

AMERICAN STUDIES, B.A.

Saint Louis University's American studies program uses film, food, fashion, buildings, sports, popular media, the environment, art, literature and historical texts in order to understand the diverse cultures of the United States and the nation's place in the world in the past and present.

- American studies at SLU is interdisciplinary, using a variety of sources and methods (literature, social science, film and community institutions) to understand American cultures.
- American studies is global and diverse, paying close attention to international and regional relations, as well as to the variety of racial, ethnic, religious and other communities within and around its borders.
- American studies is practical, which means the everyday is taken as seriously as the esoteric, and the lessons learned in the classroom are applied to work in communities and public institutions.

As a result, SLU's American studies degree trains students in critical thinking, complex problem-solving and clear written and oral communication. American studies graduates from SLU have experience working in diverse groups and applying their knowledge to the world around them.

These are sought-after skills transferable to a variety of fields. Graduates from SLU's American studies program have worked in higher and secondary education, media and communications, nonprofit organizations, government, political organizing, social work, law, museums and other cultural institutions.

Curriculum Overview

A major in American studies is 30 credits, including ASTD 1000 Intro to American Culture: Movements, Myths, and Methods (0,3 cr) ; a breadth requirement entailing one course in each of the three categories of "Contexts: Period and Place," "Identities: Social Difference and Agency," and "Practices: Cultural Forms and Interpretive Methods" (9 credits total); and ASTD 4960 Senior Workshop: Crafting the American Studies Thesis (3 cr) . The remaining 15 credits are elective courses selected from American studies courses. With the approval of a student's faculty mentor, up to nine of these elective credits may be fulfilled by relevant courses offered outside of the Department of American Studies. At least one course taken for the major must have the department's "community engagement" attribute.

Fieldwork and Research Opportunities

Internships completed through SLU's American studies program are student-designed in close collaboration with the department's internship supervisor and participating organizations and institutions. Internships count as a three-credit course, requiring 120 hours total, or about eight hours per week. Past students have partnered with the Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis Zoo, Missouri Botanical Garden, International Institute, Missouri History Museum, Circuit Court Records Project, City Museum and Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts, among other sites.

Careers

A degree in American studies provides a broad education that prepares graduates for careers that emphasize creative thinking, strong writing, critical analysis, clear communication, skilled research and civic and community engagement.

The following list is just a small sample of jobs for American studies graduates:

- Archivist
- Editor
- Exhibit designer
- Foundation director
- Grant writer
- Historic preservation specialist
- Journalist
- Labor organizer
- Lawyer
- Librarian
- Museum curator
- Nonprofit management
- Politician
- Professor
- Public policy analyst
- Public relations
- Social worker
- Speechwriter
- Teacher
- Urban planner

Admission Requirements

Begin Your Application (<https://www.slu.edu/apply.php>)

Saint Louis University also accepts the Common Application and the Coalition Application.

Freshman

All applications are thoroughly reviewed with the highest degree of individual care and consideration to all credentials that are submitted. Solid academic performance in college preparatory coursework is a primary concern in reviewing a freshman applicant's file.

To be considered for admission to any Saint Louis University undergraduate program, applicants must be graduating from an accredited high school, have an acceptable HiSET exam score or take the General Education Development (GED) test.

Transfer

Applicants must be a graduate of an accredited high school or have an acceptable score on the GED or HiSET.

Students who have attempted fewer than 24 semester credits (or 30 quarter credits) of college credit must follow the above freshmen admission requirements. Students who have completed 24 or more semester credits (or 30 quarter credits) of college credit must submit transcripts from all previously attended college(s).

In reviewing a transfer applicant's file, the Office of Admission holistically examines the student's academic performance in college-level coursework as an indicator of the student's ability to meet the academic rigors of Saint Louis University. Where applicable, transfer students will be evaluated on any courses outlined in the continuation standards of their preferred major.

International Applicants

All admission policies and requirements for domestic students apply to international students along with the following:

- Demonstrate English Language Proficiency (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/office-admission/undergraduate/english-language-proficiency/>)
- All academic records must include an English translation. An official course-by-course transcript evaluation may be required and accepted.

Tuition

Tuition/Fee	Cost Per Year
Undergraduate Tuition	\$58,960
University Fees	\$1,000

Additional charges may apply. Other resources are listed below:

Net Price Calculator (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/tuition-and-costs/calculator.php>)

Cost of Attendance (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/tuition-and-costs/cost-of-attendance.php>)

Information on Tuition and Fees (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/student-financial-services/tuition/>)

Miscellaneous Fees (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/student-financial-services/fees/>)

Information on Summer Tuition (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/student-financial-services/tuition-summer-current/tuition-summer-current.pdf>)

Scholarships and Financial Aid

There are two principal ways to help finance a Saint Louis University education:

- **Scholarships:** Scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement, service, leadership and financial need.
- **Financial Aid:** Financial aid is provided through grants and loans, some of which require repayment.

Saint Louis University makes every effort to keep our education affordable. In fiscal year 2025, 99.6% of first-time freshmen and 92% of all students received financial aid (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/>) and students received more than \$517 million in aid University-wide.

For priority consideration for merit-based scholarships, apply for admission by Dec. 1 and complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by Feb. 1.

For more information on scholarships and financial aid, visit the Office of Student Financial Services (<https://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/>).

Learning Outcomes

1. Graduates will explain the contexts, historical, political, geographic, literary, artistic, social, or intellectual, that shape American cultural practices, expressions or ideas.
2. Graduates will assess how American cultural practices, expressions, and ideas are constructed by or interpreted through frameworks of nation, class, race, gender, ability or sexuality.

3. Graduates will synthesize two or more disciplinary approaches in analyses of American cultural practices, expressions or ideas.
4. Graduates will effectively articulate arguments and information about American cultural practices, expressions and ideas.
5. Graduates will demonstrate the ability to bridge academic concerns with American cultural practices, expressions and ideas and the concerns of broader public life.

Requirements

American Studies students must complete a minimum total of **30 credits** for the major.

Code	Title	Credits
University Undergraduate Core (https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/academic-policies-procedures/university-core/)		32-35
Major Requirements		30
<i>Introductory American Studies Course</i>		
ASTD 1000	Intro to American Culture: Movements, Myths, and Methods	3
<i>Breadth Requirement</i>		9
Students must take at least one 3-credit course in each of the following attribute categories: "Contexts: Period and Place," "Identities: Social Difference and Agency" and "Practices: Cultural Forms and Interpretive Methods."		
Examples of courses with a "Contexts" attribute include the following:		
ASTD 2300	Americans Abroad	
ASTD 2600	American Places	
ASTD 3000	American Decades	
ASTD 3100	Making the American City	
ASTD 3200	The Urban Crisis	
Examples of courses with an "Identities" attribute include the following:		
ASTD 2500	American Identities	
ASTD 2700	Gender, Race, and Social Justice	
ASTD 3400	American Incarceration	
ASTD 3500	Religion & American Culture	
Examples of courses with a "Practices" attribute include the following:		
ASTD 2100	Studies in American Photography	
ASTD 2800	Sports in American Culture	
ASTD 3020	American Mosaic: Literature & Diversity	
ASTD 3050	American Soundscapes	
<i>American Studies Elective Courses</i>		15
Students are encouraged to work with their faculty mentors to devise a thematic or disciplinary emphasis for their American Studies elective credits; with approval of a student's faculty mentor, up to nine of these credits may be fulfilled by relevant courses offered outside the Department of American Studies.		
<i>Capstone Course</i>		3
ASTD 4960	Senior Capstone	
<i>Community Engagement</i>		

At least one course taken for the major must have the department's "Community Engagement" attribute. Examples of courses with a "Community Engagement" attribute include the following:

ASTD 3910 Internship in American Studies

An approved service-learning course

University Electives	55-58
Total Credits	120

Continuation Standards

Students who pursue a major in American Studies must earn a 2.00 GPA in the courses approved for completion of the major. If a student's major GPA drops below 2.00, the student will be placed on academic program probation within the department. A student may remain on academic probation for no more than two consecutive semesters, or for three semesters total, before being dismissed from the major.

Roadmap

This roadmap is just one example of a semester-by-semester plan of study for this program. There are other plans students can and do take. The plan of study for each particular student is established in consultation with each student's academic advisor; *this roadmap does not replace academic advising appointments.*

Roadmap notes:

- This Roadmap assumes full-time enrollment unless otherwise noted.
- Courses/Milestones marked with an "!" are critical and must be completed in the semester listed in the Roadmap to ensure a timely graduation.
- Course availability and sequencing are subject to change.

Course	Title	Credits
Year One		
Fall		
ASTD 1000	Intro to American Culture: Movements, Myths, and Methods *	3
CORE 1000	Ignite First Year Seminar (Must be taken in first 36 credit hours at SLU / Cannot carry attributes)	2-3
CORE 1500	Cura Personalis 1: Self in Community (Must be taken in first 36 credit hours at SLU / Cannot carry attributes)	1
CORE 1900	Eloquentia Perfecta 1: Written and Visual Communication (Should be taken in first 36 credit hours at SLU / Cannot carry attributes)	3
University Electives		6-5
Credits		15
Spring		
ASTD "Practices"	Breadth Requirement	3
CORE 3200	Ways of Thinking: Quantitative Reasoning (Should be taken in first 45 credit hours at SLU)	3
CORE 1600	Ultimate Questions: Theology	3
University Electives		6
Credits		15

Year Two

Fall

ASTD "Contexts"	Breadth Requirement	3
CORE 1200	Eloquentia Perfecta 2: Oral and Visual Communication	3
CORE 1700	Ultimate Questions: Philosophy	3
University Electives		6
Credits		15

Spring

ASTD "Identities"	Breadth Requirement	3
CORE 3800	Ways of Thinking: Natural and Applied Sciences	3
CORE 2500	Cura Personalis 2: Self in Contemplation (Cannot carry attributes)	0
University Electives		9
Credits		15

Year Three

Fall

ASTD Electives		6
CORE 2800	Eloquentia Perfecta 3: Creative Expression (taken any time)	2-3
CORE 3400	Ways of Thinking: Aesthetics, History, and Culture (taken any time)	3
University Electives		4-3
Credits		15

Spring

ASTD Elective		3
ASTD 3910	Internship in American Studies (or another course with an ASTD "Community Engagement" attribute)	3
CORE 3600	Ways of Thinking: Social and Behavioral Sciences (taken any time)	3
CORE 4000	Collaborative Inquiry	2-3
University Electives		4-3
Credits		15

Year Four

Fall

ASTD Elective		3
CORE 3500	Cura Personalis 3: Self in the World (May be added to a capstone for the major / Cannot carry attributes)	1
University Electives		11
Credits		15

Spring

ASTD 4960	Senior Workshop: Crafting the American Studies Thesis	3
ASTD Elective		3
University Electives		9
Credits		15
Total Credits		120

* Fulfills University Undergraduate Core requirements in Ways of Thinking: History, Aesthetics, & Literature and in Equity and Global Identities: Identities in Context.

Program Notes

American studies is an interdisciplinary field. As a result, many ASTD courses satisfy requirements for the University Undergraduate Core (UUC). Various ASTD courses fulfill UUC requirements including the following:

- Ways of Thinking: Aesthetics, History, and Culture
- Ways of Thinking: Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Identities in Context
- Dignity, Ethics, and a Just Society

American studies majors may count courses for both their major requirements and core curriculum requirements, which would modify the roadmap above.

With the approval of a major's faculty mentor, nine of the ASTD elective credits required for the major may be fulfilled by relevant courses offered outside the Department of American Studies.

2+SLU

2+SLU programs provide a guided pathway for students transferring from a partner institution.

American Studies, B.A. (STLCC 2+SLU) (<https://catalog.slu.edu/academic-policies/office-admission/undergraduate/2plusslu/stlcc/american-studies/>)

Contact Us

For additional information about this program, please contact american.studies@slu.edu or call 314-977-2911.