

AMERICAN STUDIES, BA

Students should have a strong interest in American culture and history. This can include the visual arts, music, and popular culture, as well as social movements and politics in any time period of U.S. history. Many students also have great interest in how America fits into the larger global picture. Curiosity about different parts of American culture and a willingness to explore new areas are essential. A desire to communicate ideas in writing is important. This major helps develop skills in connecting information, writing strong arguments, and reading for both fine detail and the big picture.

Admission into the Major

Students are expected to formally declare a major no later than the fourth semester of full-time enrollment (or at 61 semester hours for transfer students). Students can declare a major by completing the Change of Major/Minor Application online under the Student tab of myBama.

Special Opportunities

Students have the opportunity to complete internships in a variety of settings. Students should contact the department for more information.

Students earning the bachelor of arts (BA) degree with a major in American studies must complete all University, College and departmental degree requirements. These include the general education requirements, the following major requirements, all requirements for an approved minor and other sufficient credits to total a minimum of 120 applicable semester hours.

Code and Title	Hours
Major Courses	
AMS 150 Intro American Studies	3
Select one of the following:	3
AMS 203 Southern Studies	
AMS 204 Intro to Western Studies	
AMS 205 Dirty Jobs	
AMS 206 Native American Studies	
AMS 207 Intro to Latinx Studies	
AMS 213 Honors Southern Studies	
AMS 231 Contemporary America	3
AMS 492 Capstone Research Seminar	3
AMS electives 400 level ¹	6
AMS elective 300 or 400 level	3
AMS electives any level	9
Credit Hours Subtotal:	30
Total Hours	30

Footnotes

¹ Other than AMS 400 Internship, AMS 403 Honors Research - AMS or AMS 405 Directed Study.

Grade Point Average

A 2.0 grade point average in the major is required for completion of the degree. Please see the Grades and Grade Points section of this catalog for an explanation on grade point average calculations.

Upper-level Residency

A minimum of 12 hours of 300- and 400-level courses in the major must be earned on this campus.

Required Minor

This major requires the completion of a minor.

Additional Major Requirements

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have met all University, College, major and minor requirements. However, each student must meet with an adviser in the major department for academic planning and be approved for registration each semester. College advisers are also available for additional assistance with minor, College and University requirements.

Students may count up to 9 credit hours from different departmental offerings toward the AMS major. These classes must be at the 200-level or above and at least 50% of the course content must address issues and/or themes about American culture (history, literature, art, politics, beliefs and values, etc.).

Prerequisites

Unless otherwise stated, the prerequisite for 300-level AMS courses is six hours in Humanities or Social and Behavioral Sciences courses or permission of the instructor, and the prerequisite for 400-level AMS courses is nine hours in Humanities or Social and Behavioral Sciences courses or permission of the instructor.

Many career opportunities exist for American Studies majors. Many students attend law school, library school, or pursue advanced degrees. American Studies majors teach in secondary schools, junior colleges, and universities and work for historical commissions, arts alliances, museums, libraries, and the private sector.

Types of Jobs Accepted

Recent graduates have accepted jobs in libraries, museums, student services, tourism, secondary education, junior college teaching, advertising, public relations, journalism, and labor relations.

Jobs of Experienced Alumni

Jobs held by alumni include attorney; university trustee; university external affairs and development director; school counselor; principal; museum sales manager; museum consultant; public relations specialist; library collection curator; special collections librarian; public television production manager; fiction and biography author; popular music critic; publishing account executive; arts alliance programs director; community celebration and documentation coordinator; educational programmer; Jessie Ball DuPont Fund executive director; advertising website developer; public health counselor; Department of Labor wage and hour investigator; architectural historian; congressional press secretary.

Learn more about opportunities in this field at the Career Center