Master of Arts in American Studies

American Studies is an interdisciplinary program offering graduate work on society and culture in the United States—past, present, and in global context. It accommodates a variety of individual academic objectives. All students are asked to define a concentration—a period or problem—and to draw on appropriate university resources relating to that area. Students must demonstrate coherence in their graduate work and be able to show relationships between their concentrations and the wider socio cultural system. To accomplish this, students must develop knowledge (including historical perspective) in the humanities and social sciences.

The Master of Arts in American Studies is a free-standing degree. Students admitted to the M.A. program may hold bachelor's degrees in any field and will be considered for admission based on the merit of their application. Students nearing completion of the M.A. program may apply to a doctoral program, either at KU or another university.

Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (http://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Admission to the M.A. in American Studies

Students are admitted into the M.A. program for entrance in the upcoming fall semester. To be eligible for most KU fellowships, awards, and assistantships, applications must be received by January 10. The final deadline for fall admission is May 1, however, applications received by January 10 will receive priority.

Eligibility criteria for admission to the M.A. program follow Graduate Studies’ admission policy (http://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study). To be considered for admission to regular graduate status in the program, a student must hold a bachelor's degree and have earned at least a B (3.0) grade-point average in previous academic work. Admission is based primarily on the applicant’s statement of academic objectives, record of prior studies at the undergraduate or graduate level, and references from persons familiar with the applicant’s work. Evidence of preparation for graduate study may include substantial work in American Studies or related fields, such as American history, literature, art, media, sociology, anthropology, political science, journalism, or interdisciplinary studies.

A full list of the required application materials can be found on the American Studies website (http://americanstudies.ku.edu/admissions).

Non-native speakers of English must meet English proficiency requirements as described here (http://graduate.ku.edu/english-proficiency-requirements).

M.A. Degree Requirements

The Master of Arts in American Studies requires 30 credit hours, including courses and the completion of a research article or thesis.

| Code     | Title                                               | Hours |
|----------|                                                    |-------|
| AMS 801  | Introduction to American Studies (offered every fall) | 3     |
| AMS 802  | Theorizing America (offered every fall)             | 3     |
| AMS 803  | Research Methods in American Studies (offered every spring) | 3     |
| AMS 804  | Research Seminar (offered every fall)               | 3     |

Elective Methods

1 course selected by the student and advisor provides methodological support for the student's research.

Elective Topics

Three courses constitute a coherent concentration, including historical depth in a defined area that prepares the student for either the master’s thesis or publishable article.

Thesis Hours

After completing required courses, the student enrolls in AMS 899 and continues enrolling in thesis hours until their article or thesis is accepted by their committee.

Research Project and Defense

Students complete a project of original research, resulting in a thesis or scholarly article. A committee of three faculty members evaluates the project, and the student provides an oral defense.

Handbook

Further details about meeting the degree requirements can be found in the Department's Graduate Handbook (https://americanstudies.ku.edu/graduate-student-handbook).

Transition from the MA Program

Students admitted to the MA Program in American Studies at KU must petition the Department if they wish to continue for the PhD. This requires an internal application process, including the submission of a research statement and letter of support from a KU American Studies faculty member. All admissions to the PhD program are at the discretion of the Graduate Committee.