

# American Studies Clusters

CLUSTERS, comprised of five courses, give American Studies majors the opportunity to focus on a particular theme or topic from an interdisciplinary perspective by selecting relevant courses from departments throughout the university. At least two of the courses counting towards the cluster must be at the 100 level, and no more than one independent reading course or internship will count. Students have flexibility on course selection in completing their clusters, but the cluster as a whole should be intellectually coherent, not merely a random selection of courses. Courses not listed in this handbook might be accepted with approval of the Director of American Studies. American Studies core or affiliate faculty with expertise relating to each of the clusters will serve as cluster advisors, assisting students in selecting the specific contents of their cluster. Students' Senior Special Project or Honors' Thesis is to be considered a capstone and must be on a topic related to the cluster.

In addition to the clusters listed below, there are several areas of inquiry relevant to American Studies but that are represented in other interdisciplinary programs such as Women's Studies, Environmental Studies, Peace and Justice, and Communication and Media Studies. American Studies majors interested in areas that are not represented in existing clusters can either choose to combine their American Studies major with a minor or second major, or create an independently designed cluster. Independently designed clusters should reflect the goals articulated in the American Studies mission statement. Students seeking to design their own cluster must obtain approval from the Director by submitting a written rationale for the proposed cluster and course selection, and a letter of support from an American Studies affiliate who has agreed to supervise the cluster.

Note: The lists below are intended to guide students in creating coherent clusters, but as new courses are offered every semester, the course lists should not be considered exhaustive. Students are encouraged to inform their advisors of courses they believe fit within the intellectual rationale for each cluster category. There may be additional advanced courses normally unavailable to American Studies majors that might fit in to a particular cluster (because of departmental prerequisites or they are primarily graduate courses). Students should consult with their cluster advisors prior to requesting special permission to enroll in such courses.

The courses listed are guides only for helping students structure their clusters. While several of these courses are offered on a regular basis, others are offered in one semester only, alternate years, etc. Other courses which are new might not have made this list at this time, and alternatively, some courses might have been dropped. Therefore, always check course availability on the respective department websites before committing any course to your schedule.

These lists will be updated frequently as needed. Please stop by the American Studies Office if you have questions, or email Deborah Pacini, the Director of American Studies or Sheila Driscoll, the Program Coordinator.

## African American Studies Cluster

This interdisciplinary cluster critically examines the cultural, political, social and historical experiences of peoples of African descent in the United States. The distribution of courses across disciplines will encourage students to bring to bear a variety of critical perspectives to understanding black life in the US in relation to other Americans and the African Diaspora. Students focusing in this area will develop an understanding of race, power and racism in historical, social, political, class, legal and cultural contexts.

Five Courses are needed to complete this Cluster. Cluster requirements are as follows:

**Required: At least three courses that substantially focus African American historical and contemporary issues. One of these courses must be an African American history survey course or its equivalent (Hist 95 or Hist 96).**

AMER 12	Race in America
AMER 16	(Un)making American Identities: Asian and Black Experiences in the US
AMER 181	Constructions of Whiteness
AMER 184	Viewing African American Dance
AMER 194-07	Legacies of the Civil Rights Movement
AMER 194-06	Bamboozled?: A Social History of African Americans and the Movies
ENG 69	Contemporary Multi-ethnic Literature
ENG 91	Body, Memory, Representation: Reading Black Women's Texts
ENG 91-02	Slavery's Optic Glass: First Century of African American Literature
ENG 153	American Realism
ENG 161	Memory for Forgetting
ENG 191	Literature and the Law
ENG 168	Home Is Where the Hatred Is
FAH 73	Blackness: Digesting Difference in African America
HIST 95	African American History to 1865
HIST 96	African American History since 1865
HIST 171	The American South since 1865
MUS 11	African American Music
MUS 12	History of Blues
MUS 40	History of Jazz

**Related Courses: No more than two courses from the following list may be taken. If the African American content is less than 25%, writing assignments must be on an African American topic.**

BIO 97	Contemporary Biosocial Problems in America
CH 55	Race, Ethnicity and Health
EC 144	Income, Inequality, Poverty, Justice
ED 192	Critical Race Theory Seminar: Issues in Urban Education
ENG 20	Black World Literature
ENG 45	Non-Western Women Writers
FAH 71	Arts of the Afro Atlantic Diaspora
MUS 64	Gospel Choir
PSY 136	Stereotypes, Prejudices and Discrimination
PSY 139	Social Cognition: The Face of Race
SOC 110	Racial and Ethnic Minorities
SOC 130	Wealth, Poverty, Inequality
SOC 187	Children of Immigrants and Immigrant Children

## Indigenous Peoples of the Americas

This interdisciplinary cluster critically examines the cultural, political, social and historical experiences of indigenous peoples in the US and the Americas. The distribution of courses across disciplines will encourage students to bring to bear a variety of critical perspectives to understanding indigenous peoples in the US, and in relation to other Americans. The courses in this cluster allow students to examine and assess the external events, issues, assumptions, and internal responses that have and continue to shape Native American history and contemporary life in Indian America. Courses on Native Americans in Latin American can count towards the cluster, but at least three courses must be on Native American history/issues in the US. Five courses are required, including an introductory course:

**Required: At least two courses, one must be AMER 100 Native American Issues that substantially focus on Native American history and contemporary issues.**

AMER 101	Native American Fine Art: Beauty and Meaning
AMER 103	Museums and Native Americans: The Politics of Representation
AMER 185	Native American Issues
ANTH 15	Native Peoples of South America
ANTH 128	Mesoamerican Archaeology
ENG 154	Native American Writers

**Related courses: Up to three classes may be taken that focus on the social, economic or political structures shaping indigenous lives. If the Native American content is less than 25 % writing assignments must be on a Native American topic.**

AMER 12	Race in America
AMER 66/ENV66	Representing the Environment
AMER 181	Constructions of Whiteness
ANTH 132	Myth, Ritual and Symbol
CD 164	Cultural Diversity in Child and Family Services
CD 177	Bilingual Children in US schools
CH 55	Race, Ethnicity and Health
CH 106	Health, Ethics and Policy
CH 190	Social Capital and Mental Health
EC 144	Income, Inequality, Poverty, Justice
ED 161	Sociology of the School
ED 192	Critical Race Theory Seminar: Issues in Urban Education
ENG 69	Contemporary Multi-ethnic literature
ENG 160	Environmental Justice and United States Literature
FAH 007	Introduction to Latin American Art
HIST 75	The Americas
PS 109	Politics of Ethnicity and American Identity
PS 111	Political Psychology
PSY 136	Stereotypes, Prejudices and Discrimination
SOC 110	Racial and Ethnic Minorities
SOC 130	Wealth, Poverty, Inequality

## Comparative Race and Ethnicity

This interdisciplinary cluster critically examines cultural, political, social and historical experiences across race and ethnicity in the United States. The distribution of courses across disciplines will encourage students to bring to bear a variety of critical perspectives to understanding racial and ethnic experiences in the US. Students focusing in this area will develop an understanding of race, power and racism in historical, social, political, class, legal, cultural and local community contexts. Five Courses are needed to complete this Cluster. Cluster requirements are as follows:

**Required: At least two courses that address race and ethnicity comparatively. Race in America must be one of these courses.**

AMER 12*	Race in America
AMER 16	(Un)making American Identities: Asian and Black Experiences in the US
CH 55	Race, Ethnicity and Health
ED 192	Critical Race Theory Seminar: Issues in Urban Education
ENG 69	Contemporary Multi-ethnic literature
ENG 153	American Realism
ENG 160	Environmental Justice and United States Literature
ENG 191	Literature and the Law
HIST 80	The Changing American Nation
PS 109	Politics of Ethnicity and American Identity
SOC 110	Racial and Ethnic Relations
SOC 187	Children of Immigrants & Immigrant Children

\* This course may be used for the cluster OR as a foundation requirement, not both.

**At least two courses that focus on two different specific racial and/or ethnic groups.**

AMER 101	Native American Fine Art
AMER 103	Museums and Native Americans
AMER 131	Active Citizenship
AMER 184	Viewing African American Dance
AMER 185	Native American Issues
ANTH 116	Intro to Latino Cultures
ANTH 149	Growing Up Latino
ANTH 183	Urban Borderlands
ANTH 185	Involuntary Crossings: Disasters, Refugees, & Resettlements
ED 177/CD177	Bilingual Children in U.S. Schools
ED 192	Critical Race Theory Seminar: Issues in Urban Education
ENG 91	Slavery's Optic Glass: First Century of Af/Amer Lit
ENG 154	American Indian Writers
ENG 161	Memory for Forgetting
ENG 168	Home is Where the Hatred Is
ENG XXX	Body, Memory, Representation
FAH 73	Blackness: Digesting Difference in African America
FAH 92/AMER143	The Latino/a Body Visual Culture
HIST 86	American in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century
HIST 87	American in the 20 <sup>th</sup> Century
HIST 95	African American History to 1865
HIST 96	African American History since 1865
HIST 99	Latino in U.S. History
HIST 171	The American South since 1865
ANTH 17	Latino Music, Migration and Identity
SPN 92	US Mexico Borderlands
SPN 192	Chicano Cultures, Communities and Identities

**One additional class may be taken that focuses on social, economic or political structures shaping the experience of racial and/or ethnic groups in the U.S.**

AMER 181	Constructions of Whiteness
CH 106	Health, Ethics and Policy
CD 164	Cultural Diversity in Child and Family Services
CH 190	Social Capital and Mental Health
PS 111	Political Psychology
PSY 136	Stereotypes, Prejudices and Discrimination
SOC 10	American Society
SOC 130	Wealth, Poverty, Inequality

## Asian Americans

This interdisciplinary cluster critically examines the cultural, political, social and historical experiences of peoples of Asian descent in the United States. The distribution of courses across disciplines will encourage students to bring to bear a variety of critical perspectives to understanding Asian American life in the US in relation to other Americans and the Asian diaspora. Students focusing in this area will develop an understanding of race, power and racism in historical, social, political, class, legal, cultural and local community contexts.

Five Courses are needed to complete this Cluster. Cluster requirements are as follows:

**Required: At least three courses, including AMER 182 Asian America, that address Asian American history and contemporary issues. If the Asian American content is less than 25% the student's final project must be on an Asian American topic.**

AMER 12	Race in America
AMER 16	(Un)making American Identities: Asian and Black Experiences in the US
AMER 131	Active Citizenship in Boston Chinatown
AMER 182	Asian America
DR 49	Asian American Stage and Screen
ENG 69	Contemporary Multi-ethnic Literature
ENG 155	American Women Writers
ENG 191	Literature and Law

**Related: up to two classes may be taken that focus on social, economic or political structures shaping the Asian American experience.**

AMER 181	Constructions of Whiteness
CD 164	Cultural Diversity in Child and Family Services
CD 177	Bilingual Children in US schools
CH 55	Race, Ethnicity and Health
CH 106	Health, Ethics and Policy
CH 190	Social Capital and Mental Health
EC 144	Income, Inequality, Poverty, Justice
ED 161	Sociology of the School
ED 192	Critical Race Theory Seminar: Issues in Urban Education
ENG 153	American Realism
ENG 160	Environmental Justice and United States Literature
HIST 80	The Changing American Nation: 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> C.
PS 109	Politics of Ethnicity and American Identity
PS 111	Political Psychology
PSY 136	Stereotypes, Prejudices and Discrimination
SOC 10	American Society
SOC 110	Racial and Ethnic Minorities
SOC 130	Wealth, Poverty, Inequality
SOC 187	Children of Immigrants
UEP181/SOC149	Homelessness in America

## Latino/as in the US

This interdisciplinary cluster critically examines the cultural, political, social and historical experiences of peoples of Latin American descent in the United States. The distribution of courses across disciplines will encourage students to bring to bear a variety of critical perspectives to understanding the Latino experience in the US in relation to other Americans and other minorities. Students focusing in this area will develop an understanding of race, power and racism in historical, social, political, class, legal and cultural and local community contexts.

Five Courses are needed to complete this Cluster. Cluster requirements are as follows:

**Required: At least two courses with substantial content addressing US Latino history and culture. One of these must be a survey course (asterisked below)**

ANTH 17	Latino Music, Migration and Identity
ANTH 116*	Intro to Latino Cultures
ANTH 149*	Growing Up Latino
ANTH 183	Urban Borderlands
ANTH 185	Involuntary Crossings
FAH 92/AMER143	The Latino/a Body as Visual Culture
HIST 99	US Latino History
SPN 92	US Mexican Borderlands
SPN 192	Chicano Cultures, Communities and Identities

**Related courses: Up to three courses may be taken that focus on social, economic or political structures shaping the US Latino experience. If the US Latino content is less than 25% writing assignments must be on a Latino topic.**

AMER 12	Race in America
AMER 65	American Film Studies
AMER184/DNC 70	Viewing African American Dance
CH 55	Race, Ethnicity and Health
CD 177	Bilingual Children in US Schools
ED 192	Critical Race Theory Seminar: Issues in Urban Education
ENG 69	Contemporary Multi-ethnic Literature
ENG 155	American Women Writers
ENG 191	Literature and Law
FAH 7	Intro to Latin American Art
FAH 83	Gender in Latin American Art
FAH 84	Latin American Cinema
HIST 3	World in Motion
HIST 80	The Changing American Nation
PS 109	Politics of Ethnicity and American Identity
SOC 110	Race and Ethnic Relations
SOC 183	Transnational Communities
SOC 187	Children of Immigrants and Immigrant Children

## Representation and Performance in the Arts and Humanities

This five course interdisciplinary cluster critically examines the representation and expression of race, sex, class, gender, cultural identity and politics within the visual, literary, performing and applied arts in the United States.

The distribution across disciplines including art history, film studies, literary studies, creative writing, dance, drama and studio arts, should be determined according to the student's interest but in consultation with their cluster advisor. The distribution should have a coherent analytical focus and should be comparative.

Students must take five courses and the courses must be distributed across at least three disciplines. Students may petition to have one applied arts course count toward the cluster if the creative work undertaken is deemed appropriate by the cluster advisor and the director of American Studies.

AMER101	Native American Fine Art: Beauty and Meaning
<a href="#">AMER 184</a>	<a href="#">Viewing African American Dance</a>
ANTH 17	Latino Music, Migration and Identity
ANTH 116	Introduction to Latino Cultures
CD167	Children and the Mass Media
DR 43	Gay and Lesbian Theater and Film
DR 48	African American Theater and Film
DR 49/DR 149	Asian American Stage and Screen
ENG 37	20 <sup>th</sup> Century African American Literature
ENG 63	American Fiction 1900 -1950
ENG 64	American Fiction 1950 - present
<a href="#">ENG 80</a>	<a href="#">Hitchcock: Cinema, Gender, Ideology</a>
ENG 154	American Indian Writers
ENG 153	American Realism
ENG 155	American Women Writers
ENG 160	Environmental Justice and US Literature
ENG 161	Memory for Forgetting
ENG 164	Representing the Jew
<a href="#">ENG 191</a>	<a href="#">Literature and Law</a>
<a href="#">ENG 192</a>	<a href="#">Cultures of Vision: 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature</a>
FAH 61	American Art 1776 to 1900
FAH 73/0173	Blackness: Digesting Difference in African America
FAH 91	American Architecture
FAH92/ AMER143	The Latina/o Body in Visual Culture
FAH 95	Boston Architecture and Urbanism
MUS 11	African American Music
MUS 12	Blues
MUS 13	History of Rock and Roll
MUS 40	History of Jazz
MUS 190	Hip Hop
SPN 92	US Mexican Borderlands
SPN 192	Chicano Cultures, Communities and Identities

## Issues in US Education

This cluster is designed to engage students in interdisciplinary and theoretical explorations of the contexts and practices of schooling. Students will examine institutions and experiences that shape the American educational system. Schooling, as both a conceptual and physical site of inquiry and analysis, will provide students the framework for investigating race, gender, sexuality, class, and creativity, conflict, and inequality.

Five courses complete this cluster.

**Required: Students are required to take Race in America AMER 12 and either ED001 School and Society or ED161 Sociology of the School.**

Students must take at least two courses focusing on educational issues in the US from the list below.

ED 1	School and Society
ED 11	Observing Theory in Action
CD 70	The Child and the Educational Process (New)
CD 155	Development of Language
CD177	Bilingual Children in U.S. Schools
CD 195	Developmental Disorders
ED 162	Class, Race and Gender in the History of US Ed.
ED161	Sociology of the School
ED165	Educating Women and Girls
ED 191-16	Masculinities in Urban Schooling
ED192	Critical Race Theory Seminar: Issues in Urban Education

**Students must take at least one of the following courses focusing on the social and structural contexts that shape education in the US.**

AMER 131	Active Citizenship
AMER 182	Asian America
AMER185	Native American Issues: Past and Present
ANTH 116	Introduction to US Latino Cultures
ANTH 183	Urban Borderlands
HIST 93	Women in Twentieth Century America
HST 96	20 <sup>th</sup> African American History since 1865
PHIL 125	Racism and Social Inequality
PSY136	Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination
SOC 30	Sex and Gender in Society
SOC 10	American Society
SOC 130	Wealth, Poverty, and Inequality
UEP181	Homelessness in America
UEP 188	Seminar in Government and Families
UEP/CD182	Social Policy for Children and Families
WS 72	Introduction to Women's Studies
WS 191	Introduction to Queer Studies

## Science, Health and Society

In the United States, as is true with other countries, health outcomes tend to follow a social class gradient. People with higher socioeconomic statuses tend to be healthier than those with lower ones, and within social classes, whites tend to be healthier than other racial and ethnic groups. Health thus provides one lens for studying American society, forcing us to try to understand the reasons for these differences and to think through what can be done to mitigate them. For American Studies majors with an interest in health issues, this cluster is designed to guide this exploration of differences. Five courses complete this cluster.

**Required: One course that gives an overview of issues related to health and society, selected from list below:**

ANTH 148	Medical Anthropology
CH 1	Introduction to Community Health
HIST 94	Sickness and Health in America
SOC 141	Medical Sociology

**2. Required: One course that focuses on political structures – selected from list below:**

CD 182	Social Policies for Families and Children
CH 189	Seminar in Health Politics
CH 2	Health Care in America
PS 11	Intro to American Politics

**3. Required: One course that studies one population or issue in greater depth – selected from list below:**

AMER 12	Race in America
AMER 16	American Identities: Asian and Black Americans in the US
AMER 82	Asian America
AMER 131	Active Citizenship in Boston Chinatown
AMER 185	Native American Issues: Past and Present
ANTH 183	Urban Borderlands
CD 193	Pediatric Psychology
CEE 158	Occupational and Environmental Health
CH 55	Race, Ethnicity and Health
CH 104	Women and Health
CH 187	Health Policy for Aging Populations
CH 188	Health of New Immigrants
ED 1	School and Society
ED 161	Sociology of Schools
HIST 98	The Immigrant in America
UEP 181/SOC 149	Homelessness in America
WS 72	Introduction to Women's Studies

**4. Related: One course that focuses on the social, scientific, ethical, or economic ramifications of how health issues are handled in the Americas – select from list below:**

BIO 2	Biology & the American Social Contract
BIO 97	Contemporary. Biosocial Problems in America
CH 106	Health, Ethics, and Policy
CH 185	Community Health and Drugs
EC 48	Economics of Health
GEO 2	Environmental Geology
PHIL 48	Feminist Philosophy
PHIL 124	Bioethics
PHIL 125	Racism and social Inequality
PSY 55	Human Sexual Behavior
PSY 56	Drugs and Behavior
PSY 136	Stereotypes, Prejudice, Discrimination
SOC 130	Wealth, Poverty and Inequality

The fifth course is an elective that reflects the individual student's interests. The course need not be specifically about health, but must be approved by the Health and Society cluster advisor in order to count towards the cluster. For example, if the student's interests are related to how race and health interact, both at both biological and social levels, then a course in human genetics might be appropriate. Students may satisfy this cluster requirement with a course listed under one of the other four clusters.