American Studies

The American studies program at Youngstown State University offers you the opportunity to examine the central themes and events in American life today and in the past. The program emphasizes American diversity, the experiences of ordinary people, and relationships among individuals, communities, the nation, and the world. In American studies, you'll design an individualized program to fit your goals and interests, bringing together courses in history, popular culture, literature, politics, and more. This rich mix allows you to gain a broad understanding of American culture that is good preparation for many different careers.

Employment Opportunities
American studies graduates pursue a wide variety of careers. Students develop strong communication, research, and analysis skills that are transferable to many kinds of work and are highly valued by employers. In today's economy, with its constantly changing workplace and increasing technology, critical thinking and the ability to work independently are essential skills. Because American studies majors design their own programs, take courses from many different departments, and complete independent research projects, they excel in these important skills.

With a degree in American studies, you could
- develop educational programs for an art museum
- write for a magazine
- serve as an aide to a congressional representative
- lead a fund-raising campaign for a non-profit organization
- write grants for a social service agency
- manage a historical site
- work in public relations
- design advertising campaigns
- produce documentary films
- organize public events, such as film festivals, reading series, or information fairs

American studies also provides strong preparation for graduate study. Many of our graduates have succeeded in law school and graduate programs in American studies, literature, history, geography, education, and public service.

Degree Options
American studies offers a flexible major that you can adapt to fit your goals. All students take a common core of four courses, beginning with a sophomore-level course on American identity and continuing through junior- and senior-level courses that explore interdisciplinary approaches to studying American culture.

Majors select from more than 80 approved courses in departments across campus to fulfill area requirements and create an individualized focus area.

Students have developed a pre-law focus by emphasizing courses in political science, criminal justice, and sociology, while others have focused on Latin American studies, local history, and education.

In your senior year, you'll complete a major individual project. Students have examined legal issues, studied political campaigns, and analyzed contemporary films. You also have the option of doing an internship for your senior project.

Throughout the program, you'll work closely with an advisor who can help you make good choices. The nature of the program and its small size ensure that each student receives individual attention and develops close ties with faculty advisors.

Facilities
American studies students regularly use campus computer labs, Internet connections to libraries and research materials worldwide, and multi-media CD-ROMs that bring historical documents, works of art, and film and video footage to each student's computer.

Maag Library offers extensive holdings of books and journals as well as government documents and a multi-media collection. In addition, Maag Library participates in a statewide cooperative system that allows YSU students to borrow materials from other university libraries across the state.

For more information about this program, go to www.ysu.edu, click on Colleges, then College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences
Faculty
Youngstown State University maintains a faculty-student ratio of 1:20, among the best of the state-affiliated universities in Ohio. American studies students work individually with faculty, getting one-on-one attention in both advising and coursework.

The American studies faculty at YSU represents five colleges and more than a dozen academic departments. Most hold Ph.D.’s, and many have practical experience working in the fields in which they teach. In selecting courses for the American studies program, the Advisory Committee looks for teachers who emphasize active learning, critical thinking, and student-centered teaching. Many have won awards and major grants in recognition of their teaching abilities, and several have been featured speakers for American studies programs overseas.

Accreditation
Youngstown State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association.

Outside the Classroom
American studies courses use the rich resources of the Mahoning Valley to give students experiences in the community, with local history, and in the arts, social services, and government.

In recent courses, students have completed projects at the Youngstown Historical Center for Labor and Industry, the Butler Institute of American Art, and various historical sites in the area, and more community-based activities are planned for the future.

The American studies program also sponsors a series of presentations throughout the year, bringing faculty and students together for discussions about recent trends in the field, research by faculty and students, and current events.

Curriculum Overview
**Required core courses**
- American Identity
- Approaches to American Studies
- American Studies Research Seminar
- Independent Project on American Culture

**Literacies (choose one course in each of the following categories):**

**Textual**
- American Material Culture
- Cultures of the New World

**Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century American Art**
- Nineteenth Century American Art
- African American Art
- Native North American Art
- Images of Women
- Film Genres
- American Genres
- Themes in American Literature
- Selected Topics in American Literature
- Selected Topics in Film
- Topics in Regional Geography
- American Material Culture
- American Architectural History
- Survey of Jazz

**Social**
- Work in America
- Class and Culture
- Cultural Anthropology
- Violence in America
- Education and Society
- Urban Geography
- History of American Sports
- History of American Cities
- Human Behavior in Organization
- Political Behavior
- Psychology of Intimate Relationships
- Social Problems
- Women in Society
- The Family
- Urban Sociology
- Social Movements
- Social Stratification and Inequality
- American Social Welfare

**Historical**
- Turning Points in U.S. History 1, 2
- American Literature in Historical Perspective
- New World Archaeology
- American Journalism
- American Literature in Historical Perspective
- Historical Geography of the United States
- The Atlantic World
- Early America
- The Age of Jefferson and Jackson
- The Age of Sectionalism
- Incorporation of America: 1877-1919
- United States in Crises: 1920-1945
- Cold War America: 1945-1990
- The West in American History 1, 2
- History of Organized Crime in the United States
- Selected Problems in American History

(see following page)
Global and Cross-Cultural Perspectives
- Cultural Anthropology
- Cross-Cultural Perspectives of Aging
- Women in the Ancient World
- World Civilization to 1500
- World Civilization since 1500
- African Civilizations
- Mexico and the Caribbean
- History of Modern Philosophy
- Ethics of War and Peace
- Comparative Government
- International Relations
- Model United Nations
- European Politics: National, Regional, International
- Latin American Politics
- International Law
- International Organizations
- International Conflict & Conflict Management
- Select Problems of Global Affairs
- Myth, Symbol, and Ritual
- African and Neo-African Religions
- Buddhism
- Liberation Theologies and Revolutionary Change
- Dramatic Texts

Cultural Pluralism
- Introduction to Africana Studies 1, 2
- Africana Studies Colloquium 1, 2
- Minority Groups
- African American Art
- Women in Literature
- American Literature and Diversity
- Selected Topics in Multicultural Studies
- The Black Experience in American Literature
- German-Americans
- Amish Culture
- History of Women in the United States
- The Black Experience in American History
- Labor in United States History
- Managing Diversity
- African-American Politics
- Psychology of Women
- The Minority Individual
- African-American Religion
- African and Neo-African Religion
- Islam
- Christianity
- Judaism
- Buddhism
- Women in Society
- Minority Groups
- Social Stratification and Inequality
- Aging and Society
- Culture and Literature of Spanish-Speaking Groups in the U.S.
- Topics in Hispanic Literature and Film

Competencies (choose one course in each of the following categories):

Quantitative
- Applied Sociology
- Research Methods
- Criminal Justice Research
- Political Behavior
- American Public Opinion
- Applied Sociology
- Social Research

Qualitative
- American Literature in Historical Perspective
- American Material Culture
- Archaeology
- Archaeological Techniques
- Method and Theory in Archaeology
- American Literature in Historical Perspective
- Practicum in Historic Preservation
- Documentation and Interpretation of Historical Sites
- Conservation of the Historic Built Environment