

Integrated B.A./M.A. Degree in American Studies

The American Studies Program offers an integrated B.A./M.A. (IUG) program that allows academically superior American Studies majors to obtain both the [Bachelor of Arts](#) and the [Master of Arts](#) degrees in American Studies within five years of study.



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School of Humanities



**Integrated B.A./M.A.
Degree in American
Studies**

Curriculum

For the IUG American Studies B.A./M.A. degree, a minimum of 123 credits are required for the B.A. and a minimum of 30–33 credits for the M.A. (30 for non-thesis; 33 for thesis). Twelve credits at the 400 level or higher, in consultation with the adviser, can apply to both the B.A. and M.A. degrees; at least 6 of these 12 credits must be at the 500 level.

If for any reason a student admitted to the B.A./M.A. program is unable to complete the requirement for the Master of Arts degree program in American Studies, the student will be permitted to receive the B.A. degree assuming all degree requirements have been satisfactorily completed.

Courses Overview

The integrated B.A./M.A. (IUG) in American studies allows high-performing students to earn the Bachelor of Arts and the Master of Arts degrees in American studies within five years of study. Students graduate prepared to thrive in museums and archives, educational institutions, governmental and public policy agencies, and Ph.D. programs in myriad fields.

During the first two years, students take introductory courses such as Women and the American Experience (AMST 104) and American Architecture (AMST 308N) in an environment that promotes active learning in the classroom and beyond. During their third year, they take upper level courses as varied as Folk Groups and Genres (AMST 423) and American Literature (AMST 472), often honing ideas for their culminating M.A. theses or projects. Hands-on learning is embedded in courses such as Museum Studies (AMST 480) and Public Heritage Practices (AMST 482). Students frequently undertake internships at museums, archives, and governmental organizations to further expand their experiences and hone career choices.

The fourth and fifth years involve graduate-level coursework. AMST 500 offers advanced preparation in American studies theories and methods, and AMST 591 prepares students to devise, research, and write their final project or thesis. Wide-ranging graduate course options include American Civilization in the Twentieth Century (AMST 535) and Pivotal Books (AMST 511). B.A./M.A. students work closely with faculty members to identify, research, and complete their culminating work, a master's project or thesis (AMST 580).

For course descriptions and requirements, see the [University Bulletin](#).

Program Requirements for Admission

The number of openings in the integrated B.A./M.A. program is limited. Admission will be selective based on specific criteria and the unqualified recommendation of faculty. Applicants to the integrated program:

1. Must be enrolled in the American Studies B.A. program and meet the admission requirements of the American Studies M.A. program.
2. Must apply and be admitted to the Graduate School.
3. Shall be admitted no earlier than the beginning of the third semester of undergraduate study at Penn State (regardless of transfer or AP credits accumulated prior to enrollment) and no later than the end of the second week of the semester preceding the semester of expected conferral of the undergraduate degree, as specified in the proposed IUG plan of study.
4. Must have completed at least one 400-level American Studies course (AM ST prefix) with a grade of A.
5. Must submit transcript(s) of previous undergraduate work, recommendations from two faculty members, writing sample, and statement of goals.
6. Must have an overall GPA at or above 3.3 (on a 4.0 scale) in undergraduate coursework and a GPA at or above 3.5 in all coursework completed for the American Studies major.
7. Must present a plan of study approved by the student's adviser in the application process.