

# AMERICAN STUDIES

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**Office:** Room 6011  
**Phone:** 718.489.5284 or 718.489.5440

## Minor Mission

The American Studies minor is an interdisciplinary program bringing together the methods and insights of many departments to give the SFC student a complex, rich and sophisticated understanding of American culture as well as the context for understanding America's interactions with the larger world.

We are an extremely diverse community in one of the most lively and diverse cities in America. This program focuses on the complex culture created by such diversity and energy and will connect the classroom to the larger world by helping students learn ways to think critically about the culture around them; American Studies offers a dynamic way of exploring our world by using multiple disciplines to form a more sophisticated and useful understanding of American culture.

The program gives students a "stand out" addition to their transcript and resume.

## Goals and Objectives

- *Develop skills of critical thinking, effective oral and written communication, and research.*
- *Practice interdisciplinary or cross disciplinary learning in order to give students a complex understanding of American culture and expose them to historical, artistic, literary, social, political and economic perspectives.*
- *Examine the city as a "text" or platform for encountering, critiquing and engaging American culture.*
- *Promote cultural events that support an appreciation for the complexity of American culture and America in a global context.*

## Programs

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## Courses

### AMS-1001 Introduction to American Studies (3 Credits)

**Requisite(s):** Take WRI-1100

This course will introduce students to some of the primary questions and methods of American Studies. We will begin by asking a deceptively simple set of questions: What is American Studies? How do we practice American Studies? What are its borders and boundaries? We will then move on to some of the central questions of the field: Is there such a thing as an American identity? How have Americans defined themselves? Who is an American? What are the promises and preoccupations of America and American Culture? In trying to answer these questions we will draw from a variety of texts and genres, from fiction and poetry to political speeches, diaries, music, visual art, sociological studies, historical narratives, critical theory, media and other forms of popular culture.

**Fulfills General Education Requirement:** HCE, SEH

**Typically offered:** As Needed

### AMS-4998 American Studies Capstone Seminar (3 Credits)

**Requisite(s):** WRI 1100, AMS-1001, HIS-3456 and departmental approval  
 The capstone course in American Studies is a seminar in which students will be asked to produce a 20-25 page interdisciplinary research paper on a particular aspect of American culture. Seminar topics will change or rotate with each offering of the course. Some sample topics include: Leisure in America; American Region and Culture: Understanding Place in American Perspectives; America and Consumerism; Popular Culture in America; America in a Global Perspective: American Borders.

**Typically offered:** As Needed

## Faculty Directors

Dr. Athena Devlin  
 Dr. Jennifer Wingate