

Faculty

Kevin M. Britz

Director, Assistant Professor of American Studies

Melissa Dabakis

Professor of Art History (on leave)

Ennis B. Edmonds

Assistant Professor of Religious Studies

John M. Elliott

Professor of Political Science

Kirk R. Emmert

Professor of Political Science (on leave)

Lewis Hyde

Richard L. Thomas Professor of Creative Writing (on leave)

P. Frederick Kluge

Writer-in-Residence (first semester only)

David H. Lynn

Professor of English

Janet E. McAdams

Robert P. Hubbard Professor in Poetry; Associate Professor of English (on leave)

Kim McMullen

John Crowe Ransom Professor of English (Exeter Program)

Peter Rutkoff

Robert A. Oden Jr. Professor of American Studies

Howard L. Sacks

Senior Advisor to the President; Professor of Sociology

William B. Scott

Professor of History

Ric S. Sheffield

Associate Provost; Associate Professor of Sociology and Legal Studies

Judy R. Smith

Professor of English

Gregory P. Spaid

Provost; Professor of Studio Art

Thomas P. Stamp

Associate Vice President for Communications

Jonathan E. Tazewell

Associate Professor of Drama

Jan E. Thomas

Associate Professor of Sociology

American studies provides a broad framework for the exploration of the people, places, society, and culture of the United States. American studies accomplishes this by appropriating ideas and methodologies from one field and applying them to another and by transcending established boundaries among disciplines to create a new structure that combines traditional values and new visions.

Requirements for the Major

The major in American studies consists of 6 units:

- AMST 108 Introduction to American Studies (.5 unit)
- Four diversification courses (2 units)
- Five courses of elective study (2.5 units)
- The Senior Seminar (1 unit)

AMST 108 Introduction to American Studies (.5 unit). This course is normally taken during the first or second year at Kenyon.

Diversification courses (2 units).

See the list of courses below. One unit must be from A. History and Politics, and one unit from B. Culture and Society. Some courses may have prerequisites in the home department; others may have limited enrollment. Students majoring in American studies should work closely with their advisors to ensure their acceptance.

A. History and Politics. Two courses (1 unit) from the following:

AMST 310 American Culture and the Environment
HIST 101D U.S. History, 1492-1865

HIST 102D U.S. History, 1865 to Present

HIST 175 Early African-American History

HIST 176 Contemporary African-American History

HIST 205/PSCI 309 U.S. Political History

PSCI 200 Liberal Democracy in America

PSCI 301 American Presidency

PSCI 331 American Political Thought

B. Culture and Society. Two courses (1 unit) from the following:

AMST 104D Narratives of Our America

AMST 109D American Art and Culture

AMST 222 The American West

ARHS 227 American Art to 1900

ENGL 270 American Fiction

ENGL 280 American Modernist Literature

MUSC 302 The History of Jazz

RLST 230 Religion and Society in America (U.S.)

RLST 332 African-American Religions

SOCY 111 American Society

SOCY 246 American Folk Music

Elective study (2.5 units). Five courses from a single area, discipline, or set of disciplines that form a coherent program in American studies. Examples of such areas would be: writing and literature, race and ethnicity, history and society, politics and economics, African-American studies, women's studies, law and society, landscape and the environment, America in a global context, or another category of student and faculty agreement. The elective-study program undertaken by the student requires approval of the director of the American Studies Program. At least one unit (2 courses) must be at the 300 or 400 level.

Senior Seminar (1 unit). A two-semester sequence taken during the senior year. The Senior Seminar will typically entail collaborative research and public presentation.

The Senior Exercise

The Senior Exercise in American studies may take several forms. But it must draw on the elective-study component of the major, identifying and then developing, through original research, a major theme that the student has identified as central to his or her work in American studies. By the final Friday in September, majors in American studies will present their plans for the Senior Exercise to their advisors and to the program director.

The exercise itself will have two parts: (1) a presentation (visual, oral, electronic) to selected majors and faculty in American studies; and (2) a written analysis or documentation of the work presented. The Senior Exercise will be presented no later than the last Friday in April in the spring semester.

Honors

The Honors Program in American studies entails a two-semester (1 unit) sequence of independent work integral to the elective-study program in the major, taken during the senior year (AMST 497Y-498Y). The program will result in an honors project that may take a variety of forms but that shall include a written component and a public presentation or performance. Honors work will be evaluated by an external examiner. Students with an overall GPA of 3.33 and a GPA of 3.5 in the major become eligible for admission to the Honors Program during the second semester of their third year. To enter the Honors Program, students must be nominated by an American studies faculty member. Following the recommendation, a formal proposal containing a statement of intent, a tentative bibliography, and a project outline must be sent to the project advisor and the director of American studies for approval by April 1. Exceptions to the GPA requirements may occasionally be granted by petition.

The Concentration in American Studies

The concentration in American studies, encompassing 3 units of work, consists of three components: a one-semester introductory course, AMST 108 (.5 unit); three semester courses in curricular options (1.5 units); and a two-semester senior seminar (1 unit). Students may choose among several pathways that will fulfill the curricular-options requirement. To obtain a list of specific courses that fall under these categories, students should consult the director of the American Studies Program. Courses required for a student's major cannot count toward completion of the American studies course requirements. Coursework undertaken for American studies must be over and above work required by a major department.

Students who are considering the concentration should consult with Kevin Britz, director of American studies, before enrolling in classes.

Year Courses

Global Cities Seminar: Americans in Paris

AMST 405Y-406Y D (1 unit)
Rutkoff, Scott

The inaugural seminar in a new Kenyon program, the Global Cities Seminar, will study the cosmopolitan settings and cultural crossroads of major urban centers. The focus of the course will change yearly, and for 2006-07 the subject will be "Americans, Black and White, in Paris." This year-long seminar, available to history and American studies senior majors on first priority, will examine the intersection of American and French history from the end of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century. The focus will be on the experience of black and white American artists in Paris, their interconnections with French avant-garde art and life, the lessons they took with them, and the ones they learned. The seminar will have

two important components. The first is a week-long fieldwork experience in Paris during the last week of winter break. The second is the creation of a "Global Cities" Web site that future classes in the program will build upon. This course is also listed in the history department as HIST 405Y-406Y D. It may be taken for credit in either American studies or history. Prerequisite: permission of the instructors, based on a written application. Enrollment limited to twelve.

Fieldwork: Rural Life

SOCY 477Y-478Y (1 unit)
Sacks

This course provides an introduction to fieldwork techniques and to the ethical and political issues raised by our purposeful involvement in other people's lives. Students will spend considerable time conducting original field research throughout Knox County, with the results to be presented publicly. Our research will generally consider the character of rural society, with particular focus on the local food system. Students will conduct a community food assessment, examining the character and adequacy of local food production, distribution, and access. The results of this research will provide the basis for a major effort to build a sustainable market for food produced in Knox County. This course satisfies the senior seminar requirement in American studies. Prerequisites: permission of instructor.

Senior Honors Project

AMST 497Y-498Y (1 unit)
Staff

The Honors Program in American studies entails a two-semester sequence of independent work integral to the elective-study program in the major, taken during the senior year. Prerequisite: permission of the American studies faculty.

First-Semester Courses

United States History, 1492-1865

◆ AMST 101D (.5 unit)
Scott

This course is a thematic survey of United States history from European conquest through the Civil War. Through lectures, discussions, and readings, students will examine the nation's colonial origin, the impact of European conquest of the native peoples, the struggle for national independence, and the formation of a national government. The second half of the course will focus on the making of a modern nation. Topics will include the expansion of the market economy, chattel slavery, and the factory system. The course will also look at early urbanization, the rise of egalitarianism, religious movements, the first women's movements, and the defeat of the southern secessionist movement. No prerequisites. This course is the same as HIST 101D in the history curriculum.

August Wilson and Pittsburgh

◆ AMST 191 (.5 unit)
Rutkoff

The great African-American playwright August Wilson set his cycle of plays in Pittsburgh's once dynamic neighborhood, the Hill. In this seminar, students will read a series of Wilson's plays, including *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *The Piano Lesson*, and *Fences*, and locate them in time and place in African-American history. A critical aspect of the course will be a three-day fieldwork experience, during October break, in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. This course is for first-year students with AP or KAP credit in American history or American studies. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. Enrollment limited to twelve.

The American West

AMST 222 (.5 unit)
Britz

The frontier experience and the American Western experience have

sometimes been referred to as our defining myth. Are the West and the frontier experience a source of American exceptionalism and identity? Or is the West a plundered province and a place marked by conquest? Historians of the frontier and the West have referred to it in each of these ways. What is the real West? This course will examine how the role of the West changed over the course of the nineteenth century as it evolved, taking on a mythic status. To help understand how perceptions of the frontier and the West evolved, the course will look at the economic, social, political, gender-related, and environmental factors. Close attention will be paid to the shifting relationships between the various cultural groups that once called the West home. The course will conclude with an exploration of the methods by which the West became mythologized through dime novels, Wild West Shows, literature, films, television, and material culture. Most importantly, the course will look at the power of myth—how it shaped, and still shapes, American national and cultural identity. No prerequisites. Enrollment limited to twenty-five.

Special Topic: History of the American Western Film

AMST 291 (.5 unit)
Britz

From *The Great Train Robbery* in 1903 to *Brokeback Mountain* in 2006, Westerns have served as mirrors and allegories of prevailing American values, social issues, and nationalism. In this course we will explore the cultural meaning of the film Western by looking at its Wild West Show origins in the nineteenth century and tracing how the genre evolved over the twentieth century to become an internationally recognized emblem of America. The movies we watch and discuss will explore the various stages of Western film history, including the epic silents of the early twenties, the curious history of singing cowboys, the sweeping Cold War-era epics, the anti-heroes of the sixties

and seventies, the Spaghetti Western phenomenon, and postmodern films like *Brokeback Mountain*. We will look at how gender and ethnic roles changed and see how Westerns could be both celebrations and criticisms of our society.

Among the movies we will watch are: *The Great Train Robbery*, *Squaw Man*, *The Overland Trail*, *Two-Gun Man from Harlem*, *Tumbleweeds*, *Stagecoach*, *The Oxbow Incident*, *High Noon*, *Shane*, *The Big Country*, *Rio Bravo*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *The Searchers*, *The Magnificent Seven*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *For a Few Dollars More*, *The Wild Bunch*, *Unforgiven*, *Blazing Saddles*, *Bad Girls*, *Johnny Guitar*, *Lone Star*, *Lonely Are the Brave*, *Jeremiah Johnson*, *The Claim*, *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, and *Brokeback Mountain*. No prerequisites. This course requires two three-hour periods, one for screening and the other for discussion.

Second-Semester Courses

United States History, 1865 to Present

◆ AMST 102D (.5 unit)
Scott

This course is a thematic survey of the United States from the end of the Civil War to the present. Students will examine the transformation of the United States from a rural, largely Protestant society into a powerful and culturally diverse, urban/industrial nation. Topics will include constitutional developments, the formation of a national economy, urbanization, and immigration. The course will also discuss political changes, the secularization of the public culture, the formation of the welfare state, World War I, World War II, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War as well as suburbanization, the civil rights movement, women's and gay rights, and the late twentieth-century conservative-politics movement and religious revival. No prerequisites. This course is the same as HIST 102D, in the history curriculum.

Introduction to American Studies

◆ AMST 108 (.5 unit)
Britz, Rutkoff

This course introduces students to the principles of American studies through the exploration of American history and culture in the 1960s. We will seek to understand the nature of American society in that critical period through the study of the struggle for civil rights, the Vietnam War, the rise of environmentalism, and women's liberation. We will explore these topics through the examination of four cultural artifacts: the March on Washington in 1963, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Barbie, and Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*. Guest lectures and presentations complement the course, and students will be asked to engage actively in its development. This course is cross-listed in the Department of Art and Art History. No prerequisites.

American College and University Architecture

AMST 314 (.5 unit)
Stamp

College and university campuses, from picturesque Gothic and Georgian wonderlands to the starkly modern and utilitarian assemblages of more recent years, have long been a source of fascination for Americans. They play a large role in the romantic ideal of college life, they evoke images of privilege or openness, and they are increasingly seen as a sales tool by marketers. If we look beyond the most superficial aspects of campuses, though, their physical appearances can reveal a great deal about an institution's history, its goals and philosophy, even its relative place in the nation's higher-education hierarchy. This course will look at a variety of campuses and campus types—urban, suburban, and rural, public and private, old and new—and end with a class project involving development of an ideal campus. Limited enrollment. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

The following courses, offered in 2006-07, may be taken for credit toward the major or concentration in American studies:

(Other courses may apply as well. Please consult with the program director, Kevin Britz.)

ENGL 270 American Fiction
ENGL 288 Introduction to African-American Literature
ENGL 379Y-380Y American Literature
ENGL 382 The Jazz Age
ENGL 473 Faulkner
HIST 101D United States History, 1492-1865
HIST 102D United States History, 1865 to Present
HIST 175 Early African-American History
HIST 176 Contemporary African-American History
HIST 188 Origins of the First World War
HIST 189 African-American History through Fiction and Film
HIST 191 American Presidents
HIST 210 History of the South, 1607-2005
HIST 275 World War II
HIST 310 The Civil War
HIST 313 Black Intellectuals
HIST 356 Vietnam
HIST 392 Immigrant Experience in America
HIST 400 American Revolution
HIST 408 Native Voices: Self and Society through North American Indian Autobiography
HIST 411 The Civil Rights Era
HIST 492 History of the United States in Africa
PSCI 311 American Public Policy: School Reform
PSCI 365 Terrorism: Origins, Dangers, and Prospects
RLST 230 Religion and Society in America (U.S.)
RLST 411 Trials, Debates, and Controversies in American Religious History
RLST 442 Religion and Popular

Music in the African Diaspora
SOCY 111 American Society
SOCY 422 Topics in Social Stratification

Additional courses available another year include:

AMST 109D American Art and Culture
AMST 209 History of Women in the United States
AMST 310 American Culture and the Environment
AMST 378 Memory and Commemoration in American Culture
AMST 380 Baseball and American Culture
AMST 483-484Y American Ghost Towns