

AMERICAN STUDIES 2009-10



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

THE AMERICAN STUDIES MAJOR

The American studies program is committed to a self-critical and historically grounded examination of the United States and its diverse people, viewed within a local and a global context. Students take courses and work closely with faculty who are committed to interdisciplinary, multicultural, and transnational work and who include these interlocking themes in their courses: political cultural economy; comparative race, ethnicity, and diaspora studies; and cultural representations and practices.

STUDY AND RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

- ◆ B.A.
- ◆ Study abroad through the UC Education Abroad Program (EAP) during the junior year is highly encouraged.
- ◆ Fieldwork and internship experiences complement the central concerns and theme of the major.

HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

In addition to completing the courses required for UC admission, high school students who plan to major in American studies at UC Santa Cruz should obtain a strong background in American history, world history, and writing.

TRANSFER PREPARATION

Transfer students will find it helpful to complete college courses that satisfy campus general education requirements before coming to UC Santa Cruz. Those who plan to major in American studies should also take a survey course in American history before transfer. Survey courses in European or world history and in anthropology are highly recommended. Only two upper-division courses taken at other institutions may be accepted toward fulfillment of the major's formal requirements. Such courses are reviewed by the committee when a student submits a study plan for the major. Transfer students should consult with the American studies staff adviser and prepare a study plan during their first quarter. UC Santa Cruz lower-division requirements in American studies are:

- American Studies 10, *Introduction to American Studies*
- American Studies 80E, *U.S. Racial and Ethnic Histories and Formations* or American Studies 80F, *Introduction to U.S. Popular Cultures* or 80G, *Introduction to U.S. Political Cultures*

While it is not a condition of admission, students from California community colleges may complete the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) in preparation for transfer to UC Santa Cruz.

Transfer course agreements and articulation between the University of California and California community colleges can be accessed on the ASSIST web site at:

www.assist.org

CAREERS

Business
City planning
Community organizing
Education
Government service
Historical research
Journalism
Law
Literary studies
Museum work
Public administration
Social work
Teaching
Writing

These are only samples of the field's many possibilities.

RECOGNITION

Professor Michael Cowan was awarded the American Studies Association's Bode-Pearson Prize for outstanding contributions to the field of American Studies. Associate Professor Eric Porter's book *What Is this Thing Called Jazz?* won the American Book Award. Professor Forrest Robinson's most recent book is a critical/biographical study of Mark Twain entitled *The Author-Cat: Clemens's Life in Fiction* (2007). Duke University Press published Associate Professor Catherine S. Ramírez's *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory*. Assistant Professor Amy Lonetree is co-editor with Amanda J. Cobb of *The National Museum of the American Indian: Critical Conversations* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008). She is also the recipient of the 2009-10 Institute of American Cultures Postdoctoral Fellowship, Visiting Scholar Award from the University of California, Los Angeles.

ALUM FOCUS

Bonnie Hough (B.A., American studies, '83) is founder and former executive director of the Family Law Center in San Rafael and now works as the supervising attorney for the Center for Families, Children, and the Courts.

Jesse Thorn (B.A., American studies, '03) is the creator and producer of "The Sound of Young America," a weekly interview radio program featured on Public Radio International. Thorn, who describes his show as "a public radio show about things that are awesome," launched the show when he was a sophomore at UCSC. He also produces and hosts several other podcasts that are available via his web site, *MaximumFun.org*.

FIELDWORK AND INTERNSHIPS

Many American studies majors have found fieldwork and internships to be a valuable part of their academic experience. In addition to supplying some majors with senior thesis topics, hands-on experience in the public arena, and a better understanding of life in the United States, such activities have helped students explore possible career opportunities. Some sample fieldwork sites from the past include: Barrios Unidos, Korean American Coalition, Commission for the Prevention of Violence Against Women, Santa Cruz AIDS Project, KZSC Radio, and the California Immigration Project. Students interested in doing fieldwork should seek the advice and sponsorship of an American Studies faculty member.

JUNIOR YEAR ABROAD

American studies majors should seriously consider the possibility of spending their junior year studying in an American studies program in a foreign university, possibly through the UC Education Abroad Program (EAP), which offers an opportunity to study abroad in 34 countries. Such a year abroad will give them an extremely valuable perspective on American society and culture that staying in California will not give them, and at the same time will enrich their understanding of the history and culture of their host country, thus furthering the comparativist dimensions of their American studies major. Courses through EAP may be counted for up to two classes for the major. Students interested in EAP should meet with an EAP adviser as well as their college academic preceptor early in their academic career.

HONORS IN THE MAJOR

The files of all graduating students are reviewed by the American Studies Department faculty, who consider the quality of the student's course work for the major. Honors in the major will be awarded to students whose overall work is of outstanding quality.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further information about the American studies major and upper-division course requirements, see:

reg.ucsc.edu/catalog/html/programs_courses/amstPS.html

The American studies web site can be found at:

americanstudies.ucsc.edu

If you have other questions, contact:
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