

American Studies Fall 2017 Course Descriptions

AMST 10100/20100 Intro to American Studies

M/W 12:50-1:40PM and F 11:30AM-12:20PM or 12:50-1:40PM

Jason Ruiz

This course explores the rich and varied field of American Studies, a field dedicated to understanding America's diverse cultures and the ways American national identity has been constructed and contested differently over time. Through lectures, readings, and discussion, we will consider questions such as: How have ideas about race, gender, religion, sexuality, ethnicity, and class shaped the making and meaning of America and Americans, and how have they evolved? What are the dominant myths and values that Americans seem to share? How has the American Dream been defined, and by whom? As a class we will consider the ways in which concepts of America and American are performed and how they have changed over time, across space, and within particular social, cultural, and political contexts. Assignments emphasize critical analysis of texts; requirements include papers, a midterm, and a final.

AMST 13184 Exploring America's National Parks

T/H 9:30-10:45AM

Annie Coleman

Most popularly associated with iconic landscapes such as Yosemite and Yellowstone, today the National Park System oversees 417 national parks, monuments, battlefields, military parks, historical parks, historic sites, lakeshores, seashores, recreation areas, scenic rivers and trails, and the White House. Western historian and novelist Wallace Stegner wrote that "National parks are the best idea we ever had. Absolutely American, absolutely democratic, they reflect us at our best rather than our worst." Today, however, Americans are simultaneously loving them to death and refusing to support them politically; parks suffer from a significant lack of funding despite overcrowding and a crumbling infrastructure, and from controversy over issues including wildlife management, the conservation of public land, and climate change. What are national parks actually for, and how has their meaning changed over time? How do park managers understand these environments differently than park visitors and neighboring residents? What can we learn about American society, politics, and culture from an historical examination of national parks? This University Seminar will explore the history, management, use, and meaning of America's national parks from the 19th century until today with an eye towards those questions. We will read and discuss material from explorers, conservationists,

managers, tourists, rangers, Native Americans, and the federal government, and visit a national park site in person. In addition to engaging students in a critical, historical analysis of national parks, this course will introduce students to some of the many historical resources available through the Hesburgh Library as well as the process of writing a college-level research paper. To that end, students will choose a national park site to analyze in a paper which we will develop, research, draft, critique, revise, and present together throughout the course of the semester. Short writing exercises and drafts will build towards this paper of 12-15 pages.

AMST 13184 Memorial Mania: History, Memory, and Feeling in Contemporary America

T/H 12:30-1:45PM

Erika Doss

Why do we make memorials in America today—and why do we make so many of them? In recent decades, thousands of new memorials to executed witches, enslaved Africans, victims of terrorism, victims of lynching, and murdered teenagers have materialized in the American landscape, along with those that pay tribute to civil rights, cancer survivors, organ donors, U.S. soldiers, sports figures, and the end of communism. Equally ubiquitous are temporary memorials: offerings of flowers, candles, balloons, and teddy bears left at sites of tragic and traumatic death, like Columbine High School in 1999, the World Trade Center in 2001, and the Oakland warehouse fire in 2016.

Looking at a vast range of both permanent and temporary memorials—from statues and monuments to parks, public squares, cemeteries, roadside shrines, public ceremonies, and moments of silence—this USEM examines how and why memorials are made in America today, including the audiences and purposes they serve and the feelings they articulate and inspire. Exploring the key word “memorial,” “history,” “memory,” and “America,” our seminar asks: What do memory and history mean in America today? What is driving America’s “memorial mania” and who and what is remembered? What sorts of feelings, or emotions, shape memorial making in America today? What do memorials tell us about how Americans feel about themselves as Americans, and about America?

Multiple sources are at our disposal in the scholarly study of memorial mania. Our seminar will analyze a wide range of primary and secondary texts as well as sources in film, fiction, art, and architecture. We will incorporate a number of “Learning Beyond the Classroom” activities, including fieldtrips to local and regional memorials. Course projects will include imagining future memorials for Notre Dame.

AMST 30107 Literary Revolutions in the U.S.

M/W 9:30-10:45AM

Korey Garibaldi

This course examines the nineteenth and twentieth century histories of print and cultural manufacturing in the U.S., with special attention given to readers, writers, media producers, and distribution. By tracing how literature, broadly defined, has influenced the shape and reshaping of modern life, our primary goal for the semester will be to better understand the role and impact of intellectual transmission on civil society, formal politics, and cultural standards. Related topics we will investigate include the development and growth of American children's literature; the history of racial and ethnic authorship; the rise of industrial publishing; national and transnational censorship; and legacies of "master" communicators to mass audiences (e.g. Franklin Roosevelt with radio, John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan with television, and Donald Trump with Twitter). Course readings and film screenings will range from William Lloyd Garrison's abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, Matthew Rubery's *The Untold Story of the Talking Book*, Catherine Fisk's *Writing for Hire: Unions, Hollywood, and Madison Avenue*, James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*, *Capote*, and *The Social Network*.

AMST 30108 American Capitalism

M/W 11:00-12:15PM

Korey Garibaldi

This course offers a broad thematic overview of American capitalism from the early nineteenth century up through the late 1980s. As a class, we will devote most of our energies to discovering, analyzing and reflecting on the cultural and social phenomena that coincided with the economic transformation of the U.S. from a newly-independent British colony, to the most influential economic power in the world. The range of historical developments we will consider in relation to the many expansions and contractions of American capitalism during the modern era include: European imperialism; massive population shifts; U.S. territorial expansion; science and technological change; prosperity; chattel slavery; architecture, infrastructure, and material culture; the economics of war, indigenous dispossession, and debt servitude; and characteristics of economic flux. Our readings and viewings will be a mix of scholarly and primary sources (including an abundance of literary and artistic ephemera, such as novels, visual art, and films). Over the course of the semester students will use this unusual combination of seminar materials to build and refine an ability to synthesize both the historical and cultural characteristics of American capitalism via extensive inclass discussions, three short writing assignments, and an 8 - 10 page final paper based on course readings.

AMST 30110 Confronting Homelessness in the U.S.

T/R 2:00-3:15PM

Ben Giamo

The purpose of this course is to examine the conditions of extreme poverty and homelessness within the broader context of American culture and society. In order to confront the nature of these conditions, we will draw upon insights from literature, cultural history, documentary film, journalism, creative nonfiction, and ethnography. We will focus on the degree of permanence and change in our approach to both traditional and contemporary forms of the social problem. In addition, the causes of extreme poverty and homelessness will be analyzed, and the various cultural representations that work to organize social perceptions of the situation will be explored. There will be an experiential or community-based learning dimension to the seminar as well. All students are required to make at least 10 weekly visits to the Center for the Homeless in South Bend (30 hours maximum), write documentary accounts of their experiences, and complete a final paper.

AMST 30112 Witnessing the Sixties

T/R 11:00AM-12:15PM

Ben Giamo

The purpose of this course is twofold: to examine the social context and cultural change of the sixties, on the one hand, and on the other to explore the various journalistic and aesthetic representations of events and movements. We will focus on the manner in which each author or artist witnessed the sixties as well as the unique interaction between personal expression, social event, and cultural meaning. We will examine fresh styles of sixties' expression, such as the new journalism popularized by Tom Wolfe, the lyrics and songs of Bob Dylan, as well as writing that highlights liberation, protest, social justice, solipsism, and spontaneity. Major topics for consideration include the counterculture and social movements—a combination of civil rights, anti-war protest, and second-wave feminism. These topics will sharpen our interest in history, politics, foreign affairs, music, literature, and documentary.

AMST 30119 The Asian-American Experience

T/R 2:00-3:15PM

Jennifer Huynh

This class will survey the various historical and contemporary dimensions of Asian American experiences including immigration & integration, family & community dynamics, ethnic/gender/class identity, as well as transnational and diasporic experiences. We will explore contemporary and historical issues of racism, the model minority myth, inter-generational relationships, and the educational experiences of Asian Americans. To accomplish this, our

class will pose such questions as: Who is Asian American? How did racism create Chinatown? Is there an Asian advantage? Coursework includes essays based on topics of your choice, presentations, and a creative narrative.

AMST 30121 God, Country, & Notre Dame

M/W 9:30-10:45AM

Brian Collier

This course challenges students to look at the history of the United States through the history, culture, art, scholarship of our university. Students will learn a great deal about America, Notre Dame, and themselves in this course as ideas are challenged and accepted narratives are held up to scholarly scrutiny. Students will have the opportunity to create digital humanities projects as part of their coursework and to build lasting interpretations of their own views on God, the United States, and Notre Dame's role(s) there within. #Lovethee

AMST 30123 Journalism and Society

M/W 2:00-3:15PM

Rich Jones

This course is a conceptual immersion into the role of journalism in America as a catalyst for social, political, economic and cultural change. Students will learn the role and value of a free press, examine the principles of reporting and consider the evolving impact of social media and digital technology on the field today.

AMST 30124 Multiplatform News Writing and Reporting

****pre-requisite or co-requisite AMST 30140**

M/W 9:30-10:45AM

Victoria St. Martin

This course is a skills-based survey of the world of online journalism. Students will learn the principles of digital journalism and acquire the technical skills to cover events using text, images, audio and social media. Students will also learn the nuances of writing for various contemporary media platforms, including digital print and social. It will also help instruct students how to tell textured stories – both with text and visual tools. This course aims to help students learn how to produce high-quality, quick-turnarounds short-form journalism – in short, the kinds of skills that will be required to be competitive for many entry-level journalism jobs. And the

knowledge that is acquired in the course is not only applicable to journalism but also to online writing and multimedia production now commonly used in other fields.

AMST 30126 Captives and Slaves

M/W 2:00-3:15PM

Sophie White

This interdisciplinary course will foreground the lives of the enslaved in colonial America and the Caribbean (inc. Haiti). We will consider indigenous Native-American and West African practices pertaining to enslavement and captivity, as well as the development of hereditary slavery in the colonies. Throughout, we will maintain a focus on understanding the lived experience of individuals who were captured/enslaved, with special emphasis on gender and material culture.

AMST 30140 Multiplatform Journalism: Tools and Techniques

M 9:30AM-12:00PM

Michael Reilley

Journalists today are expected to write, edit and produce content across multiple platforms. This course will expose students to a variety of media by focusing on the opportunities and challenges faced by journalists in the digital world. Course content includes the impact of speed on reliability, fact-checking and analyzes the unique design and presentational problems faced by online journalists. The course provides groundwork in storytelling techniques across multiple platforms, writing and editing for the web and mobile media, search engine optimization, critical thinking, ethics and copyright law, blogging and social media. Students will be trained and produce published journalistic content on several digital tools, including Wordpress, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Photoshop, video, audio editing, Periscope, mobile reporting tools and visualization tools from the Google News Lab and the Knight Lab.

AMST 30146 Persuasion, Commentary, and Critique

M/W 2:00-3:15PM

Jack Colwell

This course will consider the roles of persuasion, commentary, and criticism in contemporary American culture and will explore the techniques of these forms of expression. Students will prepare and discuss their own writing assignments, including opinion columns, editorials, and

critical reviews of performances or books. Ethics and responsibilities in contemporary American journalism in expression of opinions also will be explored. Assignments will serve as the examinations in this course, which is taught by a political columnist for the *South Bend Tribune* who also serves as host of public affairs programs on WNIT-TV, Public Broadcasting. Open to American Studies majors and Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy minors by permission. Other applicants must submit writing samples for review.

AMST 30166 Magazine Writing

T/R 3:30-4:45PM

Jason Kelly

This course will examine various forms of magazine journalism, from the direct presentation of information to narrative journalism to the art of the first-person essay. The class, requiring students to complete a variety of written assignments while performing in a workshop setting, will emphasize those storytelling techniques essential to writing for publication.

AMST 30174 American Wilderness

T/R 12:30-1:45PM

Annie Coleman

How is a national park different from a national wilderness area, a city park, the lakes at Notre Dame, or your back yard? Why are some considered wilder than others, and why is wilderness such an attractive idea? Writers, historians, painters, photographers, and politicians have described American landscapes as wild to great effect, in concert with identities of gender, class, race, and nation. This class will explore how the idea of wilderness - and the places associated with that idea - has developed during the 19th and 20th centuries. We will examine how wilderness has supported the growth of a national identity but largely failed to recognize the diversity of the American people. Course themes include: 1) developing the wilderness idea; 2) national parks and the problem of wilderness; 3) wilderness experience and politics; and 4) wilderness narratives. Readings will range from Henry David Thoreau and John Muir to Edward Abbey and Jon Krakauer, and there will be a strong visual culture component. For their final project students will choose a wild place of their own to interpret.

AMST 30198 20th/21st Century American Art

T/R 9:30-10:45AM

Erika Doss

This course traces the history of 20th/21st Century American art: art made in the United States from the Gilded Age of the 1890s to today. A historically based survey of the evolution and development of American modern and contemporary art, it explores a variety of media from paintings and sculpture to photography, graphic arts, performance art, installation, street art, video, digital, New Media, and Social Practice within cultural, economic, political, social, and theoretical contexts. Especially attentive to the themes of modernism, migration, and mobility, it considers the roles that American art has played in the formation of and contestation over ideas about modern national identity and understandings of class, race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual difference.

AMST 43137 The Meaning of Things**M/W 11:00AM-12:15PM****Sophie White**

The Senior Seminar is designed as a culminating experience for American Studies majors; an opportunity to hone the skills, methods, and interests acquired in previous American Studies classes and direct them toward a specific and significant research project. Readings and assignments explore themes in the field of American Studies. Requirements include seminar-style discussions of course readings, a final research paper of 20-25 pages (or the equivalent), and a presentation of that project in class. "The Meaning of Things" asks how objects as diverse as a ND class ring, a pair of jeans, a lava lamp or an iPod acquire meaning and value. This seminar will introduce students to a range of practices relating to consumption in American culture. We will investigate the diverse aspects of production, marketing, buying and using goods as these influence not only gender, but also the construction of a range of identities. This will lay the foundation for students to write substantive individual research papers on "thing" of their choice. The senior seminar is designed to be a culminating experience for American Studies majors. Readings and assignments will explore course themes in the context of American Studies as a field.

AMST 43909 The Senior Thesis: Theory, Method, and Composition**M/W 2:00-3:15PM****Jason Ruiz**

This course provides a culminating experience for American Studies majors who are writing a Senior Thesis. It is only offered during fall semesters and should be followed in the spring by 3 credit hours of AMST 47910 Senior Thesis Writing with the thesis advisor. In this course students will read, discuss, and apply American Studies theories and methodologies at an advanced level. By the end of the semester they are expected to demonstrate significant progress towards their senior thesis, a year-long experience developed with a faculty advisor

that aspires to make an original contribution to the field. To that end it is expected that students will meet regularly with their thesis advisor throughout the semester in addition to regular coursework. As a class students will work on refining their topic and developing a supporting abstract and bibliography, situating their research and methodologies among relevant scholarly literature, and conceptualizing the final project. Specific expectations for each project will be developed in consultation with the course instructor and the student's thesis advisor, but each student is expected to complete at least a draft of their introduction and one chapter by the end of the course.