or independent study course may not

be counted as courses in the major. For further information on honors in the major, see “Honors in American Studies” below.

## Special Options for Majors

### Dual Majors

A dual major in American studies requires a minimum of seven courses, distributed as follows:

- American Studies 103. Introduction to American Culture**
- A one-semester survey of U.S. History** (for example, *History 80. Forging a New Nation, America to 1865*, or *History 81. Modern America, 1865 to Present*)
- One other survey-level course focusing on the United States** in another discipline, such as art history, literature, government, music, or sociology (for example *Literature 60. American Writers to 1900*, or *Government 20. Introduction to American Politics*)
- One course in Asian American Studies, Black Studies, or Chicano Studies**
- American Studies 180. American Studies Seminar**; this seminar course is normally taken in the fall of the junior year
- Two upper-division or seminar courses in a single discipline**, for example literature, history, or government. This requirement gives the program depth as well as breadth.

Students with a dual major including American studies are encouraged to write their *senior thesis* on a topic in American studies. For further information, see “Senior Thesis in American Studies” above.

Please note the restrictions on *honors in the major* for students with a dual major under “Honors in American Studies” below. For further information on dual majors and the requirements for the other

discipline of the dual major, please check the appropriate sections of this catalog.

### Honors in American Studies

To be eligible for honors in American studies, students must achieve a 11.00 or better grade point average in all American studies courses at the time of graduation. Student must also complete a two-semester thesis project in American studies (see “Senior Thesis in American Studies” above) and receive grades of “A-” (11.00) or better for the thesis courses. Participants in the honors program must register with the CMC American studies advisor at the beginning of their senior year.

Students with a *dual major* including American studies who wish to be considered for *honors* in American studies are eligible if they:

- have completed all requirements for a *full major* in American studies and are granted honors, or
- qualify and receive honors in *both disciplines* of their dual major. See “Academic Honors at Graduation” for details.

### General Education Requirements for American Studies Majors

Students with interdisciplinary majors requiring courses in the *humanities* and/or *social sciences* are required to take designated courses in six different fields of the humanities and social sciences for the general education requirements. American studies majors must take courses in at least three of the four fields of the social sciences (economics, government, history, and psychology), and in two or three of the four fields of the humanities (literature, philosophy, religious studies, and literature in a foreign language) for a total of six courses. American studies majors with a dual or double major in a second field of the humanities or social sciences will usually be required to take an additional course. For further information on general education requirements, see “Academic Policies and Procedures.”

## Courses

### CORE COURSES

#### 103. Introduction to American Culture. *Staff*

This course, taught by an intercollegiate faculty team, introduces principal themes in American culture. Its interdisciplinary approach brings together such areas as art, music, politics, social history, literature and anthropology. Topics frequently covered include the origins of the American self, ethnic diversity, immigration, women, the West, modernism, consensus and dissent. Offered every spring semester.

#### 180. American Studies Seminar. *Staff*

Interdisciplinary examination of a problem in the history, politics and culture of the United States. Offered every fall semester.

### ELECTIVE COURSES AT CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE

#### • Economics

- 109. Ethics, Economics, and Public Policy
- 114. Development of the American Economy

#### • Government

- 20. Introduction to American Politics
- 90. Introduction to Constitutional Law: National Powers
- 91. Introduction to Constitutional Law: Civil Liberties
- 101. The United States Congress
- 102. The American Presidency
- 103. The Presidency and the Constitution
- 104. The Electoral Process
- 105. Organization of Health Care and Public Policy
- 106. Politics of Interest Groups
- 108. The Politics of Recent America, 1945 to the Present
- 109. Juvenile Delinquency and Public Policy
- 113. Inequality, Politics, and Public Policy: Class, Race, and Gender
- 125. Readings in American National Politics
- 128. Ethics and American Democracy
- 144. Political and Social Movements
- 149. Foreign Relations of the United States
- 151. The United States, Israel, and the Arabs
- 152. The Pacific Rim and the United States
- 159. Topics in United States Relations with Asia
- 167. The American Founding
- 176. American Constitutional History
- 187. Women and the Law
- 191. Public Policy since the New Deal
- 193. Presidential War Powers

#### • History

- 80. Forging a New Nation, America to 1865
- 81. Modern America, 1865 to Present
- 121. The Politics of Recent America, 1945 to the Present
- 122. American Schools (seminar)
- 123. History of the American West
- 125. Asian American History, 1850 to the Present
- 126. American Constitutional History
- 149. America in Depression and War
- 153. American Religious History (seminar)
- 175. Women and Politics in America (seminar)
- 176. American Families (seminar)

#### • Interdisciplinary

- 109. 20th Century Jazz Culture

#### • Literature

- 60. American Writers to 1900
- 77. Richard Wright and Zora Neale Hurston
- 83. 20th-Century American Short Story
- 86. The American Novel, 1900-1945
- 91. American Poetry: Tradition and Experiment
- 126. 20th-Century Black Poetics

#### • Psychology

- 118. Seminar in Prejudice and Intergroup Relations
- 188. Psychology and Law

#### • Religious Studies

- 136. Religion in Contemporary America
- 138. American Religious History
- 153. Religion and American Politics
- 174. Religion and the American Presidency

### ELECTIVE COURSES AT THE OTHER CLAREMONT COLLEGES

Course information and descriptions may be found in the appropriate College catalogs. American studies courses are also listed in the *Fall 2007* and *Spring 2008 Undergraduate Schedule of Courses*. For a full list, see <http://www.scrippscol.edu/~dept/AmStudies/amst.html>.