

Institutional Program Review 5 November 2020

American Studies Program

College of Arts and Sciences

UW proposed change: Eliminate the American Studies Program including its BA and MA

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Replaces: American Studies Program sections of “American Studies and History Degree-Granting Unit Reviews” document submitted to A&S early October 2020.

Program Productivity

Declared majors in American Studies (no minors)

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
AY15-16	10	17	27
AY16-17	9	16	25
AY17-18	10	16	26
AY18-19	21	12	43
AY19-20	25-30+	14	39
Current	32+	19	51

Degrees Awarded in American Studies

	BA	MA	Total
AY15-16	3	3	6
AY16-17	3	9	12
AY17-18	3	4	7
AY18-19	7	6	13
AY19-20	12	5	17

American Studies Faculty—data agrees with October 2020 department report

AY	Tenured	T-track	Fixed term	Total count	Total FTE
AY15-16	5	1	1	7	6.0
AY16-17	5	1	1	7	6.25
AY17-18	3	0	1	4	3.5
AY18-19	3	0	1	4	2.75
AY19-20	3	0	1	4	3.5

Student Credit Hours in AMST per Faculty FTE.

NOTES:

- It is crucial to attend closely to how this is calculated. All teaching faculty teach in programs outside AMST by cross-lists and direct contribution. Over the period below, this includes AADS, CW/MFA, ENGL, ENR, GWMST, LTST, INST, and NAIS. It is also crucial to note that every class any of us has taught contributes directly to AMST BA and MA degrees. We have seen and counted them on AMST BA and MA transcripts. There is no “extra” teaching outside AMST.

- Since 2019-20, all 3 teaching faculty are directors of programs: AMST, AADS and LTST, with compensation in the form of 1 “course release” per year each. We are also MA thesis directors in high demand, though we are not able to benefit from this MA mentorship through course releases for thesis direction. The programs we direct cannot function without this minimal arrangement, so our individual teaching FTE is not 1.0. The 4th AMST colleague (APRS) has a teaching FTE of .25. The appropriate denominator for calculating SCH/faculty FTE has changed in the period below, and is most definitely not 6.0 FTE for earlier years, and not 3.5 FTE now.
- We do not teach large lecture classes; they are not appropriate to our field or our pedagogies. The largest class offered (AMST 2010) enrolls 50 students maximum; often it is offered with a cap of 25 students.
- Courses filled exclusively by AMST BA or MA students required in their degrees (AMST 5500, AMST 5510, AMST 4985) have enrollments of about 10.
- The tuition for every MA student in AMST 5500 and 5510 is paid by AMST Program endowments. That is, faculty FTE paid by the state is offset by endowment GAs that include tuition, not state GAs.

SCH/FTE	Lower division	Upper division	Graduate	Overall
AY15-16	77.5	63.62	37.24	178.36
AY16-17	105.42	155.83	64.17	325.42
AY17-18	82.5	98.4	37.2	218.4
AY18-19	75.0	170.0	51.67	296.67
AY19-20	60.0	98.18	70.90	229.09

Course fill rate: for AY19-20, approx. 94% (October 2020 department report listed 54%)

Program Quality:

- Program not accredited
- Most recent program review: 2016
- Proposed change in 2016 review: eliminate American Studies BA

Recommendation following 2016 Review:

- Retain American Studies BA pending recruiting at least 30 BA majors by 2020
- Benchmark of 30 BA majors met by January 2018; number fluctuates significantly with newcomers and graduations

Other Institutional Changes Affecting the Program Since 2016 Review:

- Program increased APRS FTE from .75 to 1.0 (position supported by American Studies Program endowment resources, the Wyoming Arts Council and the College of Arts and Sciences)
- Program entirely relinquished existing state “support budget” allocation (\$8000/year)
- Arts and Sciences abandoned advocating for alternative merger arrangements (including “Interdisciplinary and Emerging Practice,” initially endorsed by the Dean, as a possibility for any interdisciplinary programs of any type wishing to work together)

- UW President and Dean of Arts and Sciences finalized program merger with Department of History to form Department of History and American Studies
- History had not anticipated nor invited any merger
- Original merger MOU with History, signed by both programs and delivered to the Dean of Arts and Sciences by request, included a provision for hiring directly into American Studies by 2020
- No hire into American Studies has been made; History has hired several times
- Two 1.0 FTE faculty colleagues retired in 2017
- One .75 FTE colleague left UW for another institution in 2017
- American Studies recommitted to its original and highly flexible approach to its degrees and network of activity with a faculty FTE of 3.0 in 2017, as large or larger than the program FTE had ever been between 1954 and 2009.

Credentials of Faculty:

- Ulrich Adelt, PhD, American Studies (.25 FTE AADS/SCGSJ; Director of AADS)
- Andrea Graham, MA, Folklore (1.0 FTE includes .25 teaching FTE; APRS public folklorist position supported by AMST, WAC and A&S)
- Frieda Knobloch, PhD, American Studies (1.0 FTE; Director of American Studies)
- Lilia Soto, PhD, Comparative Ethnic Studies (.25 FTE LTST/SCGSJ; Director of LTST; .75 FTE teaching in LTST)

Gender: 1M, 3F

Ethnicity: 1 International; 1 Latina; 2 white

Grants Awarded 2016-2020: approx. \$81,000

Program Reputation: (approx. 30+ letters of support 28 October-5 November 2020, received by UW Program Review and available from us on request)

- The American Studies Program does not rank American Studies Programs
- American Studies value as stated by BA and MA students and alums (see narrative below and letters of support 2020):
 - Flexible curriculum
 - Formative experiences that lead to whole careers
 - Opportunity to integrate interests across a wide range of scholarly and practical fields
 - Individual attention and mentoring from faculty
 - Wide range of professional and educational opportunities post-degree
 - Personal fulfillment studying the cultures they inhabit from a wide variety of perspectives
 - Practical hands-on internship experience often leading to jobs
 - Valuable international experience and opportunity
 - Financial support for MA (full GA's; significant support for part-time MA students)
 - Financial support for BA and MA internship scholarships
 - Financial support for research-related student travel

- The program has enduring State, National and International recognition of stature and importance (see narrative below, and letters of support 2020)

Narrative:

Why is the American Studies Program here? How is it funded? What does it do?

The American Studies Program was established by a gift from William Robertson Coe, with a successful Coe-funded pilot project in 1952 followed by the establishment of both BA and MA degrees supported by Coe's major endowment in 1954. We also have 2 named endowed scholarship funds for interns in historic preservation and graduate student support specifically. The program was intended to build new generations of interdisciplinary professionals addressing real contemporary issues in American life and education. It could not be more relevant in 2020.

The program and its degrees do not have a state budget. One of our lines—an APRS Public Folklorist—is even shared in its financial support between American Studies endowment funds and WAC in addition to a state salary portion.

Everything we do is endowment supported: fully funding approximately 12-13 Graduate Assistantships per year (including tuition/fees, health insurance, and stipends, a \$25K package paid by the program for each student each year), supporting faculty and student research and travel, providing scholarship support of \$1500 for all BA and MA internships, sponsoring or co-sponsoring collaborative programming with other academic units, including WIHR, AHC or Art Museum, with other organizations in the state like WHC or WAC, to buying a SmartBoard and Meeting Owl camera to facilitate digital access, paying our own telecommunications bill, repairing our furniture and buying copier toner-- all this is made possible by endowment support intended to house the degrees and enduring capacity for program innovation.

The program has a longstanding and exceptional state, national and international reputation beyond the contributions and specialties of individual faculty members. The program as a program continues to be recognized for our importance as a model of American Studies practice, as a group as well as individually.

We are recognized by both our students and our colleagues in the US and abroad as genuinely interdisciplinary, visibly and continually supporting public work (with co-sponsorships, program and project development and GA and intern placements), actively connected with programs abroad (in student selection for our MA, student and faculty exchanges, and shared program development).

Our individual expertise all contributes to defining features of the American Studies Program:

- Interdisciplinary BA and MA degrees of high quality and flexibility working inclusively with social justice informed subjects and pedagogies immediately relevant in our world
- Interdisciplinary faculty skilled at navigating projects and student opportunities that demand thinking across boundaries
- Rapidly growing number of undergraduates thriving in responsive learning environments including significant one-on-one mentoring for both BA's and MA's

- Public application of cultural insight in coursework, a vibrant internship program, and GA placements outside UW to benefit communities and organizations
- International partnerships to bring students from outside the US regularly into the interdisciplinary MA, and facilitate faculty exchange and shared international program development
- Sustained commitment to working relationships and entrepreneurially finding and developing new relationships with a wide range of organizations supporting their projects and missions (in large-scale faculty research, GA placements, and student internships)
- Longstanding support, in both financial co-sponsorship of programming and significant faculty involvement across UW
- Endowment resources to fully fund the MA program, provide undergraduate scholarships, and scholarship support for both BA and MA internships
- Exciting capacity to plan and roll out remote access to degrees

American Studies continues to be what we have been widely recognized for. Together we are a connective, strategic, innovative catalyst for immediately relevant scholarly, public and international impacts. This power comes significantly from not merely being a collection of individuals' content areas. We are a collaborative, an ethos that carries into all our connections across and outside UW.

Our effort to grow the BA began before the 2016 review, and has been successful beyond our expectations. We have—true to our nature—forged new collegial partnerships with the Academic Director and personnel in Athletics with whom we work closely, supporting the now large number of students coming from their contact. Many of these are first-generation college students, and well more than 1/2 are people of color. Other partnerships like this are waiting to be developed, all attuned to student needs and the American Studies field ethos of working directly with who people are and what would help them succeed, anywhere, including at UW.

Developing leadership is a cornerstone of our program life, reflected in our work with students and our commitment to each other. Our students regularly become leaders in their fields, and the program has always expected and supported development of leadership for each of us, resulting in a salient leadership profile across UW (in significant UW and College committees, including important searches, UW initiative developments, as well as governance committees), in addition to direct leadership roles in other programs. Our expectation and fostering of leadership reaches outside UW as well, in state and local board memberships, student placements with organizations, and founding and leading initiatives and organization work at UW, in the US and abroad.

Our interdisciplinary insight and leadership—together and individually—is a powerful asset in addressing “wicked problems,” grand challenges and contemporary points of focus at UW and beyond it.

We are, in the language of the “four pillars,” actively becoming more digital, and continue to be leaders in entrepreneurial, interdisciplinary, and inclusive work.