American Studies Courses

AMS100 Special Topics
Hours 1
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduate students offered by American Studies faculty members or supervised teaching assistants. Some examples include the following five-week, one-hour courses: African-American Star Athletes, Superbowl Ads, Stand Up Comedy, Disney's America, and Why Eat Local?.

AMS101 Special Topics
Hours 1
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduates offered by American Studies faculty members or supervised teaching assistants.

AMS102 Special Topics
Hours 1
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduates offered by American Studies faculty members or supervised teaching assistants.

AMS103 Special Topics
Hours 1
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduates offered by American Studies faculty members or supervised teaching assistants.

AMS104 Special Topics
Hours 1
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduates offered by American Studies faculty members or supervised teaching assistants.

AMS105 Special Topics
Hours 1
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduates offered by American Studies faculty members or supervised teaching assistants.

AMS106 Special Topics
Hours 1
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduates offered by American Studies faculty members or supervised teaching assistants.

AMS150 Introduction to American Studies: Arts and Values
Hours 3
Exploration of the relation between the arts - popular, folk, and elite - and American culture in four selected periods: Victorian America, the '20s and '30s, World War II and the Postwar Era, and the '60s. Class presentations and discussions revolve around novels, movies, art, music, artifacts, and readings about the periods. This course is team taught by all the members of the American studies faculty. Offered fall semester.

Humanities

AMS151 Intro American Studies: World Nation & Region
Hours 3
A broad survey of American culture formed by global, national, and regional influences. The first section, "World," looks at the United States as a product and shaper of international movements, ideas, and cultures from 1500 to the present. The second section, "Nation," examines the creation of a distinctly American identity between 1790 and 1890 that ultimately incorporated and reflected global issues. The third section, "Regions," focuses on the South and other regions as contributors to and consequences of national and global interactions. Team taught by the entire AMS faculty, lectures will include topics on film, music, literature, art, sports, and other cultural artifacts. Offered spring semester.

Humanities

AMS200 Special Topics Amer Stud
Hours 3
Selected American topics for lower-division undergraduate students offered by AMS faculty members or Americanists from related departments. Recent examples include The Asian-American Experience, The American Road, The Sporting Life, Baseball Since 1945, and Twilight Zone Culture. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 hours.

AMS201 Intro African Amer Study
Hours 3
This course provides a basic outline of the diversity and complexity of the African American experience in the United States. It surveys the early academic and social concern of Black Studies advocates; the changes in the field's objectives that arise from its connections to contemporary social movements for Black Power, women's liberation, and multiculturalism; and its major theoretical and critical debates.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

AMS203 Introduction to Southern Studies
Hours 3
This discussion-based course introduces students to major texts and interdisciplinary methodologies in the field of Southern Studies. Traversing epochs from before the Civil War until after the Civil Rights Movement, we will scrutinize the interplay between course materials (autobiographies, fictional texts, historical accounts, and films) and major political, cultural, and social forces influencing the region and the nation.

Humanities

AMS204 Introduction to Western American Studies
Hours 3
A lecture/discussion course utilizing a biographical approach to the salient themes, issues, and episodes of the American West. Some of these lives are real, some of them imagined, and others are a little of each. All of them, however, reveal much about both region and nation and how each has changed over time.
## Courses for Department of American Studies

### AMS205 Dirty Jobs

**HU**

**Hours 3**

This course explores jobs that get you "dirty." Work is one of the aspects that most shapes individual lives, and many lines of work are viewed as dangerous, dirty, or somehow unsavory by American society. This course uses films, TV shows, written narratives, and music to explore different types of "dirty" work in the United States.

**Humanities**

### AMS206 Native American Studies

**HU**

**Hours 3**

There's a lot more to Native Americans than the first Thanksgiving, the Battle of the Little Bighorn, and casinos (although we'll discuss all those things too). This course will introduce you to the diversity of Native American societies, their histories, and their significant influence on American culture, contemporary U.S. policy, and law. We'll be examining everything from ancient archaeological artifacts to contemporary film and literature as we investigate the vital role of indigenous people in North America. As much as possible, we'll be directly engaging Native sources and voices as we explore the struggles over land, sovereignty, and culture that have shaped (and continue to shape) Native American lives.

**Humanities**

### AMS208 Rock, Hip-Hop, and Country

**Hours 3**

This course will offer an introduction to popular music that young Americans used for two generations, to root their aesthetics, center their values, and test their ethical allegiances.

### AMS222 Modern Gay America: Introduction to LGBTQ Histories

**Hours 3**

During the past decade, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) Americans have achieved various forms of empowerment and visibility in the nation's political, legal, social, and cultural arenas. However, LGBTQ persons continue to face various barriers to full equality and well-being including employment discrimination, high rates of homelessness among teens, violence, and inadequate access to health care. This 3 credit hour course places the events of the last decade into a longer history of LGBTQ communities, visibility and politics that begins in the late nineteenth century and ends in the early twenty-first century. During the semester, we will explore the historical development of LGBTQ identities, communities, politics, and cultural production. Together, we will analyze an array of materials including scholarly texts, oral histories, newspapers, films, photographs, art and political ephemera.

**Prerequisite(s): None**

### AMS225 Black Women's Experiences in the South

**Hours 3**

Southern/Black/Woman. This demographic descriptor encompasses notable figures - Ida B. Wells, Bessie Smith, Condoleezza Rice, Beyoncé – and millions whose names and individual stories are often marginal to American memory and policy. This course examines various aspects of Southern Black Women's lives and labors, pain and pleasures, adventures and adversities from the nineteenth century to the present day. Students will analyze an array of materials including: memoirs/autobiographies, oral histories, secondary scholarship, census data, paintings, photographs, film, television and music. Using in-class activities, discussion and writing assignments, this course addresses one central question: What can the academic study of Black Women's experiences in the South reveal about gender, race, class, and sexuality in the United States (past and present)?

**Prerequisite(s): None**

### AMS231 Contemporary America

**HU**

**Hours 3**

This course analyzes the changing nature of American values for the period dating from the 1970s through the 2000s by examining key developments in the everyday life patterns and cultural expressions of Americans in contexts that range from the local to the international. In doing so, we will draw connections between the economic and political contexts of these decades and contemporaneous works of creative expression and popular culture. This course also will serve as an introduction to the types of interdisciplinary research methods used in American Studies. Offered fall and spring semesters.*

**Humanities**

### AMS300 Special Topics

**Hours 3**

Selected American topics for advanced undergraduate students, offered by American Studies faculty members or Americanists from related departments. Recent examples include American Hobo Subculture, World War II and Modern Memory, Women’s Liberation Movement, Justice and Civil Society, Southern Sexual Cultures, and Cultures of American Slavery. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 hours.

**Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.**

### AMS303 Education Of Southern Blacks

**Hours 3**

A study of the "miseducation" of Africans in America. The course explores education for blacks from West Africa at the middle of the second millennium and early American society to the emergence of the separate school system of the 19th and 20th centuries.
AMS304 Civil War Still Lives: Race, Memory, and Politics of Reunion
Hours 3
For over 150 years, the Civil War occupies a prominent place in our national memory and has served to both unite and divide Americans. This course will explore the various ways in which Americans have chosen to remember their civil war through reunions, monuments and memorials, histories, literature, film, museums as well as other forms of popular culture. We will examine how memory of the war changed over time as well as the political implications for Civil War memory, the nation, and identity in understanding both historical and contemporary debates. We will pay particular attention to the way in which the war has been remembered and commemorated here at the University of Alabama.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities or Social sciences or permission of the instructor.

AMS310 The Latinx Experience
W
Hours 3
This course focuses on the history of people of Latin American descent (Latinas/os) living in the United States. Although we will examine communities comprised of people of Central and South American descent, the focus of this course will be on the four largest Latinx groups: those of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban and Dominican descent. Students will become familiar with issues that have affected different Latinx populations in the United States: migration patterns, cultural interaction, community and cultural formation; and racial formations. We will also examine relations among Latinx and European immigrants, and consider the affects of US intervention and imperialism in Latin America on US Latinx communities. Lectures, readings, and films will explore connections between the past and the present and provide students a forum to express their own viewpoints on the legacy of this history.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS315 Work and Workers Since 1865
Hours 3
Examines the history of workers - men and women, paid and unpaid, of different racial and ethnic groups, in different regions of the United States - from 1865 to the present.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS316 Labor on Film
Hours 3
This course examines the ability of film to successfully portray the history of labor in the US and how present events and attitudes shape portrayals of past events.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS318 Amusement and Tourism in America
Hours 3
This course explores the centrality of amusement and tourism in defining the American pursuit of happiness. The course examines varied forms of leisure culture that emerged in the 19th century and exploded in popularity throughout the 20th century. By asserting connections between a wide range of amusement and tourist activities, the course provides a framework for understanding how Americans at play participate in a vibrant component of American social, economic, and aesthetic history.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS320 American Popular Humor
Hours 3
This course explores major writers, performers, works, and themes of American humor that have achieved enduring popularity among mass audiences. It examines the social and historical contexts that reverberate in humor produced in the United States and focuses on three persistently popular mediums: prose and performance; film; and the television situation comedy.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS321 African American Folk Art
Hours 3
An examination of the objects created by African Americans variously classified as "folk," "self-taught," and "outsider" artists. Course material will address the African origins and American transformations of traditional arts and crafts (architecture, pottery, iron work, and quilting) as well as the work of selected 20th-century artists in such media as painting, sculpture, and assemblage. Key concerns will include not only analysis and cultural/historical contextualization of these artists and their works but also political and theoretical debates with respect to issues of collection, modes of exhibition, and use of the above-listed classifications.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS323 Into the Wild: Nature and American Popular Imagination
W
Hours 3
This course examines the often contentious and always passionate American relationship with "nature," an idea as much as a physical reality. Students consider the varying ways that nature has been imagined over a wide range of time periods and through the lenses of various forms of creative expression and cultural practices. The course explores how our complex relationship with "nature" has influenced American culture at large, its history and mainstream values.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

Writing
AMS325 America West And 19th Century  
Hours 3
Few things remained so central to the 19th American century experience as the West, a region to be explored, inhabited, and incorporated into an expanding urban-industrial society. From Lewis and Clark to Buffalo Bill, this lecture/discussion course examines the relationship between America and the West as it developed throughout the 19th century.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS326 The Modern West  
Hours 3
This lecture/discussion course examines the growth of the American West during the 20th century as both the embodiment of modernity and, as mythic imagination, an escape from the very modernity it represents.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS327 The American Western  
Hours 3
Since its creation toward the close of the 19th century, the western has been the most popular genre in American film history. No popular genre has generated anything like the kind of sustained attention, enthusiasm, interest, passion, anger, or debate as the American western. Which is the focus of the course: a chronological treatment of the on-going relationship between the western film and the meaning of modern America.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS335 American Pop Music  
W  
Hours 3
Recent scholarship has shifted popular music history from folk roots and rock rebellion to pop: commercial, acccommodating, but no less fascinating amalgamations. This class will range from blackface mistrelsy in the 1800s to American Idol today, defining mainstreams rather than undergrounds. Pop music performed capitalism, but it also performed democracy. Sorting out that process will be the task.
Prerequisite(s): Six Semester Hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences or Instructor's Permission.

AMS340 Women in the South  
W  
Hours 3
What insights into American experience are afforded by reading nineteenth- and twentieth-century texts in which Southern women engage questions of gender, class, race, labor, and region? This class will explore fictional and nonfictional prose by and about Southern women in order to examine how historical, cultural, and sociopolitical factors have shaped the lives and writings of women in the South. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.
Prerequisite(s): Six Semester Hours of American Studies or Instructor's Permission.

AMS341 African American Art  
Hours 3
An examination of the work of formally trained 20th century African American painters, sculptors, and photographers in relation to broader currents in the social and cultural history of the United States. Examines ways in which African American art has alternately reflected, shaped, and challenged such important historical events and currents as the Harlem Renaissance, the Great Depression, the Cold War, the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, the Women's Movement, and contemporary identity politics. Also evaluates the contributions of selected artists in relation to such key art movements as Modernism, Social Realism, and Postmodernism.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

AMS352 American Folklore  
Hours 3
This course offers a survey of such genres of American folk culture expression as ghost stories, urban legends, foodways, music, and folk art—paying special attention to how these diverse forms of expression reflect and shape particular regional, ethnic, class, and gender identities. Course materials include ethnographic writing, sound recordings, film, and folklore scholarship. The course also will devote attention to the competing definitions of “folk” and “folklore” prevalent from the late 19th century to the present. Assignments will emphasize student collection and analysis of original folklore material.
Prerequisite(s): 6 SH Humanities or Social Sciences or permission of instructor.

AMS364 The Beatles Era  
Hours 3
Interdisciplinary investigation of American culture from the Kennedy assassination in 1963 to the Kent State University massacre in 1970 using the popular cultural explosion of the Beatles as a prism that informs the whole.
Prerequisite(s): Six Semester Hours of Humanities and/or Social Science Courses or Instructor's Permission

AMS367 The American Game  
Hours 3
Lecture topics, readings, and classroom discussions will pursue major connections between baseball and American society from 1880 to the present: (1) the modernization of America and the rise of an urban, industrial game; (2) baseball and race; and (3) postwar America and baseball.
Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.
AMS380 Imagining the Indian: Native Americans on Page and Screen

W

Hours 3

Native American imagery is widespread in American culture, from butter packaging to sports mascots and from children’s picture books to epic films. These depictions have embedded ideas about American Indians—often romanticized, stereotyped, or just inaccurate ideas—in the imaginations of millions of readers and film-goers. In this course, we will examine representations of Native Americans in art, writing, film, music, and more, ranging from early encounters between Natives and newcomers to contemporary pop culture. We’ll consider continuities and changes in how Indians have been imagined by outsiders, while also exploring Native self-representation in the face of cultural appropriation and stereotyping. We’ll explore a variety of methods and sources as we reflect on the pervasiveness of ideas about, and images of, Natives in American culture.

Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

Writing

AMS400 Internship

Hours 1-3

An internship opportunity that combines independent study and practical fieldwork experience focusing on a particular problem or topic related to American culture and experience. Examples are internships in archival fieldwork, material culture fieldwork, museum management, and sound recordings. Credits earned in this course are applicable to the major and minor in American studies but are not counted in 400-level requirement. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours.

AMS401 Black Intellectual Thought

Hours 3

An upper level seminar designed to provide students with an in-depth study of major intellectual debates and movements that have shaped the politics, history and identities of the people of African descent in the United States and the African diaspora. The course will combine methodologies and concepts from multiple disciplines including history, political theory, literature, women's studies, sociology, psychology and philosophy.

AMS402 Special Topics

Hours 3

Selected African American topics for advanced undergraduate students. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 hours.

AMS403 Honors Research - Ams

UH

Hours 3

Internship opportunity that combines guided and independent study with on- or off-campus research experience involving a particular methodological approach to American culture and experience. Examples are social science methods, oral history, original manuscript research, and technology.

University Honors

AMS405 Directed Study

Hours 1-3

May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours.

AMS406 Directed Study

Hours 1-3

Independent study in American Studies.

AMS407 Landscapes of the South

W

Hours 3

A study of environmental and cultural landscapes of the American South, as altered and used by successive waves of native peoples, explorers, immigrants, laborers, industrialists, and urban builders, addressing historical and contemporary environmental challenges. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Writing

AMS412 On The Road

W

Hours 3

This course examines the American love affair with the open road. It considers the dramatic influence of car culture on the national imagination and the many ways it permeates and defines the United States. Drawing from an array of literary, historical, and cultural sources, the course encourages students to examine how writers, filmmakers, and artists in all mediums demonstrate the pervasiveness of the road in our historical, literary, and cultural imagination.

Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor

Writing

AMS415 Service Learning

Hours 3

Course examines immigrant journey and life in American South to gain an understanding of historical and contemporary issues through research and service.

Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor
AMS416 American Environmental Thought in a Global Context
W
Hours 3
Popular conceptions of nature hold extraordinary power in shaping our responses and policies toward both the geophysical world and built environments. This interdisciplinary course examines key concepts and controversies in American thought about nature since before colonization. Using accounts from various regions, the course explores evolving conceptions of nature and justice, competing claims about race and class, and changing institutional responses and remedies to environmental degradation in the context of global change. The course is highly interactive, inviting critical thinking about the human place in the physical world. We read and discuss ecological views as presented in colonial writings, slave narratives, Transcendentalist thought, Gilded Age preservationist and conservationist debates, and the work of Progressive Era occupational health specialists and ecologists. We give specific attention to twentieth century social movements for environmental public health, examining contemporary approaches, including eco-feminism, environmental justice, and sustainability.
Prerequisite(s): Permission of the instructor.
Writing

AMS420 Mark Twain's America: America's Mark Twain
Hours 3
This course employs the life, work, and times of America’s most celebrated author to examine American popular culture from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. In addition to exploring his major works and his times, the course considers his impact on popular culture to this day—from film adaptations of his work, to pop-culture references, to the traditions of American humor and cultural criticism.
Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor

AMS421 Writer & Artist in America
W
Hours 3
This course offers a comparative examination of responses by 20th century literary and visual artists to perceived social crises and challenges to American cultural values, such as sex in the early 20th century American city, working class struggles during the Great Depression, issues of atomic anxiety during the early years of the Cold War, the ethical dilemmas of the Vietnam War, the perils of the AIDS/HIV crisis, and the flourishing of contemporary consumer culture. The course also introduces several important movements in twentieth century American arts and letters, including Naturalism, Modernism, Social Realism, the Beat movement, Social Surrealism, and Postmodernism.
Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor
Writing

AMS422 Popular Culture in America
W
Hours 3
A selective survey and analysis of 20th century U.S. popular culture—particularly, comic books, fan culture, television, music, advertising, and sports. Examines ways in which popular culture has reflected and shaped aspects of American society such as gender ideologies, economics, race, class, and regional identity.
Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor
Writing

AMS423 The Roots of American Music
W
Hours 3
This class surveys American music from ragtime, blues, and hillbilly to Broadway, Hollywood musicals, and swing jazz. Our focus will be on commercial mainstreams and democratic audiences—how selling sound led to different identities being expressed through taste and style. Race, gender, class, sexuality, age, technology, and the music business will all factor as we move from blackface minstrelsy in the 1800s to World War II. We will listen closely to several songs each week, connecting music to larger themes through primary and secondary sources, regular writing, and in-class discussion.
Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.
Writing

AMS429 America between the Wars
W
Hours 3
Explores first two decades of America’s “Modern Times” (1919-1941) when Americans redefined themselves and their society embracing and debating (sometimes hotly) old beliefs, new conceptions, and the implications of a machine-driven, modern-mass society. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.
Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor
Writing

AMS430 Special Topics
Hours 3
Selected American topics for advanced undergraduate majors in American studies, offered by American Studies faculty members or Americanists from related departments. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours.
Prerequisite(s): Nine Semester Hours of humanities or social science courses or Instructor’s Permission
AMS439 Urban Spaces: The Nature of Cities

W

Hours 3

This interdisciplinary social science course provides an introduction to the cultural and physical ecology of cities, focusing primarily on urbanization in the United States from the late 19th century to the present. Course readings include classical scholars in urbanism and urban design. Contemporary urban environmental histories explore population shifts and land use along the urban gradient from the suburbs to urban centers, with attention to water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure, pollution, and urban sprawl. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Writing

AMS445 The "Good War"

W

Hours 3

Examination of selected topics from the American experience during the Second World War. Topics include the Homefront, the Holocaust, race relations, the emergence of American air power, and the impact of the war on American memory and postwar American society. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

Writing

AMS446 Gender and Environment

W

Hours 3

This course examines histories of concepts of nature and gender, philosophies of eco-feminism, and accounts of gender-based efforts for environmental reform. Texts include histories of environmental concepts and reform campaigns, broadly conceived, including slave narratives, accounts of experiences in the women’s club movement, the conservation movement, and Progressive Era occupational and public health reform, along with more well-known twentieth century nature writers, contemporary scholars, and activists. Particular attention is paid to women whose identities are defined in part by their status as immigrants, women of color, or in other marginalized categories. Case studies explore global environmental reform as well as U.S. experiences. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Writing

AMS450 (En)gendering Black History: Black Feminist Thought and Action in American History

Hours 3

In the Zora Neale Hurston classic, Their Eyes Were Watching God, the protagonist’s (Janie) grandmother described the gender and racial norms that dictated their lived experiences as women and racial minorities under the Jim Crow regime. This class places the experiences and expressions of black women like Janie and her grandmother at the center of scholarly and pedagogical explorations of black feminist thought and action. Beginning with black women’s responses to legal racialized chattel slavery in the nineteenth century and ending in the early twenty-first century, we will examine how black women in the United States articulate(d) politicized understandings of and responses to interlocking oppressions including racism, sexism, patriarchy, heterosexism, classism, etc. This interdisciplinary course will also examine African American gender and sexual politics, interactions between black women and the state, moments of coalition and conflict between black and white women, as well as the diverse nature of black feminist thought.

AMS460 Race & Ethnicity in US Labor

Hours 3

This course is designed to familiarize students with the important topics, themes, and methodologies in the study of race and ethnicity in U.S. labor. Throughout the semester, the class will examine the lives of working women and men and their roles in the social, political, and economic development of the United States. The class will analyze the roll of gender, race, and ethnicity at home and in the workplace and examine how scholars have studied the people, events and institutions in this field.

Prerequisite(s): Nine Semester Hours of American Studies Courses or Instructor’s Permission

AMS465 Fictions of American Identity

W

Hours 3

An examination of American literature and culture from before the Civil War until after the Civil Rights Movement. Representations of American experience in essays, novels, poems, short stories, social reformist tracts, and the visual arts will be studied in the context of social and political debates over slavery, national identity, women’s roles, immigration and assimilation, social mobility, urbanization, sexual mores, consumer culture, and race relations. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Prerequisite(s): 9 SH Humanities/ and or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

Writing
Courses for Department of American Studies

AMS470 Natives and Newcomers: Cross-Cultural Encounters in Early America

W

Hours 3

The colonization efforts of European empires in the early modern period led to cross-cultural encounters between societies previously unfamiliar with one another, introducing each of them to unfamiliar ideas, cultures, political systems, and landscapes and changing their lives in profound ways. This course explores the complex interactions between Native American, European, and African peoples in North America, with a particular focus on the region that is currently the Southeastern United States. Such cross-cultural contact could result in valuable collaborations, deep misunderstandings, violence, or contests for power. How were interactions with unfamiliar peoples described and understood by Native Americans, Europeans, and African peoples in North America? How did the circulation of peoples and cultures shape ideas about ‘America’ and ‘Americaness’? Is ‘encounter’ a single event, or a long process? This course meets a college core writing requirement; a demonstration of writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course.

Prerequisite(s): Six hours of Humanities and/or Social Sciences courses or permission of instructor.

Writing

AMS476 Constructing the American Rev.

W

Hours 3

From the Declaration of Independence to the Civil War, Americans have continually tried to provide narrative shape and cultural significance to their national origins. Through the analysis of primary and secondary sources (political tracts, art works, histories, biographies, fiction, and other artifacts), this course will explore the relationship between the eighteenth-century revolutionaries’ and their nineteenth-century heirs’ cultural construction of the Revolution. Simply put, this course is about how people in the past have thought about their own past. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Prerequisite(s): Nine Semester Hours of American Studies Courses or Instructor’s Permission

Writing

AMS480 Democracy in America

Hours 3

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, Americans prided themselves on their democratic politics, industrial progress, science and technology, religious faiths, capitalist tendencies, and control over nature. No other person captured the essence of American society and manners more than the French aristocrat, Alex de Tocqueville, who traveled to the United States in the 1830s and published his famous work, Democracy in America. Using Tocqueville’s observations as well as fiction, autobiography, painting, politics, and more, this course explores how ordinary Americans presented themselves as a democratic people from 1800 to 1865.

Prerequisite(s): Nine Semester Hours of American Studies Courses or Instructor’s Permission

AMS491 American Period Seminar

Hours 3

In-depth study of a particular period or era in American historical experience. Recent examples include the Ragtime Era, the Jazz Age, the Great Depression, the Season of 1954-55, the ’60s, Contemporary America, the Romantic Revolutionaries (1905-14), the Postwar Era, American Avant Garde, the South and ’30s Expression, the Civil Rights Movement, the American ’20s, the ’50s, America between the Wars, the Colonial Period, the Aspirin Age, Postmodern America, Contemporary America, and Writing West.

Prerequisite(s): Nine Semester Hours of American Studies Courses or Instructor’s Permission

AMS492 American Topic Seminar

Hours 3

Study of special topics within the American cultural experience. Recent examples include American Thought, Sports in American Life, American Perspectives on the Environment, the Civil Rights Movement, the Picture Press, Music and Ethnicity, the Politics of Culture, Regionalism, Homelessness in America, American Autobiography, American Monuments, Southern Popular Culture, Politics and Culture, Historical Memory, America by Design, Women in America, Race in America, 19th-Century Popular Culture, and Disasters in America.

Prerequisite(s): Nine Semester Hours of American Studies Courses or Instructor’s Permission