

**Arizona State University  
American Studies M.A. Program  
Student Handbook**

**2025-2026**

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*Please consult with the Graduate Coordinator, Associate Director of Graduate Studies, and/or the Graduate College to ensure accurate application of these policies and procedures.*

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook provides an overview of the Master of Arts (M.A.) in American Studies. However, it is not an official document or contract of Arizona State University and does not replace the policies and procedures established by the Graduate College. Please consult your faculty advisors, American Studies Chair of the Graduate Committee, and Graduate Programs Coordinator and/or the official Graduate College policies and procedures.

### **School of Social Transformation Graduate Administration**

The School of Social Transformation has a Graduate Program Coordinator, who administers all of the graduate programs and certificates. The Graduate Program Coordinator, Kayla, Elizondo-Núñez, can assist graduate students in all aspects of their program and degree completion. The Graduate Program Coordinator can be contacted by email at [SSTGraduate@asu.edu](mailto:SSTGraduate@asu.edu) or by phone at (480) 965-7334.

The Associate Director for Graduate Studies (ADG) for the School serves as the School's contact with the Graduate College, and plans and coordinates student orientation, professional development, and mentoring activities. The ADG also addresses issues related to graduate student questions, grievances, and problems, and works closely with the Graduate Coordinator. The current ADG is Dr. Raphael Charron-Chenier ([rcharron@asu.edu](mailto:rcharron@asu.edu)).

### **ASU Charter**

ASU is a comprehensive **public research university**, measured not by whom it excludes, but by **whom it includes** and **how they succeed**; advancing **research and discovery** of public value; and assuming **fundamental responsibility** for the economic, social, cultural and overall health of the **communities it serves**.

Information about ASU's mission and goals can be found [here](#).

## RESOURCES & STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

### **ASU Library**

The [ASU Library](#) system has over 3 million volumes and comfortably supports teaching and research for both students and faculty. Reflecting its recent emphasis on shifting to electronic content, ASU Library has aggressively licensed full-text journal packages and databases for use by students and faculty. Accessed from campus or remotely, these materials are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Faculty and students can electronically request (non-Reserve) books from any of the four-campus libraries to be picked up in whichever library is most convenient; these books can be returned to any ASU Library location. When materials are not available in any of the ASU Library locations, ASU Library provides subsidized interlibrary loan services for faculty and students.

[Hayden Library](#), the main social sciences and humanities library, constitutes a valuable source of research information, particularly via its collection strengths in subject areas such as: social sciences, social policy, economic development, community development, and in its [Government Documents Collection](#). In addition to providing reference assistance in person, by telephone, or by e-mail in all of the ASU Library locations, the ASU Library system offers a 24/7 virtual real-time chat reference service.

## **Career Services**

[ASU Career Services](#) offers many services and resources, including career advising, assistance with resume writing, interview preparation, networking, and job search. Career Services holds job fairs on-campus every semester and has recently implemented [Handshake](#), a new online tool for connecting with prospective employers for internships and employment.

## **Graduate Academic Support Center**

ASU offers a dynamic, supportive learning environment and programs for ASU graduate students enrolled in any graduate certificate or graduate degree program.

[Graduate Statistics Tutoring](#) provides any graduate student with free one-on-one appointment-based tutoring for statistics coursework as well as peer guidance on the quantitative analysis portion of thesis, dissertations or other research projects. Graduate students can make an appointment with a consultant to discuss and work on:

- Statistics coursework
- Data cleaning and proper formatting
- How to perform analysis using software such as SPSS, SAS, R, Excel, Minitab, and JMP
- How to explain the meaning and significance of your results in writing

Graduate students can work with consultants at [Graduate Writing Tutoring](#) at any stage of the writing process to hone their writing skills and to receive coaching advice about navigating graduate life. ASU offers both online writing tutoring in addition to four on-campus locations to serve ASU graduate students. The Tempe, West, and Downtown Phoenix campus centers also offer graduate students a place to read and write or to meet with a writing group. ASU Writing Centers also facilitate [Dissertation Writing Camps](#) during the summer.

## **Healthcare & Insurance**

All students, whether they have health insurance or not, are eligible to use [ASU Health Services](#). Graduate students must be enrolled in a graduate degree or certificate program and registered for at least three credit hours or one dissertation/thesis hour. Visit ASU Health Services for additional information and instructions regarding [Student Health Coverage Options](#), Eligibility & Enrollment. International students will automatically be enrolled in the student health plan upon registration for class. For students with an RA/TA appointment, refer to the *Benefits* section of the [TA/RA Handbook](#) for additional health insurance information. All students are required to meet the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) [immunization requirements](#) before class registration. You will see an MMR Immunization hold in the Priority Tasks module in My ASU until your MMR information is received and verified. Read [additional information](#) about MMR and other immunization information at [ASU Health Services](#).

## **Student Accessibility and Inclusivity Learning Services**

The [Student Accessibility and Inclusivity Learning Services](#) (S.A.I.L.S) provides services to qualified students with disabilities on all ASU campuses. Services include testing accommodations, note-taking services, on-campus transportation, and more. Contact S.A.I.L.S to determine eligibility and submit required documentation.

### **Veteran's Resources**

ASU has a robust veteran student services center. The [Tillman Center](#) offers advising, assistance with GI benefits, military transfer credit, and other services. The Tillman Center is staffed almost entirely by veterans who relate to the challenges that new students experience and provide support in navigating complex governmental systems.

### **Counseling Services**

Students are eligible for personal counseling services at ASU. [ASU Counseling Services](#) offers confidential, time-limited, counseling, and crisis services for students experiencing emotional concerns, problems in adjusting, and other factors that affect their ability to achieve their academic and personal goals. They will talk with you, help you identify solutions or support, and connect you with those services at ASU or in the community.

### **Title IX**

ASU prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment and retaliation. To view ASU's policy please see <https://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd401.html>.

Title IX protects individuals from discrimination based on sex in any educational program or activity operated by recipients of federal financial assistance. As required by Title IX, ASU does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities that we operate, including in admission and employment. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or to the U.S. Department of Education, Assistant Secretary, or both. Contact [titleixcoordinator@asu.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@asu.edu) or 480-965-0696 for more information. Office located at 1120 S. Cady Mall, INTDSB 284. For information on making a report please go to [www.asu.edu/reportit/](http://www.asu.edu/reportit/).

### **Business Services**

Student Business Services offers a variety of student account services including tuition and billing, student refunds (including financial aid), receipt and payment processing, support for past due accounts, third party sponsorship assistance, and loan repayment. Contact [Student Business Services](#) for assistance with student account questions.

### **Parking and Transit**

ASU offers many parking and transit services, including permitted lot and garage parking, campus shuttles, bike lockers and bike valets. Visit [ASU Transportation](#) for parking maps, shuttle routes, and permit policies. The City of Tempe also has options for traveling to and from campus, including bus, neighborhood circulators, and light rail.

### **Sun Card**

Students must obtain an ASU identification card. The Sun Card is the official student ID for ASU and provides access to campus amenities and services, including secure buildings and elevators as needed. The Sun Card office is located in the Memorial Union lower level. Visit [Card Services](#) for more information on the types of cards offered.

### **Wellness Services**

Graduate school is a stressful time, and for most people, that stress will take a toll at some point. While your academic work is important, it is also important that you find time to pursue things that can help clear your head and reduce stress. The [Sun Devil Fitness Center](#) has a broad range of

services. In addition, the Graduate and Professional Students Association (GPSA) has prepared a one-page guide to financial, social, emotional, and physical health and wellness resources [Graduate Wellness Resources](#); and [10 Best Practices in Graduate Student Wellbeing](#) highlights proven ways to help graduate students better care for themselves under the increasing demands of graduate school.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Admission to the American Studies MA requires the submission of all application materials cited in the Graduate Catalog and the School of Social Transformation webpage.

Applicants are expected to meet GPA requirements established by the Graduate College. The Graduate application can be found here: <https://admission.asu.edu/apply>

### **Application Requirements and Procedures**

In addition to the application form and materials required by the Graduate College, including official transcripts and official TOEFL test results for international applicants, ASU Graduate Admissions requires that all successful applicants hold at least a 3.00 GPA (scale is 4.00 = “A”) in the last 60 semester hours (or 90 quarter hours) of undergraduate coursework.

All materials must be submitted online via the Graduate College by the deadlines posted on the program website. Official transcripts must be mailed to the ASU Graduate Admissions office.

Required Materials:

1. Graduate admission Services application and non-refundable application fee
2. Personal statement: Approximately 1-and-a-half to two pages, double spaced, outlining areas of interest, educational and career goals
3. Writing sample: Approximately 10 pages, double-spaced, demonstrating both writing skill and capacity for analysis of abstract concepts
4. Resume or curriculum vitae, which should include names and contact information for 3 references
5. Official copies of transcripts from all college and universities where you have earned a bachelor’s and/or master’s degree
6. Two letters of recommendation: Academic recommenders are preferred; professional letters are accepted.
7. Proof of English Proficiency: Students whose native language is not English must meet ASU’s English proficiency requirements. Guidelines for proof of English Proficiency can be found here: <https://international.asu.edu/graduate/proficiency>

The AMST MA Graduate Committee will review and make recommendations for admission or denial, which will be forwarded to the Graduate College. Only complete applications with all required materials submitted will be reviewed.

### **Concurrent Degrees**

A student may pursue concurrent masters/doctoral degrees provided the degree programs are in different areas with prior written approval from the head of the academic unit for each degree program

and the Graduate College. A separate online application is required for each degree program. Students are responsible for alerting the graduate coordinator or their main advisor from each program if they are admitted to two programs and wish to pursue the coursework concurrently.

### **Transfer Credit**

Students admitted to the M.A. program must complete their undergraduate degree prior to entering the graduate program.

Students admitted to the 30-credit hour AMST MA program may transfer up to 12 credit hours of coursework taken before beginning the program (referred to as pre-admission credits).

Pre-admission credit hours must be approved by the degree program and the Graduate College. Students are responsible for alerting their graduate coordinator that they plan on transferring in credits.

To qualify for preadmission credits, the courses must meet specific criteria:

- Be graduate-level
- Have been taken within three years of admission to the ASU degree program.
- A grade of “B” or better must have been earned.
- Must not have been used towards a previous degree.
- Completed at a regionally accredited US institution or international institution officially recognized by that country

Pass/Fail, 400-level courses, and any credit hours that were applied toward a previously awarded degree, may not be counted as transfer credit.

Students must officially transfer in pre-admission credit hours through the iPOS system for approval by the academic unit and the Graduate College. Official transcripts from where the preadmission credits were earned must be sent to Graduate Admission Services.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS**

### **Academic Integrity**

The highest standards of academic integrity and compliance with the university’s Student Code of Conduct are expected of all graduate students in academic coursework and research activities. The failure of any graduate student to uphold these standards may result in serious consequences including suspension or expulsion from the university and/or other sanctions as specified in the academic integrity policies of individual colleges as well as the university.

The [ASU student academic integrity policy](#) lists violations in detail. These violations fall into five broad areas that include but are not limited to:

1. Cheating on an academic evaluation or assignment.
2. Plagiarism.

3. Academic deceit, such as fabricating data or information.
4. Aiding academic integrity policy violations and inappropriately collaborating.
5. Falsifying academic records.

For graduate students involved in research, there can be overlapping areas between Academic Integrity Policy violations, responsible conduct of research and research misconduct. The five areas listed above describe the kinds of Academic Integrity Policy violations and are handled under the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy by faculty members, colleges and the provost.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

Violations of the [ASU Student Code of Conduct](#), other than the provision concerning academic dishonesty, are more generally considered inappropriate behavior. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and/or the Dean of Students Office reviews and sanctions these matters. If a student violates both the academic integrity provision and additional provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, a combination of The College, Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, and/or the Dean of Students Office will review the matter. Each independently makes determinations concerning violations and appropriate sanctions. Additionally, the SCCJ Director may apply consequences for students engaged in academic integrity, academic dishonesty, or other misconduct.

### **Research**

For graduate students involved in research, there can be overlapping areas between Academic Integrity Policy violations, responsible conduct of research, and research misconduct. The five areas listed above describe the general types of Academic Integrity Policy violations and are handled under the ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy by faculty members, colleges, and the provost. If a student is working on a federally-funded research project, some of these items may also be considered misconduct in research.

Misconduct is defined as:

Fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, and other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting or reporting research. Instances of honest error and honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data are not considered misconduct. (From RSP 004: Definitions)

A student who violates both ASU's Misconduct in Research Policy and Student Academic Integrity Policy will be reviewed by both The College and the Knowledge Enterprise Development's Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA). Each independently makes determinations concerning violations and appropriate sanctions. In addition, some actions might be considered violations of the norms of responsible conduct of research, but not Academic Integrity Policy violations or misconduct in research. Many of these incidents fall into the general category of "collaborator disputes." For example, if a graduate of ASU continued a line of research begun at ASU in a new lab external to

ASU, and the ASU mentor objected, generally speaking the matter would be addressed as a collaborator dispute, rather than as an Academic Integrity Policy violation or misconduct in research. Many conflicts over appropriate authorship credit on publications also fall into this area.

### **Research Integrity and Assurance**

The Office of Research Integrity and Assurance's Institutional Review Board (IRB) oversees all research at ASU that involves living human or animal subjects. This includes projects that use questionnaires and/or interviews as part of the data to be included in the research project. Students should plan to contact the IRB in the planning stages of their research to get approval prior to initiating research: More information can be found on their website: Institutional Review Board.

When a thesis document is submitted to Graduate Education for format review the document is also checked by IRB. Failure to follow the procedures set by the IRB may result in the student not being able to present the data collected for the research. The process also requires that the faculty member supervising the research has IRB approval.

### **Graduate Student Responsibilities**

Graduate students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with all university and graduate policies and procedures. Each student should also communicate directly with their academic unit to be clear on its expectations for degree completion. Students should check in with their academic advisor at least once a semester to make sure they are on track for successful completion of their degree.

Information is provided to students via MyASU. Students should frequently check their MyASU account for the most up-to-date information regarding their status, holds, items to attend to and other important information. As most information will be sent to student's ASU email account, please ensure that those emails are being received effectively, or that they are being forwarded to an email address that is regularly checked.

The Graduate College Policies and Procedures found here:

<https://graduate.asu.edu/policies-procedures>

### **Safety, Discrimination, and Harassment**

All ASU students and student organizations are bound by the University's Code of Conduct, which promotes an educational environment that encourages respect, honesty, safety, and collegiality. The Code of Conduct and directions for filing a report can be found on the Dean of Students webpage. Students are encouraged to report any breach of the Code of Conduct or any concerns about other students or members of the ASU community to the Graduate Coordinator or DGS. Anonymous reports of misconduct may be filed with the Dean of Students using the Campus Community Incident Report form. Additionally, ASU takes sexual violence seriously and aims to prevent sexual violence. More information and directions for handling incidents of sexual violence can be found on the Sexual Violence Prevention website.

Institutions of higher education have a large community of people with a variety of backgrounds and beliefs and a large international presence. Arizona State University welcomes diversity among students, staff, faculty and visitors and has strict policies against discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability and

qualified veteran status. Providing a safe environment, free from harassment (sexual, religious, racial, etc.), is a priority concern for ASU and should be reported immediately when it occurs or is witnessed. There are different types and levels of discrimination and harassment. Students should become aware of them so they are careful not to cause an offense and to recognize when they have become a victim. Descriptions can be found in the Academic Affairs Manual. Students who witness offensive behavior or experience inappropriate and unwelcomed responses should contact the Office of Equity and Inclusion. This is the office that monitors and manages reports of discrimination and harassing behavior: 480-965- 5057. All information is kept confidential and it is the responsibility of everyone to report instances when observed. Retaliation against those who report such behavior is not tolerated and every effort will be made to protect those involved.

## **AMERICAN STUDIES GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

This program provides additional training and certification for graduate students in other fields who are interested in preparing for teaching, research, or applied careers related to American studies. The certificate program in American studies consists of interdisciplinary inquiries into the diverse cultures, global impact, social systems, gendered experiences, socioeconomic realities, and political thought of the United States. The field of American studies has evolved to include an understanding of diversity in U.S. society; how the U.S. national community represents and imagines itself; how this resonates globally; and the role of social movements seeking to achieve political, legal, and economic change.

We are unable to offer Certificate Students financial aid; we recommend that Certificate students pursue funding opportunities through their home units.

### **Prerequisites**

- Applicants must have completed their baccalaureate degree.
- The American Studies graduate certificate program welcome applications from qualified students without regard to sex, gender identity, race, creed, color, religion, sexuality, age, caste, or national origin.

### **Application Procedures**

- **Application form:** Please complete the application form, available at the Graduate College website.
- **Admission:** Admission decisions are made by the Graduate Director on a rolling basis, with advice from the graduate committee if needed.
- The standard application fee for graduate programs applies.

### **Certificate Requirements**

The Graduate Certificate in American Studies is a 15-credit program. To receive the certificate, students must:

- Maintain at least a 3.0 GPA and have no more than one grade below a B- in courses taken within the certificate program.
- Complete two required courses: AMS 502 American Studies: Theory and Method and AMS 500 Research Methods\*

- \*AMS 500 may be substituted with an alternative methods course as approved by the academic unit
- Complete 9 additional elective credits selected in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and as necessary, the Chair of the American Studies Graduate Committee.

### **American Studies Certificate**

#### **Degree Requirements**

15 credit hours

#### **Required Core (3 credit hours)**

AMS 502 American Studies: Theory and Method Electives (9 credit hours)

#### **Methods (3 credit hours)**

AMS 500 Research Methods\* (3)

\*AMS 500 may be substituted with an alternative methods course as approved by the academic unit

#### **Electives (9 credit hours)**

For electives, students select courses within their area of study and with guidance from the academic unit.

### **Admission Requirements**

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and The College.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree, in any field, from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. letter of intent
4. proof of English proficiency

### **Additional Application Information**

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of [English proficiency](#) regardless of current residency.

### **Certificate Completion Procedures**

Once you have been admitted to the program, you may begin to fill out the certificate iPOS. After you have completed all the requirements for the certificate:

1. Ensure that your certificate iPOS is accurate and up to date.
2. Apply for graduation.

Please note that ASU does not issue a paper certificate or diploma for certificate programs; the certificate completion is noted on the student's transcript.

## **THE MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) DEGREE PROGRAM**

### **Graduate Degree Program**

American Studies is a multi- and transdisciplinary field aimed at understanding the local and global contexts of American experience that depend on critical explorations of power, empire, settler colonialism and justice. American Studies scholars seek to evaluate the processes, ideas, social formation, and institutions that inform the U.S. and its influences upon other cultures and communities, domestically and abroad. Given our geographical location in the American Southwest, our program values an exploration of diasporic and transnational influences in U.S. cultures and social/political history. American Studies at ASU also includes a broader exploration of the Americas and sets its goals toward a more hemispheric American Studies approach.

While the array of disciplines spans the arts, humanities, and social sciences, our faculty at ASU cover a broad range of expertise in the areas of critical ethnic studies, Indigenous studies, gender and sexuality studies, Black studies, immigration studies, justice studies, disability studies, queer studies, Latino studies, transborder studies, Asian Pacific American studies, cultural studies, environmental justice studies, environmental humanities and sports studies, allowing students to focus their education around these areas.

Students gain expertise from working in a community of scholars dedicated to addressing critical questions of what "America" means and what American studies uncovers. Graduate students are immersed in conversations of how one develops, conducts and engages research on the U.S. in academia and beyond. Additionally, faculty and students include the role of other nations, cultures and communities to critically evaluate the United States in global matters. American studies graduates can bridge a strong theoretical foundation with applied research to better equip them to enter national and international dialogues.

### **Enrollment and Tuition**

Graduate students register through MyASU per their enrollment appointment. Details regarding registration and course drop/add procedures are provided on the [Registrar Services Registration Page](#). Tuition estimates can be made with the [Tuition Estimator](#) tool. An overview of all enrollment and tuition policies and procedures can be found in the [Enrollment and Tuition Guide](#).

## American Studies Faculty

The M.A. Graduate Faculty in American Studies consists of Graduate Faculty from various academic disciplines and is interdisciplinary in nature. The Graduate Faculty have been approved by the American Studies M.A. Faculty to serve as Supervisory Committee Chairs and/or members. A list of American Studies M.A. Graduate Faculty and their research areas can be found [here](#).

## The M.A. Curriculum

The American Studies M.A. Program offers a flexible selection of graduate courses in various fields. Students select courses under the advisement of their Advisor.

All students will be required to take AMS 502, which will provide them a working understanding of American Studies, and the methods and theories American Studies scholars utilize. Students will also be responsible for completing the culminating project, AMS 599-Thesis or AMS 593-Applied Project. The remainder of the curriculum will reflect its interdisciplinary nature by encouraging students to take classes across the disciplines that are central to American Studies as it has been constituted. No more than six credit hours of 400-level courses can be applied towards the Graduate Plan of Study (iPOS).

The M.A. curriculum includes required core and self-selected elective courses. Core courses help build the theoretical foundations and research toolkit, which enable students to gain expertise in substantive areas of research. Students complete the degree with a culminating experience: either a thesis or an applied project. M.A. students are required to complete a total of 30 credit hours as detailed below. All core courses are offered face-to-face. Students may choose to take elective courses online (iCourses) if available and relevant to their plan of study.

### *Curriculum: Thesis Option*

Type of Courses	Number of Hours
Core Course	3 hours
Six Elective Courses (Interdisciplinary Electives encouraged)	18 hours
Methods Elective Course (encouraged)	3 hours
Thesis (6 hours)	6 hours
TOTAL	30 hours

### *Curriculum: Applied Project Option*

Type of Courses	Number of Hours
Core Course	3 hours
Seven Elective Courses (Interdisciplinary Electives encouraged)	21 hours
Methods Elective Course (encouraged)	3 hours
Applied Project (3 hours)	3 hours
TOTAL	30 hours

### Core Courses

M.A. students are required to complete one core course and culminating experience (research or thesis) courses. Students must earn a grade of B or better in each core course.

#### *Plan of Study Example: Thesis*

Year 1:	Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
Fall Semester	AMS 502	Amer Studies: Theory & Method	3
	ELECTIVE 5XX	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
Spring Semester	METHODS	Research Methods	3
	ELECTIVE 5XX	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3

Year 2:	Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
Fall Semester	ELECTIVE	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
	ELECTIVE	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
	ELECTIVE	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
Spring Semester	AMS 592	Research	3
	AMS 599	Thesis	6

#### *Plan of Study Example: Applied Project*

Year 1:	Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
Fall Semester	AMS 502	Amer Studies: Theory & Method	3
	ELECTIVE 5XX	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
	ELECTIVE	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
Spring Semester	METHODS	Research Methods	3
	ELECTIVE 4XX	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3

Year 2:	Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
Fall Semester	ELECTIVE	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
	ELECTIVE	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
	ELECTIVE	Elective/Substantive Seminar	3
Spring Semester	AMS 592	Research	3
	AMS 593	Applied Project	3

## Descriptions for Key Courses

**AMS 502 American Studies Theory and Methods:** This three credit-hour course explores some of the major themes in American Studies scholarship by considering American cultural formation and change over the last two centuries. We will pay special attention to debates, themes, and problems that have shaped the perception of the United States, domestically and abroad. The principal categories of analysis are race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, and space. The ultimate goal is the production of a major research paper based on primary sources and grounded in the relevant secondary scholarship.

**AMS 599 Thesis, or AMS 593 Applied Project:** Six credits of AMS 599 (thesis) are required of students writing a thesis. Students selecting the non-thesis applied project option will take three credits of AMS 593 (applied project) in lieu of AMS 599.

*Requests to substitute an alternative course for a required core course are generally not accepted per ASU's Graduate College policy.*

## Self-Selected Electives Courses

M.A. students are required to complete eight elective courses (24 credits). Elective courses should be chosen in collaboration with a faculty advisor. A faculty advisor will consult on a student's electives to ensure they focus on a common theme and ultimately help inform the student's thesis or applied project.

M.A. students are encouraged to take a research methods course for the degree. Students should keep in mind that American Studies is an interdisciplinary program and should incorporate at least two methodological approaches to their work. Research methods courses can be drawn from a wide array of units across the various campuses of Arizona State University, but students should take advantage of the SST graduate research methods courses. Students should consult with the graduate programs' coordinator on a list of SST methods courses. In addition, students should meet with their faculty advisor/chair to determine the best classes.

To seek approval of an elective not listed, students are required to email a copy of the course syllabus as well as a brief description as to why they want to take the course, to the Graduate Coordinator, who will obtain faculty approval. Students are advised to submit elective approval requests prior to the semester of anticipated course registration.

## The Accelerated B.A. APAS/M.A. AMST Degree Program

This accelerated program allows undergraduates in the Asian Pacific American Studies B.A. program to share 12 credit hours with the M.A. in American Studies and to complete the 30-hour MA program in just over a year from their undergraduate graduation date. Students will complete all requirements including the core courses for the B.A. in Asian Pacific American Studies (120 hours) degree program and the 30 credit hours required for the M.A. With the 12 shared hours, the total credit hours at a minimum to complete the bachelor's/master's program will be 138.

Students in the accelerated program begin taking M.A. courses in their undergraduate senior year. The MA curriculum includes required core and self-selected elective courses. Students complete the degree

with either a thesis or an applied project. M.A. students are required to complete a total of 30 credit hours as detailed below.

More information on accelerated programs, including how to apply, can be found on the Accelerated Master's Programs [website](#).

### Sample Accelerated M.A. Course Schedule

The M.A. degree is typically completed in two years, or four semesters; the clock begins with the semester and year of admission to the program. AMST M.A. accelerated students must successfully finish their undergrad degree by the end of their first academic year in the program. Failure to do so will result in the academic unit recommending their dismissal from the program to the Graduate College. Once an accelerated student has successfully transitioned to full graduate student status in their second year, they will be held to Graduate College's policy that graduate students have 6 years max to complete their program from its start (this includes the initial year as an undergrad student). The M.A. should be completed within two consecutive years from the start of the program.

From the start of their program, accelerated students must adhere to all the graduate student policies and procedures of both the academic unit and Graduate College. Failure to maintain satisfactory progress throughout the degree will result in the student being notified in writing that they will be placed on probationary status. If the student does not meet minimum standards by the time the probationary status ends, the student will be notified in writing that AMST will recommend their dismissal to the Vice Provost of the Graduate College.

Below is a sample course schedule for an M.A. student, providing program benchmarks:

<b>Year 1 (Fall) (UG Senior Year)</b>	AMS 502 American Studies Theory & Methods (3) 5XX Elective (3)
<b>Year 1 (Spring) (UG Senior Year)</b>	5XX Methods (3) 5XX Elective (3)
<b>Year 2 (Fall)</b>	5XX Elective/Substantive Seminar (3) 5XX/6XX Elective/Substantive Seminar (3) 5XX/6XX Elective/Substantive Seminar (3) <b>OR</b> AMS 592 Research (3)
<b>Year 2 (Spring)</b>	5XX/6XX Elective/Substantive Seminar (3) AMS 599 Thesis (6) <b>OR</b> AMS 592 Research (3) AMS 593 Applied Project (3)

With the approval of the thesis chair or advisory committee, students may take a maximum of six credit hours of 400-level coursework to be included on the iPOS. Pass/Fail 400 level courses and any credit hours that were applied toward a previously awarded degree may not be included. Graduate

courses taken prior to admission are included on the iPOS must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program.

**Sample M.A. Schedule**

The M.A. degree is typically completed in two years, or four semesters. All work toward the M.A. must be completed within six consecutive years; the clock begins with the semester and year of admission to the program.

American Studies M.A. Timeline Summary	
At Start of First Semester	Begin identifying primary area of research and courses that will fulfill requirements in this area
	Plan of Study (iPOS) submitted by April 1
	Supervisory Committee Chair/Advisor Selection
By End of Second Semester	Supervisory Committee Chair/Advisor Selection by April 1
Year Two	Complete required coursework
	Submit Thesis Prospectus/Applied Project Proposal to Supervisory Committee for Approval
	Write and prepare to defend the culminating document
	Apply for graduation and follow Graduate Education timeline and procedures for scheduling final defense and review format
	Final Defense of culminating document
	Electronic submission of thesis to ProQuest or submission of Applied Project option to Chair of the Graduate Committee

**Faculty Advisors**

Upon entrance into the program, students are assigned temporary advisors. The temporary advisor provides guidance on course selection and other relevant matters until the student identifies a thesis advisory committee or applied project chair. The thesis or applied project chair oversees and approves the plan of study (POS); guides and monitors academic progress; and directs the thesis/applied project and its oral defense.

**Thesis Committee Option**

The advisory committee consists of a chair and two other faculty members. The chair and at least one other member must be American Studies faculty.

**Applied Project Committee Option**

The advisory committee consists of a chair and one other faculty member, serving as a second reader. The chair must be American Studies faculty.

**Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS)**

The Interactive Plan of Study (iPOS) functions as a contract between the student, the academic

unit, and the ASU Graduate College. The iPOS is an electronic record of a student's completed and anticipated coursework. This online form also officially establishes the thesis or applied project advisory committee. The iPOS is submitted by the end of their first semester or before they complete 50% of the minimum required 30 credit hours (i.e. before completing 15 credit hours).

Students should work in consultation with their temporary faculty advisor, thesis or applied project chair, and Graduate Coordinator to determine coursework to include on the iPOS. A draft of the iPOS is first approved by the student's thesis or applied project chair. The draft is then reviewed by the Chair of the Graduate Committee and the Graduate Programs Coordinator. Finally, the iPOS is submitted electronically to the Graduate College for approval. The Graduate Coordinator will help ensure proper online entry and submission of the iPOS.

Please note that a student's thesis or applied project chair may approve a maximum of six credit hours of 400-level coursework to be included on the iPOS. Pass/Fail 400 level courses, and any credit hours that were applied toward a previously awarded degree, may not be included. Graduate courses taken prior to admission to the M.A. that are included on the iPOS must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program.

### **Continuous Enrollment**

Once admitted to the master's program, students must be enrolled continuously, excluding summer sessions, until all requirements have been fulfilled. Students must be registered for a minimum of one graduate credit hour during all phases of their graduate education to maintain continuous enrollment.

There are appropriate circumstances when students may need to withdraw from the university (i.e. medical withdrawal, compassionate leave). The policies for such withdrawals are the same for both undergraduate and graduate students. Types of withdrawals and procedures can be found at: [Add/Drop and Withdrawal](#). More information on The College policies and procedures for medical and compassionate withdrawals can be [found here](#). Students should reach out to the Graduate Coordinator for guidance on any type of withdrawal.

### **Leave of Absence (LOA):**

Graduate students planning to pause their progress in a program must submit a request for a LOA via their iPOS. This request must be submitted and approved before the anticipated semester of non-registration. Graduate students who do not obtain an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) prior to the start of the semester, and do not register for classes, will be discontinued from the program and are required to meet with the Graduate Programs Coordinator to advise on readmission processes.

### **Annual Review**

The Annual Review process is intended to help students graduate from the program in a timely manner and learn how to function as professionals in their future careers. Information collected from students, and their advisors are used by the AMST graduate committee and ADG to identify students who may need additional assistance from the program in order to achieve their professional goals. The review process should be seen as a collaborative project intended to strengthen both individual students and the program as a whole.

Each year, students must complete their Annual Review form. Students should meet with their faculty advisors/chairs as needed and preferably in advance of completing the Annual Review form. This is important because students can benefit from their advisor's help, and a discussion will help the advisor provide useful commentary on the Annual Review.

After the student submits the Annual Review to the graduate coordinator, it will be shared with their advisor/chair for comment. All students in the M.A. program will be reviewed by the AMST graduate committee based on these submitted materials.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

For students to be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress (**in good academic standing**) in the M.A. they must : maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) and meet benchmarks for their program (see relevant section of this handbook for individual program benchmarks). The minimum 3.0 GPA must be maintained on all GPA's (Plan of Study GPA, Overall Graduate GPA, and Cumulative GPA.:

1. The iPOS GPA is calculated on all courses that appear on the student's approved iPOS
2. Cumulative ASU GPA represents all courses completed at ASU during the graduate career.
3. The Overall Graduate GPA is based on all courses numbered 500 or higher that appear on the transcript after admission to a graduate program or graduate non-degree. This includes shared coursework if in an approved accelerated bachelor's/master's program.
4. Courses lower than a "C" cannot appear on the iPOS but will be included when calculating the Graduate GPA. Courses with an "I" grade cannot appear on the iPOS
5. Must earn a grade of B or better in all required courses. In exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the student's faculty advisor/chair and the ADG, a student may repeat a course once.
6. Must make timely progress toward the degree with regard to course completion. See the individual M.A. sections for more specific information as to timely progress.

Courses with grades of "D" (1.00) and "E" (0.00) cannot appear on the iPOS but will be included when calculating the Graduate GPA. Courses with an "I" grade cannot appear on the iPOS. In addition, students must earn a grade of "B" or higher in each of the required core courses, as well as applied project courses. A student who earns a grade below "B" (3.00) in a required core course or an applied project course must retake that course and earn a grade of "B" (3.00) or higher.

A student whose GPA falls below 3.00 will be notified in writing that they will be placed on

probationary status. While on probationary status, the student must meet the GPA and probationary requirements in the next 9 credit hours or by the end of the next semester, whichever comes first. The nine credit hours will be determined after consulting with the Graduate Director and obtaining approval from the student's faculty chair. If the student does not attain a 3.0 GPA minimum after taking nine credit hours, the student will be notified in writing that the program will recommend their dismissal to the Graduate College.

The AMST graduate committee will share their review data with the ADG. The ADG will write letters for all students regarding their progress. Letters will be sent directly to students; the students' faculty advisors/chairs and a copy will be placed in their academic files. If necessary, recommendations regarding continuation or termination, conditions for continuation, and/or awarding of the doctoral degree will be made by the ADG.

Students not making progress per the conditions listed above will be placed on academic probation by the AMST graduate committee. Notice of probation will include a statement of the policy or policies the student is in violation of, the remedy or remedies for getting out of probation, and the deadline for successfully completing those remedies. In addition, the student will be informed in writing that he/she/they may be recommended for dismissal if the conditions are not met by the given time frame.

If a student is placed on probation and does *not* meet the terms of the probation, the ADG may recommend to the Graduate College that the student be dismissed from their program. Students should *also* expect to be dismissed from the program for violating [student code of conduct](#), including:

- deception or falsification in the admission application
- unauthorized periods of absence from the graduate program

- seriously compromising the relations of the School with the public
- academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, falsification of research data). See the ASU Student [Academic Integrity](#)
- behaviors inappropriate for the student's intended professional roles
- serious misuse of School or university facilities
- failure to pass ASU's official spoken English requirement after three years

Students who are recommended for dismissal should receive a written statement from the ADG informing them of this recommendation and of their right to appeal to the unit or college within a set time frame. The Graduate College will only see cases where all other appeals have been exhausted in the unit and college; lack of academic progress cases are not seen by the Graduate College unless there are procedural problems with the case. See the [Graduate Policy Manual](#) for further information on dismissal.

### **Completing the M.A. degree**

The Graduate College requires all work towards a master's degree be completed within six consecutive years.

The thesis or applied project constitutes the culmination of a student's degree. It reflects the research area of specialization identified by the student in consultation with the thesis advisory committee or applied project committee. Before any formal work on the thesis or applied project is begun, the advisory committee or applied project committee approves the student's research prospectus. The prospectus is a statement of the topic area, a brief discussion of its significance, the primary research questions to be addressed, and the research design.

### **Thesis option**

The thesis option is recommended for American Studies students who intend to pursue a doctoral program or conduct research in the future. The thesis should address questions inclusive of contemporary topics, themes, and theories engaged in by the field of American Studies. To undertake a thesis, the student must form a thesis committee (a chair and two additional committee members) and present a thesis proposal (research prospectus). It is expected that at least two committee members be affiliated directly with the American Studies program; one of them must be the committee chair. The thesis committee must approve the thesis proposal before the student proceeds to the next step. The length and specifics of the thesis proposal will be determined by the thesis committee.

Typically, a proposal includes a literature review to display the student's familiarity with the field of inquiry and gaps in the literature. The length of a master's thesis for this program is typically around 25,000 words. The 25,000-word count does not include endnotes and references.

When the thesis committee is satisfied with the progress of the thesis, the student presents and defends their thesis in an oral examination. **IMPORTANT: The thesis defense must be scheduled according to Graduate College policy [deadlines](#), and the student should contact review the deadlines well in advance of the defense.** Notice of the student's defense, with an abstract, must be posted for SST faculty and students no later than one week before the date of the defense. Interested parties may attend the defense. After the thesis defense, the committee members and SST Chair of the Graduate Committee sign the Report for Master's Thesis Defense. A copy of the defense form and the thesis

must be taken to the Graduate College. The chair must also give a copy to the American Studies faculty lead.

### **Applied Project option**

The applied project typically consists of a study (often a community engaged research project) with applied results that can contribute to the topics relevant to the field of American Studies. The applied project could assist the needs of an existing organization, but it could also be a response to solve a problem identified by the student, without necessarily being connected to a specific organization. The applied project should identify the problem to be addressed, and include a brief literature review on the topic, an analysis of the situation, and conclude with recommendations. The output of the applied project could be a report, but it could also be a video, a curriculum proposal, an evaluation, a website, or other formats. For written reports, the estimated length of the applied project is around 7,500-10,000 words.

The student will present and defend the applied project in an oral examination, attended by the chair and committee member(s). The defense is not publicized and The Graduate College does not require format approval nor does the student need to submit any form to the Graduate College. After the defense, the instructor of record for AMS 593 will submit final grade for applied project in the course. Students must earn a grade of “B” or higher to pass the Applied Project requirement.

### **Graded and Ungraded Graduate Courses**

Courses which involve classroom instruction may be taken for a letter grade (A, B, C, D, E) or for a grade of “Y” (pass). Courses such as internships, reading and conference hours, and research hours, are generally recorded as a grade of “Y” for “pass.” Theses/Dissertation hours are also recorded as a grade of “Y” for “pass.”

### **Academic (Grade) Grievance**

Student grade appeals must be processed in the regular semester immediately following the issuance of the grade in dispute (by commencement for fall or spring), regardless of whether the student is enrolled at the university. Full procedure can be [found here](#)

### **Incompletes**

Incompletes for courses are discouraged. However, if a student should receive an incomplete, the work for that course must be completed within one calendar year. It is a student’s responsibility to ensure that the grade is updated before that deadline is enforced. Check the Graduate College policies and procedures for additional information.

### **Applying for Graduation**

Students should apply for graduation during the semester of planned graduation and no later than the date specified in the most current version of the Graduate College’s Graduation Deadlines and Procedures. Students are responsible for knowing the University deadlines. A current Graduate College calendar can be found [here](#). The Graduate Application for Graduation is through MyASU. Additional instructions on applying for graduation are [online](#).

### **Dates and Deadlines**

View the university calendar found on the [Graduate College web page](#) for important dates. View the [calendar for the current academic year](#). It lists deadlines for applying for graduation, for completion of

an applied project, and for the last date to hold an oral each academic period. Check these and other dates carefully.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS**

### **FAFSA**

Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Each student should have a current FAFSA on file in order to meet the eligibility requirements for scholarships, grants, and other funding opportunities.

### **Graders**

When funds are available, student worker grader positions are awarded competitively on a semester basis, typically to master's students. Graders work with assigned SST faculty, including those teaching undergraduate courses in Justice Studies, Gender Studies, African and African American Studies, and Asian and Pacific American Studies. No tuition support offered.

### **Research Assistantships**

Graduate students may be hired as Research Assistants by School of Social Transformation faculty (or faculty across the university) with funds derived from a grant or other sources.

### **External Sources of Financial Assistance**

Check with Financial Aid for help identifying external fellowships and awards for master's students to help finance graduate studies.

### **Professional Travel**

Students are encouraged to participate in professional academic conferences as a part of their intellectual and professional growth. Based on available funds, and according to guidelines outlined in the application form, American Studies provides limited support for travel. Funds also may be available from the Graduate Student Government (GSG) and other internal or external resources. Students must be making satisfactory academic progress in their program of study for their travel funding applications to be considered.