AMERICAN STUDIES MAJOR, B.A.–FOLKLORE CONCENTRATION

Contact Information
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The concentration in folklore emphasizes the study of creativity and aesthetic expression in everyday life, focusing on those expressive realms that communities infuse with cultural meaning and through which they give voice to the issues and concerns they see as central to their being. These realms are often deeply grounded in tradition; this doesn’t mean, however, that they’re always or necessarily old. Just as communities change their own sense of self in response to shifting social, political, and economic realities, so too does the artistry they create evolve. Folklore thus moves beyond the study of the old and time-honored to explore emergent meanings and cultural forms. Trending tweets, food trucks, slam poetry, and hip hop freestyling are just as relevant to folklorists’ study as are string-band tunes, Cherokee quilts, family recipes, and blues. The communities that our students study are equally broad, ranging from Lumbee sheetrock workers and Latino line cooks to urban homesteaders and Black Lives Matter activists. The main way that we explore contemporary folklore, in turn, is ethnographic fieldwork, the real-world study of people’s lives in everyday settings, grounded in conversation and participatory engagement. Students may petition the director of undergraduate studies to have courses not listed approved to fulfill major requirements; such courses will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Department Programs

Majors

• American Studies Major, B.A. (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/american-studies-major-ba)
• American Studies Major, B.A.–American Indian and Indigenous Studies Concentration (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/american-studies-major-ba-american-indian-indigenous-studies-concentration)
• American Studies Major, B.A.–Folklore Concentration (p. 1)
• American Studies Major, B.A.–Global American Studies Concentration (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/american-studies-major-ba-global-american-studies-concentration)
• American Studies Major, B.A.–Southern Studies Concentration (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/american-studies-major-ba-southern-studies-concentration)

Minors

• American Studies Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/american-studies-minor)
• American Indian and Indigenous Studies Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/american-indian-indigenous-studies-minor)
• Folklore Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/folklore-minor)
• Global American Studies Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/global-american-studies-minor)
• Southern Studies Minor (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/programs-study/southern-studies-minor)

Graduate Programs

• Ph.D. in American Studies (http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/american-studies)
• M.A. in Folklore (http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/american-studies)
• Graduate Minor in American Studies (http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/american-studies)
• Graduate Minor in Folklore (http://catalog.unc.edu/graduate/schools-departments/american-studies)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the American studies program, students should be able to:

• Apply critical skills of analysis to a variety of primary historical sources and/or cultural expressions
• Exercise advanced writing skills that demonstrate clear articulation of ideas and effective expression of understanding
• Assess the value of interdisciplinary learning by engaging with a variety of disciplinary perspectives on the study of America within their major elective courses
• Interpret national traditions and ideals from different local, regional, transnational, and/or global situations and from diverse ideological and/or ethnic perspectives
• Report satisfaction with the American studies major and its value for their postgraduate academic and professional careers

Requirements

In addition to the program requirements listed below, students must

• attain a final cumulative GPA of at least 2.0
• complete a minimum of 45 academic credit hours earned from UNC–Chapel Hill courses
• take at least half of their major course requirements (courses and credit hours) at UNC–Chapel Hill
• earn a minimum of 18 hours of C or better in the major core requirements (some majors require 21 hours).

For more information, please consult the degree requirements section of the catalog (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/general-education-curriculum-degree-requirements/#degerequirementstext).

The concentration in folklore consists of nine courses. Courses listed more than once can be counted for only one category. At least one course must be at the 300 level or above.

Core Requirements
American Studies Major, B.A. – Folklore Concentration

Course Descriptions:

Introduction:

FOLK/ANTH/ENGL 202: Introduction to Folklore

Four core content courses from the list below:

- FOLK/JWST 505
- FOLK/JWST 481
- FOLK/HIST 670
- FOLK/HIST 571
- FOLK/ENGL 487
- FOLK/ENGL 310
- HIST/WGST 562
- FOLK/COMM/WGST 438
- LING 484
- FOLK/ANTH 675
- FOLK/ANTH 340
- FOLK/ANTH 424
- FOLK 690
- FOLK 560
- FOLK 550
- FOLK 476
- AMST/JWST 486
- AMST/HIST 671
- AMST/JWST 486
- AMST/JWST/ WGST 253
- FOLK 476
- FOLK 490
- FOLK 550
- FOLK 560
- FOLK 690
- FOLK/AAAD 480
- FOLK/ANTH 424
- FOLK/ANTH 675
- FOLK/ANTH/ LING 484
- FOLK/ENGL 487
- FOLK/JWST 505
- ANTH 356
- ANTH 454
- MUSC 144
- MUSC 291
- AMST 396, FOLK 490, or FOLK 690 may be counted if appropriate with the permission of the director of undergraduate studies.

Ethnographic-Intensive Courses

- AMST 396
- FOLK 490
- FOLK 690
- AMST 283: American Home
- AMST 284: Visual Culture
- AMST 340: American Indian Art and Material Culture through Interdisciplinary Perspectives
- AMST 350: Main Street Carolina: A Cultural History of North Carolina Downtowns
- AMST 482: Images of the American Landscape
- AMST 485: Folk, Self-Taught, Vernacular, and Outsider Arts
- AMST 489: Writing Material Culture
- AMST/FOLK 375: Carolina Cooks, Carolina Eats: North Carolina Food and Culture
- AMST/HIST 671: Introduction to Public History
- AMST/JWST 486: Shalom Y’All: The Jewish Experience in the American South
- AMST/JWST/WGST 253: A Social History of Jewish Women in America
- FOLK 476: Graffiti, Gods, and Gardens: Urban Folklore
- FOLK 490: Introduction to Material Culture
- FOLK/AAAD 480: Vernacular Traditions in African American Music
- FOLK/ANTH 424: Ritual, Festival, and Public Culture
- FOLK/ANTH 675: Ethnographic Method
- FOLK/ANTH/LING 484: Discourse and Dialogue in Ethnographic Research
- FOLK/ENGL 487: Everyday Stories: Personal Narrative and Legend
- FOLK/JWST 505: The Changing Lives of Jewish Objects
- ANTH 477: Visual Anthropology
- ANTH 625: Ethnography and Life Stories
- WGST 230: Women in Contemporary Art: A Field Study
- ANTH 356: Artisans and Global Culture: Economic, Historical, Experiential, and Cross-Cultural Dimensions
- ANTH 454: The Archaeology of African Diasporas
- MUSC 144: Introduction to Country Music
- MUSC 291: Music and Politics

Special Opportunities in American Studies

Honors in American Studies

The American studies major offers a two-course honors program: AMST 691H in the fall semester and AMST 692H in the spring semester. Students must propose their thesis and contract with a faculty advisor during the semester prior to the beginning of their senior year. For each semester of honors work, thesis students must submit a signed learning contract to the Department of American Studies during the registration period. During the two semesters devoted to honors work, students conduct individual research and prepare an honors thesis under the supervision of a faculty member. Students also will attend a weekly seminar at the discretion of the advisor. Students must maintain a 3.3 cumulative grade point average to be eligible. With the approval of the associate or the assistant dean for honors, students with a slightly lower average who have a reasonable expectation of meeting the requirement within one more semester may embark upon the honors thesis, understanding that if they do not attain the 3.3 standard they may continue the research project as independent study but are not eligible to graduate with honors or highest honors.

Experiential Education

The Department of American Studies offers a seminar on Service Learning in America (AMST 398) and offers credits for approved internship projects (AMST 493). Students have learned about American studies by serving the community in museums, schools, social agencies, and other cultural institutions.
Study Abroad
The Department of American Studies encourages students to consider a semester or more of study abroad and has developed close relations with several American studies programs in different countries. Studying American experience in international contexts is an integral part of understanding the place and influence of the United States in the world. Student learning is enhanced by the perspectives gained by examining how American subjects are taught in universities around the globe as well as by encountering the international students who enroll in American studies courses in Chapel Hill. Study abroad offers students of folklore the opportunity to understand the rich vernacular and traditional cultures of other parts of the world from both a local and a comparative perspective. Students can receive American studies major credit for selected study abroad programs and are encouraged to make study abroad part of their academic plans. Study abroad courses can count toward the international American studies major or minor. Students interested in this experience should consult with the director of undergraduate studies or with the Study Abroad Office about international exchange programs sponsored by UNC-Chapel Hill.

Undergraduate Awards
The department awards Julia Preston Brumley Travel Scholarships to help fund international travel and study abroad. The Peter C. Baxter Memorial Prize is awarded annually to the outstanding senior majoring in American studies.

Undergraduate Research
The department offers credit for AMST 396 and FOLK 495. Majors can develop a two-semester honors thesis project (AMST 691H and AMST 692H) in consultation with an advisor. Students have received summer undergraduate research fellowships, earned research support and travel awards, and presented their work at the Annual Celebration of Undergraduate Research each spring.