

## **Proposal to Eliminate Academic Program**

### **Pursuant to UW Regulation 6-43**

#### **B.A. American Studies**

#### **Statement of the reasons for elimination of the program:**

The American Studies B.A. grew out of a strong M.A. program that is funded by development money of long-standing, primarily the Coe and Kuehn endowments. The graduate program has financial stability and a very good reputation. The M.A. also supports UW's internationalization efforts (25-33% international students in the program).

In the past, the College has discussed but not implemented further investment in the B.A. program. At one time, there was a connection to the secondary education social studies endorsement in Wyoming. Most recent changes in that endorsement now leave out American Studies as the possible subject matter degree for social studies. Two faculty will retire in the near future, bringing faculty ranks down to 2.75 FTE. Replacement of one of these lines may be possible, but not both. The future of this entire unit is in jeopardy without considerable investment (funds which are not available) or creative thinking on program administration.

It is recommended that the B.A. be discontinued and attention focused on the already strong M.A.

#### **Description of the program and relevant data:**

##### **Describe the mission, curriculum, content and format of the program:**

American studies is an interdisciplinary field emphasizing the integration of the humanities, fine arts, and social sciences in the study of American experiences, past and present. Our Program places special emphasis on studying American cultures through course work, field experiences, and internships so that each student can apply academic knowledge to real-life circumstances. Our Program highlights international perspectives, as well as the transnational context of American impacts and experiences, in course work and in exchanges available to AMST students. AMST also highlights opportunities in the public sector, including historic preservation of buildings, neighborhoods, or landscapes.

AMST puts people, ideas, places, artifacts, images, and histories together in programs of study preparing students for specific career goals in K-12 education or work in the public sector (museums, collections, historic sites, interpretive centers, for example), or further education in professional schools and graduate study.

The program dates from 1952, placing it among the earliest to offer work in the interdisciplinary field of American culture studies.

**Courses in the AMST BA delivered by AMST faculty**

<b>AMST 2010</b> Introduction to American Studies (no prereq's)
<b>AMST 2110</b> Cultural Diversity in the US (no prereq's)
<b>Two (2) courses at the 1000-2000 introductory level in interdisciplinary programs</b> (might include 1 course in US History), outside AMST, in consultation with advisor. New majors' transcripts often include 2 such classes at the time they declare their AMST major. (See Appendix 3: AMST BA 4-year curriculum map for current list.)
<b>Three (3) upper-division seminars within AMST</b> , chosen for interest in consultation with advisor. These are seminars (not lectures); they are open to any UW student. <i>Stand-alone 4000-level seminars and those dual listed at the 5000-level include graduate students. Undergraduate enrollment in these seminars may not meet required UG minimums, though the total enrollment may be more than 10. AMST has not offered an under-enrolled class at any level 2015-16. Approximate 2-year course rotation, dependent on faculty availability and resources especially for public sector courses, includes:</i>
<b>3050. Cultures of Nature in the United States.</b> Cross listed with ENR/WMST 3050. <i>Prerequisite:</i> 2000-level course in one of the following departments: AMST, American history, American literature, or a 2000-level course approved for the ENR program.
<b>3100. Food in American Culture.</b> <i>Prerequisite:</i> any 2000-level course in American Studies, or ANTH 1200.
<b>3400. Popular Music and Sexualities.</b> Cross listed with WMST 3400. <i>Prerequisite:</i> WA.
<b>3800. Chicanas/os in Contemporary Society.</b> Cross listed with CHST/WMST 3800. <i>Prerequisite:</i> CHST 1100 or WMST 1080 or AMST 2010.
<b>4020. American Folklife.</b> Dual listed with AMST 5020. <i>Prerequisite:</i> Any six hours from among AMST 2010, 2110, ENGL 2400, AIST 2340, AAST 2450 2730, 3000, 3010.
<b>4030. Ecology of Knowledge.</b> Cross listed with ENR 4030. Dual listed with AMST 5030. <i>Prerequisite:</i> 3 hours in any interdisciplinary program.
<b>4040. Historic Preservation and Sustainability.</b> Cross listed with ARE 4040. <i>Prerequisite:</i> 6 hours in AMST or ARE.
<b>4250. The Harlem Renaissance.</b> Dual listed with AMST 5250; cross listed with AAST 4250. <i>Prerequisites:</i> AAST 1000, AMST 2010, AMST 2110, any AAST 2000-level course, junior or senior standing, or nine credit hours in any level AMST course.
<b>4300. American Culture and the Public Sector.</b> Dual listed with AMST 5300. <i>Prerequisite:</i> 12 credits in humanities or social science courses having to do with American culture.



<b>4500. American Civilization. 1-8 (Max. 8).</b> Explores various interdisciplinary approaches to the American experience, past and present. May include topical, thematic, historical, literary and cultural integrations; for a given semester, the course's precise focus will be indicated in the class schedule.
<b>4650. Women, Gender &amp; Migration.</b> Cross listed with CHST/INST/W MST 4650. Dual listed with AMST 5650. <i>Prerequisites:</i> Junior standing and 6 hours of AMST, CHST, INST, and/or WMST coursework or instructor approval.
<b>4800. Historic Preservation.</b> Cross listed with ENR 4800. Dual listed with AMST 5800. <i>Prerequisite:</i> ARE 3020 or AMST 5400.
<b>4900. Field Studies in Historic Preservation. 1-4 (Max. 4).</b> <i>Prerequisite:</i> 3 hours of architectural history or 6 hours of art history. (Offered based on sufficient demand and resources)
<b>Six (6) upper division courses outside AMST</b> (at least 2 in any one field, maximum of 3 in any one field, may include 1 lower-division course) chosen to reflect and develop students' interests, in consultation with advisor. These can be classes anywhere at UW, and can be transferred from other institutions or community colleges.
<b>AMST 4010 Independent Study OR AMST 4970 Internship</b>
<b>AMST 4985 Senior Seminar</b>

The AMST BA is not offered on-line. AMST 2010 Introduction to American Studies and AMST 2110 Cultural Diversity in the US are offered regularly at LCCC in Laramie. Both classes have been offered intermittently in the past at other CC's.

**Describe the role of the program within the context of the college and the mission of the University:**

**The AMST BA contributes directly and substantively to the UW (2009) mission,** through its content subject areas and learning community that includes graduate students and faculty:

- Rigorous scholarly engagement in lower-division AMST courses through upper-division AMST seminars exposes students to the frontiers of scholarship and creative activity and the complexities of an interdependent world.
- The AMST internship program for AMST BAs contributes to economic and community development and responsible stewardship of cultural, historical and natural resources.
- A small learning community provides a responsive and integrating "home" for

- BA majors and ensures individual interactions among students, faculty and staff.
- AMST classes and program life, including BA students' experiences in other programs, highlight values and practices of diversity, free expression, academic freedom, personal integrity and mutual respect; these values are visible throughout the content areas of our teaching and scholarship in American cultural studies and in our relationships with other interdisciplinary programs.
- AMST courses, independent studies, internship opportunities, and program life provide opportunities for personal growth and leadership, linking study of American cultures past and present to active participation in cultural and civic contexts outside school and in preparation for future careers.

**The AMST BA delivers content and embodies values central to the Land Grant mission** through its engagement with students in broadly humanist practice. AMST is significantly involved in humanities organization at UW, and personnel include the founding Director of the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research (WIHR), the chair of the WIHR faculty, and 3 other WIHR faculty adjuncts (5 people in a faculty of 7). WIHR outlined (2016) the relationship between humanist practice and the Land Grant mission.

The AMST BA shapes students' education in American cultural study to inform and inspire careers as well as lives and capabilities as full persons, after the model of the Land Grant mission.

**The AMST BA promotes values and content directly named in USP 2015**, across a range of learning outcome categories, including "H" and hopefully next year "C," perhaps "V," and importantly the complex **"Personal and Social Responsibility" component of USP 2015**. AMST courses contributed significantly to previous USP, in WB, WC, C, CH, CS, D.

- Introductory-level required courses in the major, AMST 2010 (Introduction to American Studies) and AMST 2110 (Cultural Diversity in the US), are "H" classes, underscoring the centrality of humanist practice in AMST for our BA majors (who officially complete their "H" in other programs).
- The AMST BA as an integrated whole broadly mirrors the "personal and social responsibility" priority in USP 2015. This list of USP objectives is not attached to specific classes; it represents the Liberal Education and America's Promise initiative (LEAP, American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2005). The AMST BA as a planned, advised, and accomplished program of study **does** much of what this complex "learning outcome" / LEAP ideal calls for.

The AMST Program contributes directly to Interdisciplinary Programs and interdisciplinary innovation in many ways:

- AMST holds split faculty lines with 3 programs (AADS, CW, LTST)
- AMST BA requires interdisciplinary introductory courses outside AMST
- Cross-listed courses raise visibility of interdisciplinary opportunities

- AMST faculty teach outside AMST without split lines (ENR 2000 every two years)
- AMST courses count in other majors (AMST 3050 Cultures of Nature, AMST 4030/5030 Ecology of Knowledge, count in “human dimensions” and “methods” requirements for ENR dual degrees)
- AMST develops courses with other programs (AADS/AIST/AMST/LTST/GWMST 1030 Social Justice)
- AMST contributes to course development outside AMST (ENR 2000 Environment and Society, since its inception in 2000 through ongoing revisions and redeliveries)
- AMST Relationships with College of Education Secondary Social Studies personnel are re-established with goal of returning AMST BA to available social studies major choices for College of Education students.

Advisory/faculty committee memberships:

- AADS
- AIST
- CW
- ENR
- GWMST
- WIHR

Cross-listed courses:

- AADS
- AIST
- ART
- ENGL
- ENR
- GWMST
- HIST
- INST
- LTST
- POLS

A&S strategic planning list relevant to AMST BA includes:

Support the nascent Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research and Center for Studies.

Add at least ONE new PhD program from six under consideration: American Studies, CoJo, English, Geography, History, and International Studies.  
May 2018



Maintain and enhance curricular initiatives related to  
diversity.

Support departmental and programmatic efforts to establish additional collaborative  
research, teaching, or field-based international opportunities for faculty and students.

Promote interactions between UW faculty, staff, and students and citizens across the  
state make it count in faculty evaluations.

Invest in curricula for professions critical to the state and region: science, math, social  
sciences (CJ, MPA in POLS, ANTH, SOC, PSYC), music ed, and  
humanities. Include collaborative curricula preparing student to work  
in the public sector.

Increase opportunities for research and internships across  
the state.

AMST UP4 plan items affecting the BA:

- *Secure one (1) tenure-track 100% AMST line to stabilize program including BA delivery by 2016. Not possible in budget environment post-2014.*

Rationale: impending retirements will reduce AMST teaching faculty from 4.75 FTE to 2.75 FTE

Note: AMST BA was deliverable, with a more distributed curriculum, at 2 FTE before 1997.

- *Expand and reconfigure public sector curriculum, including specialists outside AMST and UW on rotation in public sector classes.*

Now includes Tony Denzer, UW ARE; Beth King, WY SHPO; anticipating Fred Chapman, Consultant, and Shannon Smith, Wyoming Humanities Council.

Rationale: BA students as well as MA students seek public-sector education (folklife ethnography and oral history, museum studies, historic preservation, preservation and sustainability, built environment, public sector itself as subject of study) and experience in internships (in communities and organizations, the UW Art Museum, the UW American Heritage Center) regularly.

- *Implement AMST 1000 (first year seminar) for USP 2015.*

Delivered AMST 1101, USP 2015 FYS, Cultures of College fall 2015;

offered again fall 2016.

Note: Contribution to USP 2015, not part of the AMST BA by definition

**Post-UP4 AMST action items** addressing the AMST BA in particular and/or undergraduate education in general, including USP 2015:

Curriculum and assessment:

- Review AMST BA assessment plan, with consultation, for 2016 report and future strategies: completed.
- Secure USP 2015 “H” status for AMST 2010 (Intro to AMST) and AMST 2110 (Cultural Diversity): completed.
- Revise description of interdisciplinary “foundation” courses for AMST BA, taken outside AMST, two (2) required for the AMST BA, to reflect flexibility of advising and appropriate 1000-2000 level interdisciplinary courses at UW, at Community Colleges, or other transfer institutions: completed.
- Revise prerequisites in Bulletin for all AMST courses: 2016-17.
- Secure A&S 2015 “D” status for AMST 2110 (Cultural Diversity); provisional.
- Secure USP 2015 “C2” status for 1 or more 3000-4000-level AMST seminars (open to all UW students, most cross-listed with other programs/depts): 2016-17.
- Secure A&S “D” status for 1 or more 3000-4000-level AMST seminars: 2016-17.
- Consider AMST version of a USP 2015 “V” class, with possible status in the BA major, at any level: 2016-17.
- Review innovative approaches for delivery of AMST 4985 (Senior Seminar): ongoing.
- Secure USP 2015 “C3” status for AMST 4985 (Senior Seminar): 2016-17.
- Consider 5-year BA/MA track: partially completed, with possibility to recruit appropriate undergraduates to apply for the AMST MA, securing grad credits in last year of BA, no new program designation sought. Ongoing conversation regarding how to describe, recruit, apart from individual known students.
- Establish 5000-level course number for AMST 4500 to distinguish undergraduate/graduate enrollment.
- Consider a language requirement for BA: completed, with decision to strongly encourage 2 years of language study in advising, flexibility to advise appropriately in cases where that is not realistic.
- Public sector class for undergraduates/graduates delivered by AMST APRS: 2017-18.
- Seek 25% FTE support for APRS (currently 75%, FTE shared by AMST, Wyoming Arts Council, and A&S) to include delivery of undergraduate/graduate public-sector class for any UW students, increased advising for BA and MA students interested in public sector fieldwork: 2016-18.

Program Information and recruitment (see Appendix 5: AMST BA Recruitment plan):

- Rewrite UW catalogue copy describing AMST program and AMST degrees: completed.

- Revise AMST web presence, including creation of 4-year curriculum map, to reflect current BA opportunities and student experiences: completed.
- Invest program director and faculty time in BA student recruitment with a goal of 25-30 AMST majors to offer cohort experience without sacrificing benefits of a face-to-face learning environment. Benchmarks: 24 majors by 2018; 25-30 by 2019: ongoing.

Interdisciplinary innovation and support:

- Renew Secondary Social Studies collaboration and availability of AMST BA in SSE credentialing with College of Education personnel: ongoing.
- Support and arrange availability of co-teaching at BA and MA levels, in teaching expectations and job descriptions documents, and invited opportunities to colleagues, to deliver innovative course opportunities for students, graduate assistants with faculty mentors in undergraduate classes, among AMST faculty and other faculty at UW: ongoing. **[Co-teaching no longer an option in A&S.]**
- Support integrity and mission-central value of interdisciplinary and diversity-related programs, courses, and collaborations for all members of the UW community: ongoing.
- Identify plausible opportunity to seek 100% AMST tenure-track position who will be mentored in maintaining best practices in interdisciplinary collaboration, contribution, American Studies field responsiveness in undergraduate and graduate education, and program oversight: ongoing since 1998, ~20 years. **[With the small number of majors in the AMST BA, another faculty line will not be forthcoming.]**

**Financial data relevant to the academic program:**

**Cost data is for ENTIRE department and cannot be disaggregated—BA from MA.**

Ratio of student credit hours per FTE (AY 2014/15): 206.6

Direct instructional expenditures (FY 2015): \$1,010,260

i) Per student FTE: \$18,990

ii) Per total degrees awarded: \$202,052

iii) Non-personnel expenditures / total academic FTE: \$8,049

Course enrollment (AY 2014/15)

i) Classes falling under university minimums: 9

ii) Lower-division courses falling under university minimums: 0

Research expenditure per tenure-track FTE (FY 2015): \$8,432



**Other instructional cost drivers**

**i. Section fill rates**

Lower division average 2010-14: .....102%  
Summer lower division 2010-14:.....80%  
Upper division average 2010-14: .....87% (excluding  
senior seminar)

(Source: Banner course history, Banner final grades)

**ii. Course completion rates: approx. 100% (Source: Banner final grades)**

**iii. Curricular complexity:**

The AMST BA is flexible, including 24/48 credit hours to be taken outside AMST. With careful planning and good advising, students could complete the AMST BA in 4 semesters or 2 years.

**iv. Faculty course load: all AMST faculty teach at job-description load Course releases 2013-present:**

- Director: .....1 (not true of 2015-16, director load 2-3)
- WIHR Director: .....2 (founding director of WIHR for WIHR launch)
- Fulbright: .....1 (fall 2014)

**NOTES:**

- Independent study and/or Internships are required in the BA.
- AMST 4985 Senior Seminar is offered, on load, whenever a senior needs it.
- Independent (Group 2) instruction is expected in AMST teaching.
- AMST offers an MA as well as a BA.
- Faculty teaching/research expectations reflect participation in graduate education.
- Graduate teaching includes thesis committee chairing, thesis committee membership, and full-program events featuring graduate student formal presentations and defenses, as well as graduate committee membership outside AMST.
- Current AMST job descriptions and teaching expectation documents will be revised to accurately reflect and standardize expected independent instruction for both BA and MA and include full graduate instruction.
- WIHR directorship is a 3-year term closing in 2016-17 that has overseen the creation and organization of WIHR, an asset to AMST, A&S, and UW.
- **All American Studies Faculty** rotate through lower division courses as well as upper division seminars, independent studies, and graduate seminars.
- **AMST TAs do not teach AMST courses.** TAs are apprentice teachers assigned to faculty mentors.

**Admission, enrollment and graduation data relevant to the program, including the number of students currently enrolled and the status of their progress toward graduation:**

19 BA graduates 2011-2016  
BA majors enrolled fall 2010-spring 2015: 15, 9, 10, 10, 10  
BA majors enrolled spring 2016: 12

BA interns receive highly positive reviews from their internship sponsors, who look forward to working with AMST students. (Internship evaluations available upon request.)

AMST BA graduates go on to graduate schools, professional education in law and education, public-sector work in historic preservation, organizations, and other occupations.

**AMST BA placement:**

AMST BAs 2010-2016: ..... 19  
Known placement 2010-16: ..... 16

**AMST BA Placements:**

- Teaching at-risk youth
- Museum work
- Historic preservation (2)
- Maintaining historic buildings and structures
- Law
- Military contracting
- High school teaching
- EMT
- AMST student advising and support, community volunteer
- Graduate study in cultural studies
- Graduate study in Art History
- Graduate study in American Studies (2)
- Military service
- Community-centered food production

**Describe the administration of the program:**

The American Studies Program administers the B.A. American Studies program. It is situated within the College of Arts and Sciences, Department Head Frieda Knobloch.

**Describe the faculty and academic professionals who serve in the program, including their academic credentials, academic rank and length of service to the University:**

**Ulrich Adelt, PhD, American Studies (25% AADS)**

Rank: Associate Professor

Length of Service: 9 years (2007)

**John Dorst, PhD, Folklore**

Rank: Professor

Length of Service: 33 years (1983)

**Andrea Graham, MA, Folklore (75%FTE AP Research Scientist AMST, Wyoming Arts Council, A&S)**

Rank: Associate Research Scientist

Length of Service: 7 years (2009)

**Frieda Knobloch, PhD, American Studies**

Rank: Professor

Length of Service: 19 years (1997)

**Beth Loffreda, PhD, Literatures in English (25% CW)**

Rank: Associate Professor

Length of Service: 18 Years (1998)

**Eric Sandeen, PhD, American Studies**

Rank: Professor

Length of Service: 34 Years (1982)

**Lilia Soto, PhD, Comparative Ethnic Studies (25% LTST; 75% teaching in LTST)**

Rank: Assistant Professor

Length of Service: 6 Years (2010)

Grants awarded 2010-2015: \$196,500.00



**Describe the program facilities, including classrooms and offices, library and equipment used by or dedicated to the program:**

The facilities for the AMST program include the Cooper Mansion, where the department head and administrative staff, along with some faculty, have offices. Classroom and collaborative space are also located in the Cooper Mansion. However, all facilities would remain dedicated to this program, which will continue to run the successful MA program.

Library resources are available in the collections and databases of Coe Library. This access would be unaffected.

**Evaluations from accrediting bodies or other reviewers of the quality of the program and its faculty and academic professionals:**

The program not accredited; the most recent program review is the 1987 Self-study (Available on request; 86 pp + Addendum)

Recommendations from Self-study are summarized below.

1. *Secure full William Robertson Coe endowment for American Studies, as per original Coe bequest emphasizing instruction.*

After 1969, Coe funds had been diverted into the American Heritage Center and a range of projects and positions determined by the AMST Director (then a faculty member in History and Director of the AHC, from the late 1960s through late 1970s, Director of AHC after that). A substantial percentage of the Coe endowment was secured in 1981 for AMST instruction (including salaries); the Kuehn endowment was made available to the Program after the 1987 report.

These funds supported the salary of the Director and a resident folklorist and the original internship program. They continue to support Graduate Assistantships, undergraduate scholarships, internships for both undergraduates and graduate students, student and faculty scholarly travel, Program events and guests, co-sponsorships of events, and many other activities.

2. *Normalize budgeting/ available-endowment income reporting process.*

Completed by early 1990s.

3. *Remove the Director's salary and benefits from Coe funds and define that faculty line as a state-funded position.*

Achieved as a temporary arrangement 2015.

4. *Re-establish the Coe Chair (lost post-1969) in American Studies, to be held by a faculty member in one of the participating departments.*

The Coe Chair became a fellowship for visiting scholars by the early 1990s, for a semester or a year. AMST hosted 5 (high-profile scholars and writers Percival Everett, Karal Ann Marling, Susan Davis, James Galvin, Mick Gidley). Available endowment funds and GA expenses by 2016 mean we have to save up for a visitor like this.

5. *Allocate to AMST 1 new full-time tenure-track state-funded faculty position for 1989-1990.*

AMST had 2 faculty FTE in 1987. UW faced severe budget challenges. The College made a new hire possible in 1997. UW and A&S continued to face budget challenges 1998-present. Other hires: 75% FTE in 2009, 2011 (the latter with 75% teaching in the other program, tenure home with 75% appointment in AMST), and one faculty transfer from another unit at 75% in 2013.

6. *Offer matching funding for a 6 year position for a folk arts coordinator for the State and University, upon end of 2-year NEA support for this work in 1989.*

AMST employed a folk arts specialist with endowment funds who collected the Wyoming Folk Arts Archive, a collaborative long-term project for the state, inside and outside UW that established many of the long-standing relationships between agencies and individuals in the State with the Program. This position was a precursor to the 75% APRS position in 2009 for a folklife specialist whose salary is supported by funds from AMST, A&S, and the Wyoming Arts Council. APRS research has included student involvement and resulted in the large-scale folklife exhibit mounted at the Wyoming State Museum in 2014-15, "Art of the Hunt." The original Wyoming Folk Arts Archive materials were transferred to the American Heritage Center in 2010. In a related public-sector initiative that goes back to the early 1980s (historic preservation, see 1987 Self-Study Addendum on request), AMST was not able to secure A&S support for a historic preservation specialist position; AMST hired such a specialist for both BA and MA students, who taught part-time and completed field projects with AMST students for about 10 years, supported by endowment funds and grants.

7. *Endorse the current efforts of AMST to secure faculty and program development money from the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education.*

The FIPSE grant application was not successful; a later NEH Curriculum Development grant was. AMST worked closely with College of Education personnel—some of whom were advisory committee faculty in AMST from the 1980s through the 2000s—to provide interdisciplinary curricula for secondary social studies teachers. This set of relationships was interrupted in the 2000s when the College of Education redefined social studies fields for WY teachers, excluding American Studies. These connections are renewable now with changed circumstances in Education curricula and College of Education recognition that the redefinitions simply overlooked American Studies as a social studies field.

8. *Devote more space to AMST.*

AMST had a small office suite in Hoyt. The UW purchase and restoration of the Cooper House, with AMST faculty advocacy to save the building, document it for the National Register of Historic Places, and AMST funds contributing significantly to the cost of renovating and occupying the Cooper House, paved the way for AMST to move into the Cooper House by 1990, and firmly established historic preservation as integral to the Program.

9. *Establish a PhD in American Studies.*

The justification in 1987 was the quality and uniqueness of the program in the West, the small number of PhDs in American Studies in the West, a unique focus on the *contemporary* West, with a full complement of interdisciplinary opportunities, and importantly endowment support, hoping for a return of the full Coe endowment.

These conditions remain relevant today. In 1987, the faculty—including advisory committee members—stated in the report they were not unanimous on this goal. In a 2007 report on the field of American Studies, senior American Studies scholar Simon Bronner noted that the most promising growth in the field was at the MA level, a development since the 1990s to which UW AMST contributed directly. A PhD has not been a Program goal, unless it were interdisciplinary, shared among units, and genuinely innovative, with UW financial investment and oriented in some part toward the public sector. As recently as 2014 there is no consensus among departments (as such) for such a degree, though there is recurring interest in consulting AMST in attempting to imagine one.

**Comparison of the program with related or similar programs:**

The American Studies Association does not rank American Studies programs.

AMST value as stated by 6 new majors 2015-16:

- flexible curriculum
- opportunity to integrate interests in a genuine liberal arts experience
- individualized attention from faculty and advisors
- financial support in scholarships and internships
- wide range of opportunities possible after the BA
- personal fulfillment studying the cultures they inhabit from a wide variety of perspectives

**The American Studies Program is unique among American studies programs in the West** in its dedicated faculty lines delivering curricular breadth and depth of BA and MA programs of study. (See Appendix 1: American Studies Program Overview)



AMST undergraduate courses offered by AMST faculty, including required courses and electives (open to all UW students) do not duplicate courses offered in other units, degree programs, or colleges.

The AMST BA as a program of study does not duplicate any degree program, minor or major, at UW.

**Describe the anticipated effects of elimination of the program upon the college in which the program is situated, upon other colleges and units of the University, and upon the University as a whole, including:**

American Studies is the oldest interdisciplinary unit in the Interdisciplinary Division of the College of Arts and Sciences. Leadership in humanistic research, teaching and representation as the voice of other units is a hallmark. However, as stated in the program review in which a national report on the field is cited, **growth in the field is at the Master's degree level and not the Bachelor's degree level which here is proposed for elimination.** The BA is quite flexible with ties to many other programs where students might well be attracted (see below in next section). The students tend to have broad interests in areas including diversity, the U.S. in global context, sustainability, historic preservation, the non-profit sector, and folklore/folklife among others. The expectation is that the retention of the Master's degree program will provide the college and university with many of the same benefits as having both BA and MA degrees.

**Effects upon students enrolled in the academic program:**

Given the relatively small number of Bachelor's students and the flexibility of the degree, it is probable that many will graduate within two to three years. They will be informed of the termination of the program and urged to complete the major within two years. In addition, likely retention of 4XXX level courses, which also count for graduate credit, will help in the graduation of these students. Some students may choose to transfer to other majors combined judiciously with minors that excite their interests such as a history degree combined with African American and Diaspora Studies as just one example.

**Effects upon faculty and academic professionals who serve in the program, including termination of any existing positions:**

Not applicable since all faculty and academic professionals are involved in the Master's degree program.

**Educational and financial effects upon other units of the University:**

Several of the instructional personnel teach courses relevant to other units, including split appointments with American Studies as the lead unit (75%).. These include African American and Diaspora Studies and Latino(a) Studies. Another split appointment is with Creative Writing. **Readjustment of workload with a focus on the 4000/5000 level in**

**cross-listed courses will mean that there will be little detrimental impact on other units.** Even with units outside Arts and Sciences such as the Haub School, cross-listing of courses should prevent detrimental impact. There is no financial impact. The Coe and Kuehn endowments are significant resources for the program and focus on the MA.

**Effects upon faculty, academic professionals, staff, students and alumni of the University:**

With the elimination of the Bachelor's degree, **the retention of the Master's degree is vital to the future leadership of interdisciplinary programs and to UW's future in several areas.** That is the loyalty on which UW and the program should begin to focus. Recruitment in that area is an expectation for future growth.

**Effects on the State of Wyoming, including loss of benefits conferred outside the University by the academic program:**

The MA program is prominent in the state in non-profits, working with state agencies, and museums. This will continue and expand with the renewed emphasis on the MA and anticipated increase in graduate students in the program.

**Implementation plan to be followed in the event the academic program is eliminated, including:**

**Procedures for handling current and future applications for admission:**

If the BA program is eliminated, students will not be admitted. Current students will be allowed to finish the program and advised they have a two year window. The number of upper division courses that will likely remain available should provide sufficient opportunity for degree completion.

**Plans for assisting currently enrolled students to complete the course of study:**

The large number of electives and advising within the program should alleviate problems.

**Plans for accommodating faculty and academic professionals who will be terminated or otherwise affected by elimination of the academic program:**

Not applicable. Retention for the Master's degree is necessary.



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16 December 2016

#### MEMO

**TO:** Kate Miller  
Provost/VPAA

**FROM:** Paula M. Lutz *Paula M. Lutz*  
Dean, Arts and Sciences

**RE:** Program Review for the B.A. in American Studies: Dean's Response, 1<sup>st</sup> comment period

I am to summarize consultations with faculty, AP's, and students in this program, which occurred during the first comment period. The program review packet submitted by the department contained letters of support from individuals (primarily students and alumni). Since the decision to eliminate this program has continued forward, I collected responses from faculty (tenure-track and AP's), staff, students, alumni, and friends of the program through a Google Survey tool. This was sent to the DH on October 20, with a request to give the survey wide distribution.

**For this program, there was a single response to the on-line survey (from a faculty member) and thirty-one responses sent via e-mail or hard copy. These came from students, faculty, staff, alumni, and (thirteen) international colleagues.** This was an impressive response. One common thread from faculty and students was the personal attention given to each B.A. student in this small cohort. They have been able to construct an almost "British system" model of personal tutors. Although commendable (and obviously very meaningful to the students and faculty who send heartfelt comments), this faculty is small and will shrink in the years to come. I agree with the comments that the B.A. has not been emphasized in the past—in the long past. Plans are presented that could potentially increase the number of B.A. students, but timing is not ideal. Re-building of the faculty will be slow across this program and the entire campus. Two degrees are not sustainable. Emphasis should be placed on the internationally renowned M.A. program. Another common defense of the program is its international importance, although there the respondents seemed to be speaking of the program as a

whole or the M.A. degree. There is no argument that American Studies is an important field of study for international colleagues at this point in history.

A face-to-face visit with the program faculty also occurred this fall, as is our custom in A&S. The potential elimination of this program was a prominent discussion item, with the high quality, one-on-one learning environment, and the potential for growth as points emphasized.

**It remains the recommendation of the Dean that the B.A. be discontinued and attention focused on the strong, internationally acclaimed M.A. program. The recommendation for American Studies to become part of a larger department or school/division of Interdisciplinary Studies also remains.**

## Anne M. Alexander

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**From:** Kate Miller  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 15, 2016 12:20 PM  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office  
**Subject:** FW: AMST Program response and supporting materials for IPR December 2016  
**Attachments:** AMST Program response to IPR December 2016.pdf

-Kate

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**From:** "Frieda E. Knobloch" <Knobloch@uwyo.edu>  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 14, 2016 at 1:54 PM  
**To:** Kate Miller <kate.miller@uwyo.edu>, "Anne M. Alexander" <AAlex@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** AMST Program response and supporting materials for IPR December 2016

Dear Kate and Anne,

Attached please find as 1 file:

- 1) American Studies Program response to IPR recommendation to eliminate the AMST BA (10pp)
- 2) Supporting materials including:
  - a) "2+2" plan drafted for community college transfer students to show completion of AMST BA in 2 years
  - b) Letter from Mark Helmsing (College of Education, Social Studies Education coordinator) in support of re-including the AMST BA and AMST classes in the SSE curriculum
  - c) Comments from non-major students in 2 classes fall 2016
  - d) Letters of support including from current and former BA students, current and former MA students, colleagues in Wyoming and regional cultural resources organizations; colleagues in the US and abroad; officers of American Studies organizations.

Many of the letters of support you may have received already; those included in the file are those cc'd to me, and there may be others sent directly to you.

The Dean of A&S Paula Lutz has had this package since last Friday. I am sending it as one file so as not to separate our formal response (the first 10pp) from supporting materials. I am bringing a paper folder with the same material to your office this afternoon.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to news as the IPR process goes forward.

Sincerely,  
Frieda Knobloch

Director  
American Studies Program  
Cooper House  
Dept 4036  
University of Wyoming  
Laramie, WY 82071  
307-766-3898





## **American Studies Program Response**

**RE: A&S and Provost's Recommendation to Eliminate the AMST BA  
December 2016**

The American Studies Program welcomes this opportunity to introduce (or reintroduce) this unique Program to the UW community in our rationale and supporting documents for maintaining the AMST BA. Our Program is committed to the high quality of the BA and its relevance in Wyoming, the US, and abroad.

### **Rationale to Keep, and Support, the AMST BA**

The BA is part of a vibrant, nationally- and internationally-recognized, privately-endowed Program that maintains productive ties with Wyoming organizations, public opportunities for all students, colleagues and organizations abroad, as well as units all over UW. Our BA students have access to the very resources that make our MA lively and prominent in the field of American Studies, as our letters of support demonstrate. Eliminating the BA does no discernible service to UW students or possible interdisciplinary opportunities for research and study at the undergraduate level. Eliminating the BA saves no money, and restructures no-one's teaching (we would continue to offer undergraduate courses). Eighty percent or more of our teaching is at the undergraduate level now, primarily to non-majors. It is worth bearing in mind that the AMST BA has been available to UW students for many decades, including with faculty numbers smaller than ours today.

The American Studies BA is an asset in undergraduate education at UW, and is poised to recruit in new ways to meet the current and emerging needs of UW students and Wyoming.

Keeping the BA, allowing us to move forward with new ideas to strengthen our work with students and help UW recruit and retain students, acknowledging the accomplishments and energy of the American Studies Program to move forward, would underscore UW's current commitment to innovation and interdisciplinary teaching and learning. Endorsing the AMST BA acknowledges a culturally and historically engaged, individually attentive and applied path to UW education thoroughly aligned with the UW and College of A&S missions, land grant and liberal arts values, and directly at work in the state of Wyoming.

### **American Studies Program strengths are the capital we offer the AMST BA and UW**

- Intellectual capital: We practice the generative power of the liberal arts in interdisciplinary undergraduate education at work in the state.
- Institutional capital: We work regularly in the university community beyond the silos that have prevented the institution from reaching its full potential.
- Financial capital: Our endowment allows us to invest in students and innovate.



*The following pages lay out our strengths for the future, including an updated Retention and Recruitment plan. Please see also attached documents: letters of support; a 2+2 plan for community college transfer students completing the BA in 2 years; a statement from Mark Helmsing in support of re-including the AMST BA in the Social Studies Education curriculum, and student statements from 2 of our fall 2016 classes to give you a glimpse of what students find valuable in AMST approaches..*

**Integrated interdisciplinary learning, in close attention to American cultures and histories.** We provide broad contexts for relevant cultural study of the US and region, as well as specialized inquiry. This work is supported for both BA and MA students by the very high quality of our teaching, by the range of specialties we represent (all interdisciplinary and connective themselves), by our faculty's noteworthy national and international reputations for excellent scholarship, and by our shared commitment to responsive development of our field for the benefit of all our students.

This longstanding American Studies approach reflects the nearly-100-year development of the field, and 65 years of responsive innovation here at UW. As the American Association of Colleges and Universities has made clear in the past ten years—including its inauguration of the Liberal Education and America's Promise program, which deeply shaped UW's new University Studies Program in 2015—interdisciplinary approaches are urgently needed to address challenges facing people and communities today, in Wyoming, the US, and around the world. Life and the world are inherently "interdisciplinary." Personal, social and civic responsiveness is a central goal of the LEAP program, and UW. The field of American Studies exemplifies these ideals and goals, in both interdisciplinary approaches, and in engagement with American cultures, histories, artifacts, ideas, and landscapes. Our American Studies Program has embodied this integrated and integrative approach to the study of American experiences from its inception in 1952.

**Interdisciplinary and diversity-related initiatives.** Our Program has been a leader at UW in interdisciplinary initiatives, and in providing humanist interdisciplinary perspectives in other UW projects. We maintain close working relationships with other programs, including African American and Diaspora Studies, American Indian Studies, Latino/a Studies, International Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Religious Studies, Creative Writing (which at UW has an interdisciplinary emphasis), and Environment and Natural Resources. We share faculty and students among all these programs; we assign our Graduate Assistants as TAs in many of these programs, bringing our MAs into direct engagement with interdisciplinary teaching and learning for many BA students (including our own).

Our Program was the first to offer a cultural diversity class at UW, and continues to advocate for thorough, comprehensive attention to diversity in all aspects of life at UW, including for students, staff, and faculty, and in the curriculum.



Our Program was the incubator of the new Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research, an effort that began 10 years ago and has resulted in a vibrant, visible humanities community in research and programming, under the founding directorship of Eric Sandeen, former director of American Studies. Our program faculty has provided significant insight and work for WIHR.

Our faculty have long been key participants in discussions of interdisciplinary teaching and learning and the necessities of inclusion across campus. This includes participation in high profile search committees, advisory committee service in other programs, and discussions of new degrees (in public history for example, or a publicly-oriented PhD in the humanities and social sciences).

Extensive university engagement means our BA students work closely with faculty who are articulate leaders in interdisciplinary and culturally-responsive, relevant curriculum. Our program faculty are distinguished by their significant commitment to liberal arts and land grant education as a principle—these are big-picture faculty, and we bring our capacity for vision, for the University and for Wyoming and the US, directly into our classrooms and our work with our BA students.

**International perspectives and study-abroad opportunities for our BA and MA students.** Our BA students have taken advantage of these opportunities, and returned to UW and Wyoming with well-developed perspectives on the US in an international context. We regularly host American Studies undergraduate students from abroad as well.

American Studies is an international field, and we maintain relationships with many international colleagues (amply demonstrated in the support letters), as well as organizations like the British Association of American Studies and the European Association of American Studies, among others. We hosted 3 international colleagues just this November—from the Netherlands, Finland, and the UK; they visited our undergraduate and graduate classrooms, and, as always, we introduced our BA and MA students to them, in an event just for them, an informal but deeply informative conversation about the value of studying American cultures and the importance of international perspectives in understanding the roles of the US in the contemporary world.

Our faculty regularly bring international perspectives into our courses, and into our advising for AMST BA students, who are welcome to incorporate international and comparative coursework into their programs of study.

**Unparalleled access to hands-on public work, meaningful internships, and an expectation that American cultural study is applicable in people's lives and communities.** *It is important that reviewers hear the strength, longevity, and reliability*



*of our public work, because this important aspect of the Program was omitted entirely from the College of Arts & Sciences original memo recommending elimination of the BA.*

We prepare our students for work and full lives after graduation, and many have taken their American Studies BA directly into community and organization work in Wyoming.

Our Program is unique in the humanities and social sciences at UW—indeed unusual in the US—for piloting an Academic Professional Research Scientist position specifically to cultivate relationships with cultural resource organizations in Wyoming, to conduct research and provide research opportunities for BA and MA students, and coordinate internships for our students as well in placements all over Wyoming and the US. This position is supported by American Studies Program endowment funds, with a significant contribution from the Wyoming Arts Council, and the College of Arts and Sciences. Folklorist Andrea Graham occupies this position now, and the position was just this summer extended to a full-time position with the help of our College. She organized and contributed to the research that resulted in the Art of the Hunt exhibit at the State Museum in Cheyenne last year, a 5-year large-scale project highlighting the hunting culture of Wyoming, that involved both BA and MA student research, and attracted over 55,000 visitors.

The Program also works with historic preservation specialists and others (current and former State Historic Preservation Office personnel, as well as a close colleague in the College of Engineering, Tony Denzer, and another in Religious Studies, Mary Keller) to deliver excellent historic preservation courses (including Historic Preservation and Sustainability) and field courses (notably at the Heart Mountain internment camp, and in Grand Teton National Park). Our BA students have benefitted from all these activities and the substantial network of colleagues in organizations we maintain throughout Wyoming and the region—including the Wyoming Arts Council and the Wyoming Humanities Council, as well as personnel in cultural resource management agencies. We are in the process of developing a summer field school, with an array of student hands-on opportunities, to extend these applied approaches for our students in and for the public.

We know, as many people in higher education know, that students, communities and prospective employers want undergraduate students to have opportunities to apply their study and have access to immersive, hands-on, relevant experiences outside the classroom. *Our program has been providing exactly those opportunities for our BA students for many years.*

**High standards for BA student learning and student success.** We provide one-on-one mentoring in advising and independent study as well as research settings supported by endowment funds that benefit Wyoming communities and promote civic engagement and leadership.



The excellence of the BA is evident in the national and international reputation of the American Studies Program and our degrees, demonstrated by the letters of support from colleagues from the US and many abroad that accompany this response. The excellence of the BA is also evident in students' success in and after the degree, also demonstrated in current and former BA students' letters in support of the BA.

Our interdisciplinary expertise, the very high quality of our teaching (teaching evaluations available on request), and our approach to undergraduate education, all support students crafting an integrated approach to their own education, and define and develop a focus of their own interest. This approach empowers students, and in many cases offers a scholarly home to students who see their interests, and their goals, as exceeding what more narrowly defined majors can offer them. Again, please see students' letters of support for their BA. In many cases, American Studies has provided the very possibility of completing a BA at the university.

Our approach and support of BA students has resulted in an astonishing range of student work and accomplishment that mirrors the range of American Studies nationally and internationally as a field.

The current cohort of BA students' interests and plans includes:

- Sports studies, disability studies and cultural diversity (planning an internship in a non-profit organization, and a career goal in diversity advocacy in sports management)
- Museum studies and cultural history (planning an internship in a public collection, and a career goal in collections)
- Music, performance, and the environment (planning an internship with a specific composer with a career goal in education and performance, and environmental awareness)
- Sustainable agriculture, public health and community farming initiatives (completed an internship on a community farm, with a career goal in advocating methods and approaches to empower communities to develop local approaches to food production, as a food grower herself)
- Disability studies, cultural diversity, creative expression, and the roles of animals in people's lives (planning an internship with service animals, with goals to complete a graduate degree in American Studies, and work in education, writing, advocacy and organization to build awareness of and extend individuals' access to service animals).

Though the number of current majors (12) and graduates over 5 years may be small—the factor that precipitated this IPR—all of our graduates of the past 5 years have found work in their chosen fields, including many in the public sector, in communities and organizations, in Wyoming. Our students also pursue careers in education, law, politics, ministry, and higher education, and are strong applicants to graduate programs. We



have a long track record of educating and placing our students in community-centered roles, as emerging leaders, and stewards of public sites, community memory and economic development.

- Luke Anderson (whose letter accompanies this response) completed an internship with the Alliance for Historic Wyoming, and now works for the AHW. Historic preservation has long been an emphasis in the American Studies Program, for undergraduates and graduates alike, and is an important avenue towards community development with economic impacts in Wyoming and elsewhere.
- Misty Stoll studied historic preservation with us as an undergraduate, further developed her public expertise in our MA program, and is now the Superintendent of the Ft. Phil Kearney Historic Site in Wyoming.
- Mariah West was interested in applied American Studies and completed an internship at the Cheyenne Frontier Days museum, where she is now employed as the development officer.

These are just a few examples of how students have taken their AMST BA out into the public, often in Wyoming. Other students have given you a clear picture of the relevance of their BA educations in the supporting letters you can read here.

#### **If the American Studies BA is so good, why is it so small?**

Many factors contribute to the difficulty of recruiting large numbers of students. As an early UW American Studies Program director noted in 1962, this program, like others in the US then and now, found recruitment to be a challenge.

To begin with, junior high and high school curricula generally do not include "American Studies" as a named subject area, though teachers increasingly incorporate interdisciplinary approaches, or may well have American Studies degrees themselves. Most incoming UW students will not know American Studies is a major they can choose, and even when introduced to it at recruitment events—like Campus Pass and Discovery Days—the first question is, "What is American Studies?" It is the study of American experiences, past and present; we put ideas, artifacts, histories, landscapes, people, and images together. Parents frequently shepherd their students past recruitment tables for interdisciplinary programs, heading toward widely recognized subjects like Psychology and Criminal Justice. We engage students and their parents before they pass by, with information and examples of student success in jobs and professional training. These recruitment events serve to get the name "American Studies" before the public, often we suspect for the first time, to both students and their parents.

Additionally, in spite of widespread research documenting that employers want college graduates educated with the critical thinking, problem-solving, integrative, creative and diversity-ready experiences that humanities degrees including American Studies can



give them, parents, students and in some cases university personnel may not realize the actual value of these degrees.

These challenges demand creative approaches to recruitment.

The American Studies Program developed an extensive recruitment plan starting in 2015, building on recent recruitment efforts and insights and Program strengths, just before the Institutional Program Review flagged American Studies for its low BA numbers. We knew that we recruit students primarily out of our own classes, usually in their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year at UW. Our exceptional teaching faculty makes that possible, and we have all been engaged in getting the word out to students we work with in class. Last spring, at the start of the IPR process, we were in fact welcoming 5 new majors within the space of about 3 months, a pace of recruitment we expected to be able to continue, and looked forward to perhaps 20-30 majors within the space of a few years. We have continued to refine our recruitment plan even through this period of institutional review.

In continuing to develop our recruitment plan, we've taken note of some patterns of students who declare a major in American Studies (including Honors Program students, military veterans, and at-risk students, as well as the widespread fact that students reach American Studies usually after some time in college). We've worked with the College of Education's Mark Helmsing to begin the process to re-include American Studies as a major for Social Studies Education students—to bring education majors back to our BA, and bring interdisciplinary options into SSE. We anticipate working with community colleges, and enlisted the help of Alyson Hagy and Patrice Noel to show how easily AA transfer students can complete an American Studies BA. We've taken stock of our teaching strengths and experience to develop ideas about useful future classes for UW (from which other majors might come). And we fully expect to integrate American Studies recruitment and retention systemically by building and strengthening our links with those offices expert in working especially with at-risk students.

We are eager to have the chance to fully implement our plan, whose pieces are either under way or ready to launch.

#### **Updated Recruitment and Retention Plan**

- **Establish and maintain ongoing, frequent promotion of the AMST BA with all advising and career offices on the UW campus.**

In addition to the exceptional quality of our BA education, the AMST BA is a flexible degree. Our official 4-year Curriculum Plan for the BA—one of the documents included in the IPR—makes clear that the BA can be completed in 2 years. Please see attached here a version of this 4-year Curriculum plan designed especially with community college transfer students in mind.

The AMST BA is an excellent choice for a second major, a major for a transfer student with an AA, for students who remain undeclared for significant periods of time, or find themselves dissatisfied with a range of majors they may have already tried. In addition to the valuable content and experiences we can offer our students, the major accommodates students' need for logistic flexibility.

- **Re-establish ties directly with Wyoming community colleges, and a new generation of Americanist colleagues in the state, to get the word out about our major, and to scope out the possibility of offering classes with the AMST prefix like AMST 2010 Introduction to American Studies and AMST 2110 Cultural Diversity in the US on those campuses, in ways that work for those interested in teaching such classes.**

The LCCC campus in Laramie currently offers both AMST 2010 and AMST 2110 regularly. These classes are taught by American Studies MA graduate, Patty Kessler. We have recruited 2 majors from her classes, and the classes they took from her of course counted as the required foundational classes in our major.

Again, in direct work with community college colleagues, we can make sure they have information about our program, and the 4-year Curriculum Plan that shows how community college graduates can easily complete an American Studies BA at UW.

- **Strengthen communication and exchange with high school teachers, to make American Studies visible to high school students considering future college majors, and support interdisciplinary, connective efforts in the high schools.**

The American Studies Program began corresponding with Laramie High School Social Studies and English teachers and administrators in spring 2016, all of whom are interested in getting AMST BA students into their classrooms, and eager to talk with American Studies faculty at UW. Laramie High School offers an AP American Studies class.

In spring 2017, we will plan visit events at LHS and at UW to see how we can best work together. This pilot effort will give us information useful in planning work with LHS and hopefully other high schools and teachers in the state as well.

UW President Laurie Nichols recently expressed a commitment to integrating k-12 education in the state with the extensive community college articulation efforts and with UW. American Studies is eager to participate on behalf of interdisciplinary, integrative humanities study in Wyoming.

- **Complete work with the College of Education re-establishing the AMST BA as an option for Secondary Social Studies Education majors, alongside POLS, GEOG, and HIST.**

The AMST BA formerly participated in the SSE major, bringing future teachers regularly into our classes and the major. Curricular changes in WY reshaped the SSE approach, a number of close AMST colleagues in Education retired, and American Studies did not realize right away that the new education curriculum no longer included our major. Current SSE coordinator Mark Helmsing has worked with us to establish the rationale and the initiative from the College of Education to bring AMST back in and maintain relationships with a new generation of College of Education personnel. Helmsing's statement is attached to this response.

- **Design new classes for USP 2015 that draw on our teaching strengths, bring American Studies to a wide range of UW students, potentially recruit new majors as first or second year students, and add interdisciplinary opportunities for all UW students completing USP requirements.**

We designed AMST 1101 Cultures of College, a First Year Seminar, in 2014, and have offered it successfully twice. Attached here are some students' statements from that class this fall.

American Studies is currently designing our first V class (which satisfies the US and Wyoming constitution requirement for USP) and it will be offered in fall 2017, hosted by the Honors Program.

- **Pursue approaches to teaching, learning, and retention, with those expert on campus serving non-traditional, veteran-status, and at-risk students**

Because of the success of AMST 1101, and the emerging fact that not all students receive grades of C or better in UW's FYS, special sections of the FYS have been developed to accommodate those students in particular. The American Studies Program is eager to work with specialists on campus and in the FYS program expert in pedagogy for students at-risk, to develop an AMST 1101 specifically for those students who have failed their first attempt. The American Studies Program has long been committed to supporting at-risk students in our own major; we are ready to fully and more formally develop our capacity this way.

Because of the relatively large number of AMST BA students who are military veterans—including some who are currently inactive majors—the Program is committed to formally pursuing best approaches to help these students thrive in school.

Our inactive majors have not declared other majors, and we have regularly graduated both veteran-status and at-risk students. Again, we are ready to fully and more formally develop our capacity to retain and recruit veterans, non-traditional, and at-risk students.

- **Continue cultivating opportunities to teach in the Honors Program**



Susan Aronstein, Director of the Honors Program, is eager to develop opportunities for AMST faculty to teach Honors classes, including the V class we will offer through Honors next fall.

One identifiable group of AMST BA students has long been Honors students—including 4 current and recent BA students.

Teaching in Honors will bring American Studies expertise and approaches directly to Honors students, and since it is our classes that most directly recruit new majors, these classes will contribute to the availability, accessibility, and visibility of the AMST BA.

- **Establish and advertise a formal 4+1 BA /MA path**

The American Studies Program has admitted a number of our BA students into our MA program, and this has become more frequent: one current MA student graduated with our BA last spring, and another BA graduating this spring is applying to our MA program for fall 2017.

The structure of our BA, and the range of our 4000-level and 4000/5000-level courses open to both BA and MA students, makes a 5-year BA/MA a realistic, straightforward plan that would, we believe, be attractive to UW students, particularly in the context of the whole range of efforts to keep the program visible in USP, in advising across campus and in the college, in high schools, in community colleges and so on.

Such students could easily take advantage of 2 internship opportunities, could develop continuous depth in engagement with their scholarly and career interests, and do so in a supportive, congenial, and well-informed program learning community. A 4+1 plan would further integrate our already connected BA and MA programs—a feature of the American Studies Program well-documented in current and former MA students' letters of support for the BA, and a recruiting asset for the Program and for UW.

- **Continue attending all recruitment events, and take AMST BA students.**

Our own BA students are the best ambassadors for the degree and the program, as we happily discovered in early 2016, when 4 graduating seniors went with the program director to Discovery Days.

- **Continue cultivating our Program website and newsletter, Porchlight, to highlight undergraduate opportunities.**
- **Continue hosting BA events and get-togethers at the Cooper House, and ask them to bring a friend.**

**Stephen L. Bieber**

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**From:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 07, 2017 11:07 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Assistance - American Studies

Hello Steve,

Thank you for your heroic efforts this last year. And thank you for contacting me.

I've included my answers on behalf of the American Studies Program and our BA to your questions below. I am happy to answer questions in person. Meanwhile, I implore you and the committee to read the general reporting statements I have made, since May 2016, specifically regarding the BA MA faculty learning community (it's one operation we've got here, we're all in it), and if nothing else please hear the reality that the American Studies Program is privately funded as far as anything students do: 12-15 GAs (stipends, tuition, insurance), 6-8 internships, scholarships for research travel, international opportunities--- we do all this ourselves for BAs and MAs both, to the tune of about \$300K each year. Our line faculty salaries are state funded-- and those salaries support the MA and BA programs with broad undergraduate (and graduate) teaching beyond our majors, with many ties throughout UW and in WY, the US and abroad. We don't have a "state support budget." We have loaned the college of A&S money on occasion (A&S is currently repaying a loan, on a 5 year plan, to replace over \$150K that was taken by A&S from one of our endowment accounts 6 years ago). Our teaching, of course, is for anyone-- almost all our undergraduate teaching is for non-majors. This last bit of \$\$ info might be handled delicately-- I trust you-- but after a year of defending the program, the program's autonomy and futures in A&S, and the BA, honestly it's time to be clear about what American Studies does, and what it actually contributes, including financial resources, to undergraduate and graduate education at UW.

Can we cultivate more majors? Of course, and I have been (this is my 3d year as director, after 32 years of the director who solidified the stature of the program). It would be helpful even in these drafty transitional times that the institution recognize, if it cannot remember, we're here, and it is obviously my job to do my best on that front.

Thank you--

Frieda

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**From:** Stephen L. Bieber  
**Sent:** Monday, February 6, 2017 10:11 AM  
**To:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Subject:** Request for Assistance - American Studies

Frieda --

In reviewing the materials for the elimination of the BA degree in American Studies, the Academic Planning Committee felt that the "evidence" provided in support of the program's elimination and the "evidence" provided in support of the program's retention was insufficient to enable us to make a decision in regard to elimination or retention of the program. It would seem that the manner in which the proposals were developed (several different authors and within the context of UW Regulation 6-43) did not result in as clear a document for some proposals as for others. Perhaps it is only our inability in reading this proposal in the context of so many. If this is the case, then I am very sorry.

However, in order to complete our task as responsibly as possible, I would beg your indulgence by asking for your assistance. I am asking essentially the same three questions (below) to both you and the Dean of the College. We are looking for only brief responses (not numbers, just your perceptions), about 1 page in total only. If you would prefer that I would pass along this request to someone else, please let me know and I will be happy to contact them.

Thank you very much for your patience with us.

Steve, Chair  
Academic Planning Committee

From your perspective as the Head of American Studies,

1. What will be the benefit to UW associated with the retention of the BA in American Studies?
  - Only degree at UW that cultivates interdisciplinary approaches to complex issues in US and WY communities in a flexible thematic approach defined by students' goals.
  - Only UW degree that prepares students for hands-on work in historic preservation, museum and collections settings, and organizations, relevant in WY/US/abroad. Many BA graduates work in WY in capacities they developed in the BA.
  - Only degree at UW featuring an approach to undergraduate education where BA students shape their education to study broad cultural contexts they are immersed in as life-long learners.
  - Demonstrably retained UW students for whom other majors are too narrow.
  - Potential UW recruitment draw: unique in the region in its faculty lines, experience, commitment to flexible future-thinking curricula, and extraordinary endowment resources at students' disposal. No American Studies BA in the region—or in the US outside private institutions—offers the BA opportunities and support that UW's does.
2. What will be the loss to UW associated with the elimination of the BA in American Studies?
  - No interdisciplinary, integrative approaches to large issues relevant in US lives and communities outside disconnected minors and content-driven majors (including ENR).
  - Loss of a significant contributor to the land grant mission for the BA in the area of applied, hands-on, community-relevant humanities.
  - Potential loss of BA students who realize after 2-3 years they want to integrate their cultural studies who cannot do so.
  - Loss of an experienced, accomplished AMST contribution to innovative undergraduate education at a time when the university appears to want to develop more.
3. Specifically, how do you see American Studies as being able to deliver both quality BA and MA programs without additional funding, even after any imminent retirements?

AMST receives **no state funds outside salaries** to support BA or MA students (or copier/post/phones etc). Program endowment resources support both MA and BA internships and scholarship opportunities. The BA costs nothing but commitment.

The BA depends on the quality, not quantity, of personnel. The BA is a holistic degree, not specialized additive faculty coverage—it is **a degree of integration, emergent insight, and forward thinking. All hires in AMST since 1982 have had that capacity in mind, and contributed significantly to innovation at UW. An outward looking perspective is inherent in American Studies at UW, not dependent on the number of faculty.** Imminent retirements do not affect the holistic ability of American Studies to cultivate students' interests and accomplishments. **Remaining faculty are more than capable of doing that.** We excel in mobilizing the flexible study of American cultures, including our own scholarly and creative development. We were trained (and hired) for our capacity to build from specialized interests in connective and integrative ways. This is what we offer UW. AMST BA curriculum has changed before and will again because the field is responsive to conditions of American experiences and approaches to study them. This was true with 2 faculty, it has been true with more faculty, and it will remain true with fewer faculty.



## Stephen L. Bieber

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**From:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 08, 2017 12:38 AM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Assistance - American Studies

PS. All American Studies faculty teach 1000/2000 undergraduate classes, and required MA classes. There is no separate "MA faculty". I apologize for fussing over details, but since I don't know what assumptions about undergraduate education there may be, I want to be clear that we (all) teach UW undergraduates-- and we all teach a range of grad students.

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**From:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 7, 2017 11:06 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Assistance - American Studies

Hello Steve,

Thank you for your heroic efforts this last year. And thank you for contacting me.

I've included my answers on behalf of the American Studies Program and our BA to your questions below. I am happy to answer questions in person. Meanwhile, I implore you and the committee to read the general reporting statements I have made, since May 2016, specifically regarding the BA MA faculty learning community (it's one operation we've got here, we're all in it), and if nothing else please hear the reality that the American Studies Program is privately funded as far as anything students do: 12-15 GAs (stipends, tuition, insurance), 6-8 internships, scholarships for research travel, international opportunities--- we do all this ourselves for BAs and MAs both, to the tune of about \$300K each year. Our line faculty salaries are state funded-- and those salaries support the MA and BA programs with broad undergraduate (and graduate) teaching beyond our majors, with many ties throughout UW and in WY, the US and abroad. We don't have a "state support budget." We have loaned the college of A&S money on occasion (A&S is currently repaying a loan, on a 5 year plan, to replace over \$150K that was taken by A&S from one of our endowment accounts 6 years ago). Our teaching, of course, is for anyone-- almost all our undergraduate teaching is for non-majors. This last bit of \$\$ info might be handled delicately-- I trust you-- but after a year of defending the program, the program's autonomy and futures in A&S, and the BA, honestly it's time to be clear about what American Studies does, and what it actually contributes, including financial resources, to undergraduate and graduate education at UW.

Can we cultivate more majors? Of course, and I have been (this is my 3d year as director, after 32 years of the director who solidified the stature of the program). It would be helpful even in these drafty transitional times that the institution recognize, if it cannot remember, we're here, and it is obviously my job to do my best on that front.

Thank you--



## Stephen L. Bieber

**From:** Melissa B Alexander  
**Sent:** Friday, January 27, 2017 2:57 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber; James W. Waggoner JR.; Casey J Kearns  
**Subject:** Re: Academic Planning Committee

**Importance:** High

Gentlemen,

Having reviewed the American Studies materials, my initial thoughts and questions are below:

1. Elimination gains- Cost savings (if any) & ability to focus on core strengths and needs
2. Elimination losses- The graduate program appears to be a source of distinction for the university, and eliminating the undergraduate program could diminish the graduate program (if fewer courses are offered, fewer teaching opportunities given, or through decreased interactions between upper level undergraduates and graduate students). The undergraduate program also appears to enjoy some recognition and prestige, especially abroad. Even if the same classes are offered, it is possible that elimination of the undergraduate major might diminish perception of the university overseas and undermine our efforts to increase global interactions. That having been said, if the same classes continue to be offered without this very small major, it is not clear that elimination will cause much loss. The inter-disciplinary nature of the major, while perhaps a strength, makes this especially so.
3. Benefit of elimination- see #1
4. Cost of retaining- while the quality of this program appears sound, the efficiency does not. A program that nurtures students one on one (or close thereto), may be enjoyable for participants and produce positive results, but it is questionable stewardship of resources in a time of increasing resource scarcity.
5. Elimination or alternatives- If there are no cost savings, I see no benefit to elimination and at least some possibility of loss. That being said, reports indicate that continuing the undergraduate major would require hiring two new faculty, for which there are no funds. Given other unmet needs on campus, this seems problematic. However, two decades ago, American Studies operated with fewer faculty per student than today. If existing faculty were able to continue offering the undergraduate major without additional hiring and at a continued high level of quality, I would consider this the best of all worlds.
6. Questions- (1) what cost savings, if any, are associated with this elimination? [Immediately and over 5 years] (2) Could existing faculty continue the undergraduate major at an acceptably high quality level without new hires, even after upcoming retirements?

I welcome your thoughts, as I am sure they are likely to cause me to reconsider some of my own. I look forward to working together.

Best,

Melissa Ballengee Alexander

Associate Professor of Law

University of Wyoming College of Law

Dept. 3035, 1000 E. University Ave.

Laramie, Wyoming 82071

(307) 766-2289

melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu

Publications at <http://ssrn.com/author=1843785>

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**From:** "Stephen L. Bieber" <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>

**Date:** Friday, January 27, 2017 at 9:52 AM

**To:** "James W. Waggoner JR." <[JWags@uwyo.edu](mailto:JWags@uwyo.edu)>, Casey J Kearns <[CKearns@uwyo.edu](mailto:CKearns@uwyo.edu)>, "Kelly L. Tian" <[ktian@uwyo.edu](mailto:ktian@uwyo.edu)>, Lydia Dambekalns <[LyDart@uwyo.edu](mailto:LyDart@uwyo.edu)>, Hertanto Adidharma <[Adidharm@uwyo.edu](mailto:Adidharm@uwyo.edu)>, "Mark T. Byra" <[Byra@uwyo.edu](mailto:Byra@uwyo.edu)>, Melissa B Alexander <[melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu](mailto:melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu)>, "Lori J. Terrill" <[Lori@uwyo.edu](mailto:Lori@uwyo.edu)>,

"Molly E. Marcusse" <[mmarcuss@uwyo.edu](mailto:mmarcuss@uwyo.edu)>, "Brent L. Pickett" <[BPick@uwyo.edu](mailto:BPick@uwyo.edu)>, Jaynie Rene Welsh  
<[jwelsh7@uwyo.edu](mailto:jwelsh7@uwyo.edu)>

Cc: "Stephen L. Bieber" <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>

Subject: Academic Planning Committee

Please read carefully. This is a very important email.

The APC met yesterday (January 26) to discuss the review of the 12 academic programs being proposed for elimination. The context of the proposed eliminations was discussed along with a course of action under UW Regulation 6-43.

Over the past 10 days it has come to light that the Graduate Council should be involved in the review of the graduate programs being proposed for elimination. The Chair of the APC met with the Chair of the Graduate Council along with Associate Vice President Ann Hild to determine how best to integrate the work of the two committees within a timeframe permitted by the charge letter received from Provost Miller. It was determined that the two chairs would stay in weekly contact to share the work and progress of their committees, and that the Graduate Council would provide its review to the Academic Planning Committee in order to incorporate their assessment into its own review. It was anticipated that the Graduate Council could probably complete its work around the 17th of February. Therefore the APC determined that it would be best for it to consider its final review of the graduate programs after this date.

Here is the course of action finalized at yesterday's meeting.

#### Preliminary Review

1. The APC will be divided into 6 sub-committees based on the 6 areas that the programs had previously been divided. I have read all of the program elimination proposals and as such have placed myself as a member of all of the sub-committees with the exception of 6-2, since I am a member of the Statistics Department. If you have read, or would like to read, a second or even third area, then please let me know and I will send you the proposals and place your name on the appropriate sub-committee. The sub-committees are

Sub-committee 1 (Area 1): Languages and Neuroscience  
Kelly Tian, Jaynie Welsh, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 2 (Area 2): Sociology  
Lori Terrill, Molly Marcusse, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 3 (Area 3): American Studies  
Melissa Alexander, James Waggoner, Casey Kearns, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 4 (Area 4): Science Math Teaching Center (SMTTC)  
Lydia Dambekalns, Hertanto Adidharma, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 5 (Area 5): Secondary Education  
Brent Pickett, Mark Byra, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 6-1 (Area 6): Philosophy  
Brent Pickett, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 6-2 (Area 6): Statistics  
Lori Terrill, Kelly Tian

2. As a target date, please read the materials associated with your area by Wednesday February 1.

## Stephen L. Bieber

---

**From:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 5:38 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber  
**Subject:** Thank you!

Hello Steve,

Thank you so much for talking with me today.

I went back to the endowment records I have to confirm some details:

William Roberston Coe had been approached for a large donation in the early 1950s, over \$2 million for a new library. Coe declined. But he offered a modest gift in 1952 (\$4000) to support a trial summer institute for high school teachers, intended to give "high school teachers of History and related subjects...newer methods of presenting their course material." The summer institute success prompted Coe to offer \$10,000 for 1953, and when approached again, Coe gave \$750,000 to found a School of American Studies to offer American Studies courses (both undergraduate and graduate) during the school year (1965 report to Board of Trustees). Coe also agreed to support the building of the new library-- 1/2 its cost. This was the endowment that founded American Studies as full academic program. Coe himself was pleased that his similar endowment at Yale had resulted in a very "popular selective course among undergraduates being exceeded only by English and History" (Coe letter about the Wyoming endowment, 22 April 1954).

All the records I have describe an academic program without distinguishing between grad and undergrad majors --there were clearly both from 1954, and correspondence from Coe suggests he intended both. The summer teachers' institutes were intended to bring American Studies to even younger students--in other words, the vision included k-12, undergrads and graduate students.

At that time and at least through the mid-1960s, The School of American Studies reported directly to the university president, and board of trustees, and was governed by its own American Studies Board (on which the UW president was an ex-officio member).

I don't know when the School became a program in A&S. I suspect it was in the 1970s, when there was no longer an American Studies Board; the program was directed ably by a faculty member in the History Department, followed by an opportunistic director (another faculty member in the History Department, and director of the American Heritage Center) who siphoned all the endowment money into his own collection projects in the AHC, and effectively ceased operating a functional academic program. The damage of that director's tenure has been pretty far-reaching.

It was that decline Eric Sandeen was hired to turn around, and he did. In any case, undergraduate education was part of the endowment intent.

I'll look forward to keeping in touch-- and thank you again!

Frieda

## American Studies

Current Teaching Load of the Faculty.

How many Faculty are needed to teach the courses in the BA and MA programs on a timely cycle?

9 courses FY15 below min.

in FY 16, 17 how many courses offered.  
w/enrollments. each semester.

Is it possible on 2.75 FTE

Yes - Unit

No - Dean.



## American Studies

if the MA program is retained, then the BA program can be offered without any additional resources required.

The BA and MA are both highly interdisciplinary and consequently courses from other departments are common in the BA and MA programs. This is seen as a great strength.

follows  
As expressed in the preamble, the elimination of the BA program will change literally none of the course offerings in American Studies. Since the BA degree is not research intensive, then there does not appear to be any savings that will result to the department, college, or university from its elimination.

Bringing  
in Coe.

The American Studies is aware that its strength comes from its MA program. More than any one else on campus they know that the quality of this program cannot be compromised. They need sufficient resources to offer the MA. According to the dept. they can ~~offer~~ easily offer the MA with the resources they currently have, and have offered a SUCCESSFUL BA in addition to their successful MA with as few as 2.0 FTE.

if their resources drop to the point where if the BA is hurting their MA program, I would expect them to be the first to recommend the elimination of this program.



In 1965 Coe gave \$750,000 to found a School of American Studies to offer American Studies courses (both undergraduate and graduate) during the school year. ~~as indicated in the memo to...~~

mean to be - it is American Studies responsibility to consider its ability to offer any and all degree programs of sufficient quality to be worthy of a UW degree. It is the responsibility of various administrative authorities to monitor and assess the ability of American Studies to deliver on this charge.

Coe has not been made to ~~even~~ question American Studies ability to offer its BA and MA programs with current or even slightly reduced resources.

Recommend: program be retained

**Stephen L. Bieber**

Area 3

**From:** Stephen L. Bieber  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 6:12 PM  
**To:** Melissa B Alexander  
**Subject:** RE: Area 3 - American Studies

Great. I will communicate this with the others.

Let's meet again in Ross Hall 326.

Steve

Friday

1:30

326 Ross

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Dean

----- Original message -----

**From:** Melissa B Alexander <melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu>  
**Date:** 2/1/17 6:09 PM (GMT-07:00)  
**To:** "Stephen L. Bieber" <Bieber@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: Area 3 - American Studies

Terrific. Let's go with 1:30. Where would you like to meet? I'm happy to host or to come to you (although I may need a slightly later start if I do so).  
Best,  
Melissa Ballengee Alexander  
Associate Professor of Law  
University of Wyoming College of Law  
Dept. 3035, 1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, Wyoming 82071  
(307) 766-2289  
melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu  
Publications at <http://ssrn.com/author=1843785>

can offer AHA with  
current th. B.A. is  
a total freebee  
: interdisciplinary  
majors take  
courses and  
much of degree  
from other  
units.

**From:** "Stephen L. Bieber" <Bieber@uwyo.edu>  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 4:05 PM  
**To:** Melissa B Alexander <melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** RE: Area 3 - American Studies

How about Friday at 9:00 or at 1:30?

Steve

**From:** Melissa B Alexander  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 4:03 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber <Bieber@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: Area 3 - American Studies

Ok, I could meet tomorrow anytime: 8:15-9:30 or 12:30-2:30

Friday: 8:15-11:30 or 1:30-5:30.

Melissa

---

**From:** "Stephen L. Bieber" <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 3:56 PM  
**To:** Melissa B Alexander <[melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu](mailto:melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu)>  
**Subject:** RE: Area 3 - American Studies

Melissa –

I would like to arrange a meeting. I will schedule it at a time that we can meet and I will invite the others to attend. But we need to move forward with or without them.

I can meet tomorrow (most of the day) and Friday (nearly all day).

Steve

---

**From:** Melissa B Alexander  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 3:51 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>  
**Subject:** Re: Area 3 - American Studies

Nope.  
Melissa

---

**From:** "Stephen L. Bieber" <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 3:46 PM  
**To:** Melissa B Alexander <[melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu](mailto:melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu)>  
**Subject:** Area 3 - American Studies

Have you heard anything from Casey Kearns or Jim Waggoner?

Steve



## Stephen L. Bieber

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**From:** Casey J Kearns  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 4:36 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber; Melissa B Alexander; James W. Waggoner JR.  
**Subject:** RE: Academic Planning Committee

Hello All,

Here are my two cents... Though times, no doubt.

**I. If the program is eliminated, what are the "gains"**

- The College of Arts and Sciences will no longer feel the financial pressure to replace retiring faculty.
- Reduced teaching load for faculty serving the MA as well.
- Re-assigning split faculty assignments to comparable cross-listed dept. to offset any vacancies unfilled in cross-disciplinary programs.
- ASMT will have the potential resources to further support the MA program.
- Eliminating the BA will not affect current hires. The ASMT BA/MA program currently serves all faculty and academic professionals.
- Minimizes the number of uncredited programs at UW

**II. If the program is eliminated, what are the "losses?"**

- The ASMT BA is a product of a strong MA. Does the loss of the BA make the success of the MA more vulnerable in years to come?
- UW will lose a nationally recognized program (though their strongest notoriety appears to be from the 1900's)
- Reduced General Studies course options will be offered to our students. Course enrollments in 2010-2014 maintained a minimum capacity of 80%. This is prior to USP 2015. No current data is provided.
- The risk of losing undergraduates interesting in ASMT. (BA Majors, Spring 2016 – 12)  
The risk of losing continuing graduate students as part of the MA Program.
- Grants awarded \$196,500.00 though it is less clear how these grants best served a small group of students.
- Interdisciplinary division of the College of Arts and Sciences
- The BA alone has a fantastic student to faculty ratio – a very expensive one.

**III. Benefit of eliminating the program?**

- The College of Arts and Sciences will no longer feel the financial pressure to replace retiring faculty.
- Eliminating the program reduces general studies courses currently available in ASMT, but will marginally improve enrollment in other course offerings college wide.
- I can be done without disrupting FTE.
- No need to further review the program. Sadly, the last program review appears to be a Self-Study conducted in 1987.

**IV. "Cost" of retaining the program?**

- It is difficult to determine monetary cost comparatively to other programs without further information. However, continuation of a program with a low number of majors will inevitably lead to further strain given the future self-sustaining position of UW.



- According to the proposal, there are minimal costs in retaining the program, given all faculty serve the undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Is it necessary to acquire accreditation given the national notoriety of the program? I find it odd; given the notoriety and longevity of the faculty, that accreditation has not been pursued.
- The student to faculty ratio favors the students, but is depleting the budget.
- What is the ratio for the Graduate Program? Is the graduate program vulnerable to the same future threat?

**V. Is there information that you need to answer any of the four questions above?**

- Course enrollments in 2010-2014 maintained a minimum capacity of 80%. This is prior to USP 2015. What are the current enrollment figures and course caps for each class?
- What is the A&S ratio of student credit hours per FTE?
- What are the average A&S Direct Instructional expenditure per FTE?
- I'm not sure the above information is necessary in determining to endorse or reject the proposal, never the less, interesting to know)
- What happens to the graduate program when the current faculty on the eve of retirement chose to retire?

**VI. Recommendation –**

- **Endorse the proposal to eliminate the program – preliminary choice prior to committee discussion.**
- ~~Reject the proposal to eliminate the program~~
- ~~Reject the proposal to eliminate the program – recommend an alternative solution.~~

**From:** Stephen L. Bieber

**Sent:** Monday, January 30, 2017 2:45 PM

**To:** Melissa B Alexander <melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu>; James W. Waggoner JR. <JWags@uwyo.edu>; Casey J Kearns <CKearns@uwyo.edu>

**Subject:** RE: Academic Planning Committee

Here are my thoughts.

1. Can the BA program be offered in addition to the MA program with the projected 2.75 FTE? The Dean says no, the unit says yes. If the department can offer the BA in addition to the MA with 2.75 FTE and no additional resources, then UW has everything to lose and nothing to gain by the elimination of this program. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE EITHER WAY.

Here is a place where additional information is needed.

- Current teaching loads of all faculty
- All course enrollments for FY 16 and FY17
- How many faculty are needed to teach all of the courses in the BA and MA on a timely and appropriate cycle?

2. In FY 15, 9 courses were offered below minimum enrollments! This is incredibly inefficient and ineffective. But FY 15 is OLD INFORMATION!!!!

Steve

**From:** Melissa B Alexander

**Sent:** Friday, January 27, 2017 2:57 PM

**To:** Stephen L. Bieber <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>; James W. Waggoner JR. <[JWags@uwyo.edu](mailto:JWags@uwyo.edu)>; Casey J Kearns <[CKearns@uwyo.edu](mailto:CKearns@uwyo.edu)>

**Subject:** Re: Academic Planning Committee

**Importance:** High

Gentlemen,

Having reviewed the American Studies materials, my initial thoughts and questions are below:

1. Elimination gains- Cost savings (if any) & ability to focus on core strengths and needs
2. Elimination losses- The graduate program appears to be a source of distinction for the university, and eliminating the undergraduate program could diminish the graduate program (if fewer courses are offered, fewer teaching opportunities given, or through decreased interactions between upper level undergraduates and graduate students). The undergraduate program also appears to enjoy some recognition and prestige, especially abroad. Even if the same classes are offered, it is possible that elimination of the undergraduate major might diminish perception of the university overseas and undermine our efforts to increase global interactions. That having been said, if the same classes continue to be offered without this very small major, it is not clear that elimination will cause much loss. The inter-disciplinary nature of the major, while perhaps a strength, makes this especially so.
3. Benefit of elimination- see #1
4. Cost of retaining- while the quality of this program appears sound, the efficiency does not. A program that nurtures students one on one (or close thereto), may be enjoyable for participants and produce positive results, but it is questionable stewardship of resources in a time of increasing resource scarcity.
5. Elimination or alternatives- If there are no cost savings, I see no benefit to elimination and at least some possibility of loss. That being said, reports indicate that continuing the undergraduate major would require hiring two new faculty, for which there are no funds. Given other unmet needs on campus, this seems problematic. However, two decades ago, American Studies operated with fewer faculty per student than today. If existing faculty were able to continue offering the undergraduate major without additional hiring and at a continued high level of quality, I would consider this the best of all worlds.
6. Questions- (1) what cost savings, if any, are associated with this elimination? [Immediately and over 5 years] (2) Could existing faculty continue the undergraduate major at an acceptably high quality level without new hires, even after upcoming retirements?

I welcome your thoughts, as I am sure they are likely to cause me to reconsider some of my own. I look forward to working together.

Best,

Melissa Ballengee Alexander

Associate Professor of Law

University of Wyoming College of Law

Dept. 3035, 1000 E. University Ave.

Laramie, Wyoming 82071

(307) 766-2289

[melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu](mailto:melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu)

Publications at <http://ssrn.com/author=1843785>

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**From:** "Stephen L. Bieber" <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>

**Date:** Friday, January 27, 2017 at 9:52 AM

**To:** "James W. Waggoner JR." <[JWags@uwyo.edu](mailto:JWags@uwyo.edu)>, Casey J Kearns <[CKearns@uwyo.edu](mailto:CKearns@uwyo.edu)>, "Kelly L. Tian" <[ktian@uwyo.edu](mailto:ktian@uwyo.edu)>, Lydia Dambekalns <[LyDart@uwyo.edu](mailto:LyDart@uwyo.edu)>, Hertanto Adidharma <[Adidharm@uwyo.edu](mailto:Adidharm@uwyo.edu)>, "Mark T. Byra" <[Byra@uwyo.edu](mailto:Byra@uwyo.edu)>, Melissa B Alexander <[melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu](mailto:melissa.alexander@uwyo.edu)>, "Lori J. Terrill" <[Lori@uwyo.edu](mailto:Lori@uwyo.edu)>, Molly E. Marcusse" <[mmarcuss@uwyo.edu](mailto:mmarcuss@uwyo.edu)>, "Brent L. Pickett" <[BPick@uwyo.edu](mailto:BPick@uwyo.edu)>, Jaynie Rene Welsh <[jwelsh7@uwyo.edu](mailto:jwelsh7@uwyo.edu)>

**Cc:** "Stephen L. Bieber" <[Bieber@uwyo.edu](mailto:Bieber@uwyo.edu)>

**Subject:** Academic Planning Committee

Please read carefully. This is a very important email.

The APC met yesterday (January 26) to discuss the review of the 12 academic programs being proposed for elimination. The context of the proposed eliminations was discussed along with a course of action under UW Regulation 6-43.

Over the past 10 days it has come to light that the Graduate Council should be involved in the review of the graduate programs being proposed for elimination. The Chair of the APC met with the Chair of the Graduate Council along with Associate Vice President Ann Hild to determine how best to integrate the work of the two committees within a timeframe permitted by the charge letter received from Provost Miller. It was determined that the two chairs would stay in weekly contact to share the work and progress of their committees, and that the Graduate Council would provide its review to the Academic Planning Committee in order to incorporate their assessment into its own review. It was anticipated that the Graduate Council could probably complete its work around the 17th of February. Therefore the APC determined that it would be best for it to consider its final review of the graduate programs after this date.

Here is the course of action finalized at yesterday's meeting.

#### Preliminary Review

1. The APC will be divided into 6 sub-committees based on the 6 areas that the programs had previously been divided. I have read all of the program elimination proposals and as such have placed myself as a member of all of the sub-committees with the exception of 6-2, since I am a member of the Statistics Department. If you have read, or would like to read, a second or even third area, then please let me know and I will send you the proposals and place your name on the appropriate sub-committee. The sub-committees are

Sub-committee 1 (Area 1): Languages and Neuroscience

Kelly Tian, Jaynie Welsh, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 2 (Area 2): Sociology

Lori Terrill, Molly Marcusse, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 3 (Area 3): American Studies

Melissa Alexander, James Waggoner, Casey Kearns, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 4 (Area 4): Science Math Teaching Center (SMTc)

Lydia Dambekalns, Hertanto Adidharma, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 5 (Area 5): Secondary Education

Brent Pickett, Mark Byra, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 6-1 (Area 6): Philosophy

Brent Pickett, Steve Bieber

Sub-committee 6-2 (Area 6): Statistics

Lori Terrill, Kelly Tian

2. As a target date, please read the materials associated with your area by Wednesday February 1.

3. Please initiate an email, although it may actually be advantageous to meet, discussion to perform the preliminary assessment of your sub-committee area. This preliminary assessment should include the following.

- a. If the program is eliminated, what are the "gains?"
- b. If the program is eliminated, what are the "losses?"
- c. What is the "benefit" of eliminating the program?
- d. What is the "cost" of retaining the program?
- e. Preliminary thoughts on whether the program should be eliminated, should be retained, or should be offered a course of action prior to a decision of elimination or retention.
- f. After reading the materials, are there questions that you would like to see answered before a. through e. can be addressed?

4. Once your sub-committee has completed 3., communicate the results to me (unless I have already been a part of your discussion) and I will begin the process of obtaining the answers to the questions you have asked in 3.e.

5. Please complete the preliminary review, NO LATER THAN Friday February 10.

6. I will collect the answers to our questions no later than Friday February 17. This should enable us by this date to have all of the information that we will need to complete our final review: program elimination proposals, answers to our questions, and the assessments from the Graduate Council.

#### Final Review

1. We will start the final review during the week of February 13 (one meeting) to discuss the two simplest programs for elimination that have been proposed: Neuroscience and Statistics. Most likely we will not need supplement information on either of these two programs. Our discussion of these two programs at this first meeting will establish the protocol for our discussion of the remaining 10 programs.

2. We will tentative review the remaining 10 programs on the following schedule.

Week of February 20 (2 meetings): Secondary Education/American Studies and Languages

Week of February 27 (2 meetings): SMTC/Philosophy and Sociology

3. I am extremely sorry for the short timeframe, but I do not see any way to get around it. We can only attempt to get through it. Hence, we WILL HAVE 5 meetings in 3 weeks. It is incredibly important for us ALL TO MEET to discuss these final reviews. When I send out a doodle poll, please indicate all possible times that you can be available.

Unfortunately, I will tell you in advance, that I will be sending out possible times as early as 7:00 in the morning and as late at 7:00 in the evening. It will be a difficult 3 weeks for us.

4. I am trying to push us on a schedule that would have us complete our charge by the 3rd of March. This will give us one grace week prior to Spring Break.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Steve



## Stephen L. Bieber

**From:** Paula M. Lutz  
**Sent:** Monday, February 13, 2017 1:47 PM  
**To:** Stephen L. Bieber  
**Cc:** Audrey C. Shalinsky; Robert A. Schuhmann; Gregory K. Brown  
**Subject:** answers to your questions re BA in AMST

Steve:

I must say I find it difficult to answer negatively worded questions such as these, but here are my responses!

*Paula*

From your perspective as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences,

1. What will be the cost savings associated with the elimination of the BA in American Studies?

One faculty line. They have two retirements in the near future, bringing their FTE to 4.25; 1.0 FTE of that is an APRS performing very specific research duties; so in actuality, 3.25 faculty. At some point in the future, ONE of those two retirements will probably be replaced. Time-line unknown. ✓

2. What will be the loss to the College if the BA in American Studies is retained?

a. Under the circumstances described in the answer to Q1, keeping the BA as the faculty shrinks will damage the very strong MA degree. That should be the focus of the department's efforts.

b. Also, loss to the college will be more demands/competition for faculty lines—a request for both lines to keep both programs going. With a new budget model based on SCH's, they will be disappointed in their ranking in cpm. This will further damage morale.

3. Specifically, how do you see American Studies as not being able to deliver both the BA and MA programs without additional funding?

a. The BA and MA must be assessed (HLC requires ALL programs to be assessed). With only 3.25 FTE, faculty time will be stretched too thin.

b. The issue is faculty time and energy. 3.25 faculty cannot deliver a rigorous MA program while also trying to deliver a small BA. Dual-listing of ~70% of their classes weakens their MA. Their curriculum should be trimmed to focus on graduate courses.

c. At many universities, there is a minimum faculty size for having a graduate program, usually TEN faculty. The issue returns to faculty time and energy to deliver a quality product.

In short, it's a zero-sum game. Where should our resources be spent in these times of budget reductions with concomitant emphasis on increasing enrollment? Should money follow students? Yes, I believe it should. And that means that larger programs in terms of majors will and should FINALLY benefit.

*Paula M. Lutz, Dean*  
University of Wyoming  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Dept. 3254  
1000 East University Avenue  
Room 113, A&S Building  
Laramie, WY 82071  
[plutz@uwyo.edu](mailto:plutz@uwyo.edu)

*rather than pre-emptive.  
simply allow time to take  
its course. Program quality  
is their responsibility. Continue  
to function w/o immediate future  
expectation of additional resources.  
Revisit<sup>1</sup> in 3 years or when there  
is another position loss (under 2.75).*



Paula Lutz, Dean  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Campus

January 5, 2016

Dear Dean Lutz,

I have waited until the last minute to write in support of our BA program because I wanted to see how the process has unfolded. I have been gratified by the support we have received from friends, colleagues, and alumni and concerned that the unique qualities of this program will not be fully appreciated.

As you may understand, this is a difficult letter for me to write. I came here in 1982 with the mandate to resuscitate the American Studies Program. Now the BA program is being called into question, unnecessarily, in my opinion. I will attempt a response but I cannot do so through a bureaucratic, bulleted memo. I have been intertwined with this program for too long to be able to do that. I trust that you will bear with me.

In the early 1950s William Robertson Coe endowed three American Studies Programs: Yale, Stanford, and Wyoming. Yale supported student fellowships and library acquisitions; Stanford used the endowment to develop faculty positions. Only at Wyoming did this investment in the American Studies movement include all facets of education. Looking through the Program archives recently reveals to me once more the exuberant, even aggressive effort of our Program's illustrious founders to extend this interdisciplinary view of American culture to high school teachers (and through them, to their pupils), undergraduates, and graduate students. Because of the support awarded to graduate students (fellowships and then Graduate Assistantships) the Program achieved and maintained national prominence, but this is only the most visible part of our curriculum. Undergraduate education has always been an important element of American Studies at Wyoming.

Why is the undergraduate curriculum so important? It satisfies the goals of a liberal education, fulfilled through an examination of American culture, past and present. This intention remains the same today as it ever was, made all the more immediate by the proliferation of options (and institutional attention) outside the liberal arts and by the diminution of what could be called the public realm, or the sphere of civic discourse. The first intention was taken for granted then but must be self-consciously preserved now: the creation of intellectual space in which young minds could grow, exercise new skills and examine new perspectives gleaned from the liberal arts, fashion a set of values, and, as someone once said, prepare for a life of complete living. The second intention cannot be ignored. Our predecessors thought of this in terms of a perceived threat from the outside; today we could point to the sorry spectacle of our last election as an example of why critical thinking and articulate expression of civic ideals are vital to the life of our democracy.

The founders of the program DID anticipate that American Studies would be of considerable import on the international level. They assumed that this was because of the post-World War II prominence of the United States, a fact that produced both pride and anxiety.



They would recognize the current international prominence of American Studies at Wyoming, though they might be surprised at the number of students we receive from outside the U. S. and the variety of interactions that our faculty has had with colleagues abroad. You note this aspect of our Program in your assessment. What you failed to recognize or acknowledge is the way in which American Studies interacts with the state. Our forebears would have seen this in terms of the college (or high school) classroom. Our innovation (nationally noted over twenty-five years of practice, I might add) has been to extend the reach of American Studies to institutions and locations throughout the state through our public sector program, in which undergraduates have consistently participated.

All of these observations have practical consequences that make the BA a vital part of the UW liberal arts curriculum.

First of all, the undergraduate program costs practically nothing. When I arrived here in 1982 the undergraduate and graduate programs fit together organically and were easy to maintain in relation to each other. That relationship persists to the present day.

Secondly, courses at the BA level will continue to be taught, either as a part of University Studies or A&S curricula or as elements of courses that are also available to graduate students. The American Studies curricula at UW have been in line with interdisciplinary practice throughout the nation in this field since its inception in the 1950s: these are distributed majors, most of the courses for which are selected by students in consultation with faculty members from offerings in other departments and programs. The role of American Studies is to synthesize through seminars, capstone courses, field experiences, and internships. Faculty teaching assignments will change little, were the BA eliminated. Student opportunities and the public sector in the state of Wyoming would be sure to suffer.

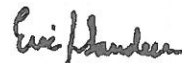
Third, undergraduate American Studies has produced the desired results: undergraduate students have undertaken international exchange semesters (mostly with the University of Southern Denmark), they have held ambitious internships, and they have participated in the many field experiences that the program has to offer.

Fourth, our graduates have built upon the opportunities offered through American Studies. I can cite specific examples of students now working in Wyoming cultural institutions who received their BAs from us. We send students on to graduate programs. Our alumni are teaching in Wyoming high schools. Equally impressive is the accomplishment of those students who have had a difficult time in traditional departments at UW. By offering a flexible curriculum and individualized attention we have nurtured students so that they have realized their talents in our program. Perhaps you have heard from some of our alumni during the past weeks. There are a lot more voices out there, over the horizon, that could add to the chorus.

And this is my final point: the American Studies Program has a considerable reach. We are respected nationally and internationally and our students represent us well in positions that are related to American Studies sometimes more through the passion of commitment or the skills of writing and observation than through the subject matter that we teach.

I will also claim a point of personal privilege by praising the colleagues I have recruited to the Program over the last three decades: the American Studies faculty is absolutely first rate. We could support a Ph.D. program – this has been true for many years now. More than that, though, this group of colleagues is totally committed to the teaching mission of the university and our academic field. The Program is also fortunate to have a superb director who can carry this Program forward. The essential point is this: students receive a superlative education in American Studies and, through their achievements, the state is rewarded, as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eric J. Sandeen".

Eric J. Sandeen  
Professor  
Director (1982-2014)



**Subject:** UW American Studies B.A. program

**Date:** Friday, December 16, 2016 at 9:00:27 AM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Sonjia Weinstein

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office, Frieda E. Knobloch

Area 3

Dear Provost Miller,

I am writing in support of continuing the American Studies Bachelor of Arts program at University of Wyoming. The B.A. program in American Studies at University of Wyoming offers a unique opportunity for undergraduates to major in a truly interdisciplinary field with high academic standards.

As a UW alumni with a Master of Arts in American Studies, I can attest that the faculty in American Studies set rigorous intellectual standards and provide unparalleled support to students to achieve high goals. I earned my Bachelor of Fine Arts from a program that is currently ranked #1 in the United States. However, I found a much stronger sense of community at the University of Wyoming. Undergraduate students in the American Studies Bachelor of Arts program are a significant part of the American Studies community at University of Wyoming. The undergraduate students who choose to major in American Studies contribute greatly to classroom discussions by bringing broad perspectives and insightful comments. Eliminating the undergraduate program in American Studies at UW will negatively impact the graduate program. More importantly, it will eliminate the possibility for undergraduate students in Wyoming to receive a degree in a field of study that they could continue at the same institution.

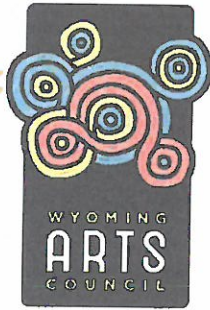
It is questionable what benefits are to be gained by eliminating the Bachelor of Arts program in American Studies. I strongly urge you to reconsider this administrative decision and continue to offer a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies at the University of Wyoming.

Sincerely,

Sonjia Weinstein

Sonjia Weinstein  
Designer  
B.F.A. RISD, M.A. University of Wyoming

Drishti LLC  
Strategic Communication Design  
PO Box 2312  
Laramie, WY 82073



November 7, 2016

Kate Miller  
Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of Wyoming

The Wyoming Arts Council encourages the review team to reconsider the recommended changes to the American Studies Program. The Program is regionally, nationally and internationally recognized for its longevity, public sector emphasis and the caliber of the faculty, researchers and staff. The Arts Council has a longstanding relationship with the Program reaching back to 1989 when there was a joint public sector folk arts coordinator position held by Tim Evans through 1996. Today, the Arts Council continues a formal partnership with the program to support the Public Sector Folklife Specialist, currently held by Andrea Graham. Together, the UW Research Scientist and the Arts Council's Folk and Traditional Arts Specialist collaborate on statewide initiatives to bring the research of Wyoming's cultural traditions to campus and across the state. The recent project, *Art of the Hunt: Wyoming Traditions*, culminated in an 18 month long exhibit and programs in Cheyenne and a symposium on campus. Our current collaboration focuses on Wyoming's fiber arts scene from animal husbandry to producing elaborate works of art. The ongoing partnership between the Arts Council and the American Studies Program would not be visible if run through an interdisciplinary department in which the Arts Council would identify with only a single member of the faculty (the Folklife Specialist) rather than integrated through the entire program from Program Chair to Office Staff to Student.

The Graduate and Bachelor students connect with the Arts Council through internships, graduate assistantships, and mentorships. Former bachelor student Mariah West received a summer internship provided through the State of Wyoming Administration Office to work during the months leading up to the Art of the Hunt exhibit opening. Her academic background and previous on-campus internship experience allowed her to start her work in Cheyenne with a strong understanding of the project and a firm grasp of the work required. She not only assisted with exhibit program development, she wrote an essay on Wyoming hunting traditions for the agency newsletter utilizing her American

Matthew H. Mead | Governor  
Darin J. Westby, P.E. | Director



**ARTS. PARKS.  
HISTORY.**  
State Parks & Cultural Resources

Studies major. She has returned to Cheyenne to work as Development Manager at the CFD Old West Museum and has reached out to the Arts Council about future collaborations. Mariah is only one success story of American Studies majors graduating from the university and who go on to serve the betterment of the state in thoughtful and purposeful ways.

The Arts Council stresses that the autonomy of the Program and the retention of the undergraduate major are important to our ongoing partnership.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Lange", with a stylized, flowing script.

**Michael Lange**  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anne F. Hatch", with a more formal, cursive script.

**Anne F. Hatch**  
Folk & Traditional Arts Specialist



## **Frieda E. Knobloch**

---

**From:** Mary M. Humstone  
**Sent:** Friday, December 09, 2016 4:16 PM  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz  
**Cc:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Subject:** Letter in support of American Studies undergraduate major

Dr Paula Lutz, Dean  
College of Arts & Sciences  
University of Wyoming

Dear Dr. Lutz:

I am writing in support of retaining the Bachelor's Degree in American Studies.

I served as research scientist in American Studies for 12 years, from 2002 to 2014. During that time I taught undergraduate and graduate courses in historic preservation, sustainability, architectural history, American cultural landscapes and American culture in the public sector. I also directed the American Studies internship program, and put dozens of undergraduate and graduate students to work on historic preservation and other public sector projects in 19 of Wyoming's 23 counties, through internships, graduate and undergraduate assistantships and field courses. I am currently an adjunct faculty member in American Studies.

The BA program is an integral part of education in American Studies. Undergraduate and graduate students mingle and learn from each other in courses, field courses, seminars and informal get-togethers and lectures at Cooper House. Undergraduates contribute to the intellectual and social fabric of the program, while also benefitting from being part of a small but diverse learning community. Several undergraduates that I taught during my tenure at UW went on to get their masters in American Studies at UW, and are now working in the field.

As someone who does not have an academic background in American Studies, I found my American Studies students to be engaging pupils and able contributors to public sector projects. They are creative problem solvers and broad thinkers who can easily make connections among disciplines, something that is critical to understanding the built environment. With my undergraduate and graduate American Studies students, I completed approximately 70 projects for federal, state, local and private clients in Wyoming, including the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, Wyoming Army National Guard, Wyoming Humanities Council, Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, and Albany and Sheridan Counties. Students contributed to surveys of historic neighborhoods and historic schools, nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, archeological investigations, writing of interpretive plans, and public programming in the arts, humanities and historic preservation. They regularly presented their work to the community in public forums. These experiences helped to shape the future careers of a number of American Studies undergraduate and graduate students, while providing service to the state.

As a founding board member and past president of the Alliance for Historic Wyoming (AHW), I would also like to attest to the importance of this undergraduate program. AHW was founded 12 years ago as Wyoming's only statewide nonprofit historic preservation organization. The Alliance for Historic works throughout the state with citizens, organizations, local governments and businesses to recognize and protect Wyoming's historic and cultural resources. As a nonprofit service organization, AHW has benefitted greatly from our association with American Studies, particularly through internships performed by undergraduate majors. For example, as an undergraduate, Misty Moore (now Stoll) conducted a statewide assessment of historic preservation in Wyoming, which included interviews with 30 or more leaders from around the state. In 2015, American Studies BA student Luke Anderson interned with AHW, providing valuable assistance to our executive director and revamping our website and other communications systems. We are



now happy to have Luke as a part-time employee. AHW has also benefitted from the leadership of several American Studies MA students, two of whom have served as executive directors, as well as two who have served on the board of directors (one is currently board president). These are significant contributions to Wyoming, and represent only a fraction of what the American Studies program as a whole contributes.

It would be a shame and a disservice to the state to discontinue a 65-year-old degree program that has so many benefits for students and for Wyoming. I urge you retain the integrity of the University of Wyoming American Studies program by making the decision to retain the Bachelor's Degree in American Studies.

Sincerely,

Mary M. Humstone

Mary M. Humstone  
Principal, Humstone Consulting  
4420 Bingham Hill Rd.  
Fort Collins, CO 80521  
970 420-5275  
[humstone@uwyo.edu](mailto:humstone@uwyo.edu)

Board Member, Alliance for Historic Wyoming  
[www.historicwyoming.org](http://www.historicwyoming.org)  
307-333-3508

Principal, Humstone Consulting  
Board Member, Alliance for Historic Wyoming

**Subject:** Letter in support of American Studies undergraduate major  
**Date:** Friday, December 9, 2016 at 4:25:19 PM Mountain Standard Time  
**From:** Mary M. Humstone  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office  
**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

copy /

Dr. Kate Miller  
Vice-President for Academic Affairs  
University of Wyoming

Dear Dr. Miller:

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Sincerely,

Mary M. Humstone

Mary M. Humstone  
Principal, Humstone Consulting  
4420 Bingham Hill Rd.  
Fort Collins, CO 80521  
970 420-5275  
humstone@uwyo.edu

Board Member, Alliance for Historic Wyoming  
[www.historicwyoming.org](http://www.historicwyoming.org)  
307-333-3508

Principal, Humstone Consulting  
Board Member, Alliance for Historic Wyoming



**Subject:** Comment in support of the American Studies BA degree  
**Date:** Friday, December 9, 2016 at 6:47:56 AM Mountain Standard Time  
**From:** Beth A Loffreda  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

Dear colleagues in Academic Affairs,

I write to urge you to reconsider the elimination of the American Studies BA degree. I was struck, reading Provost Miller's message of 12/8, "Restructuring for Excellence," by how exactly the American Studies BA already delivers, consistently and precisely, what are described as the hallmarks of excellence in that document. Our BA, like our MA, deeply involves students in transformative learning experiences outside the classroom that immersively prepare them for future careers, through our longstanding and substantial internship opportunities and international study opportunities. Our BA degree requires each student to construct, in close consultation with AMST faculty, a coherent interdisciplinary program of study: every AMST BA student is by the very nature of the program pursuing individualized exploratory research that disciplinary degrees cannot replicate or sustain. Our internship program in particular is consciously aligned with state interests: students concretely contribute to the preservation and celebration of Wyoming cultural resources and historical sites. That is student activity that aligns with state (and national) demand for research of societal importance, to cite the Provost's document. And the AMST program's deliberate attention to critical matters of diversity and cross-cultural understanding dovetails with the UW mission to prepare students for a complex and changing national and international landscape.

The AMST BA is already expert in the kind of education that the University is shaping its future towards. It is true that our former, longtime program director's energies were primarily directed at the establishment of our distinctive and successful MA program. But our new program director, along with the faculty cohort that will shepherd the program through the next two to three decades of the program, are all committed to growing the BA's service to students and the state. Two years of new program leadership has not been enough time to fully energize the BA (nor would that be enough time for any program). The AMST BA and the faculty that support it are a major reservoir of expertise in and commitment to the educational values and approaches the new leadership of UW has articulated this fall. I respectfully submit that it is an unnecessary mistake to start over from scratch rather than build upon an already-existing site of excellence that may simply not have been as visible to you as it could have been. We're here, and we want to continue working on behalf of UW undergraduates even more in the future. And we'll deliver.

Beth Loffreda  
Associate Professor of American Studies and Creative Writing



Professor Paula M Lutz  
Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences  
University of Wyoming

12 December 2016

American Studies at the University of Wyoming

Dear Professor Lutz

I am writing to you in my capacity as the President of the European Association for American Studies (EAAS), and on behalf of the 5500 academics and postgraduate students across Europe who constitute the membership of the EAAS, to express deep concern at the news that the University of Wyoming is to close its American Studies BA degree. At this critical point in American, as well as global, history, programmes such as the American Studies BA at Wyoming are more needed than ever. America, its cultures, its peoples, and its multiple narratives are of heightened interest the world over in the wake of a tumultuous 2016 Presidential campaign, and I and my colleagues in the field predict this will remain the case for the medium and long term as the current and next generations come to terms with this watershed period in American history, politics, and culture.

The lead that the BA programme in American Studies at Wyoming has given to the field in the US and further afield is undoubted. Your successful exchange programmes with universities in Europe has ensured that the University of Wyoming has long benefitted from the dynamic replenishing of your faculty's work in, and teaching of, American subjects that such arrangements provide; moreover, those of us working on this side of the Atlantic come to know of the expertise, range, and professionalism of the faculty there who have been involved in delivering the American Studies programme over the last 65 years. That longevity in itself is a significant achievement that should be lauded by the University: it certainly gives European scholars a paradigm and scale of achievement to (attempt to) emulate as we produce American Studies programmes of our own. The academics who have brought Wyoming to the world, through their research, their participation in international conferences, and by way of the American Studies programme at Wyoming, are a valued asset in the global American Studies community.

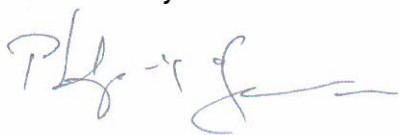
As an example of the view from outside of the United States: at my own institution, Queen's University in Belfast, we are about to embark upon what for US universities is a matter of course, the creation of a liberal arts programme, that I have been tasked with designing and leading. Central to this programme will be an undergraduate American Studies pathway offering opportunities for international student exchanges and academic collaboration with a number of US institutions; a programme as well-established as Wyoming's would be an ideal fit for our students as we look to connect the best of our students with the best of America's.

I am aware that a deadline of 5 December for registering support for the programme has passed, but I was awaiting confirmation here in Belfast – which arrived today – that my Faculty is to open its own American Studies Research Centre. Despite competition from proposals for a Shakespeare Centre and a centre dedicated to the exploration of Irish culture in the wake of the Northern Irish Troubles, the American Studies Centre won out in a lengthy bidding process. The

tide in European academic circles is again turning firmly toward the study of America: this fact, I think, must form part of your deliberations in relation to the American Studies BA programme at Wyoming. As international academic communities are moving toward the education model offered by your programme, it appears that you are, unfortunately, willing to sacrifice one of the significant academic successes for which Wyoming is known across the globe.

I am happy to be contacted at any point in relation to this, or related issues, to do with American Studies at your institution.

Yours sincerely



Dr Philip McGowan,  
School of Arts, English  
& Languages,  
The Queen's University of Belfast,  
Belfast BT7 1NN. Northern Ireland.

Ph.: +44 2890 793261  
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Webpage: <http://go.qub.ac.uk/McGowan>

President, The European Association for American Studies ([www.eaas.eu](http://www.eaas.eu))  
[president@eaas.eu](mailto:president@eaas.eu)



cc. Dr Laurie Nichols, President, University of Wyoming  
Dr Kate Miller, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Wyoming  
Dr Frieda Knobloch, Program Director American Studies, University of Wyoming



Dr. Paula M. Lutz, Dean  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Department 3254, 1000 E. University  
Laramie, WY 82070  
307-766-2697

Dr. Lutz and Academic Affairs Review Board:

I am writing to express my deepest concern of the College Arts and Sciences' decision to eliminate the Bachelor of Arts program in American Studies. Doing so would not only hinder the program, but this would cause a rippling effect throughout the whole campus, and even on a global scale. As an educator looking for the greater good of the University of Wyoming and Laramie, I would hope you would reconsider your recommendation. The American Studies program is rich with historic integrity, arguably to most departments and establishments in the College of Arts and Sciences. This particular program was one of three schools (THREE) that began through the Coe Endowment. The other two were Ivy league schools of high caliber thus showing the importance this program is to Wyoming and its University. This department hires intellectually intelligent and internationally renowned faculty to support the UW mission of higher education and *preparedness for complete learning*.

International students have the opportunity to attend the University of Wyoming because of the international connections which this faculty have made and continue to create, when arguably coming to Wyoming was probably not even a consideration. Hands-on experience is what I thirsted for during my undergraduate studies, and because of the experience that is available through American Studies program, students have the unique chance to gain knowledge-based as well as resource-based experiences in the actual field. If I had the opportunity to be in this American Studies program as an undergrad, I would have been able to do so much more in the preservation field than I ever dreamt I could in comparison to the university I attended. Because of all the connections both domestically and globally, internship opportunities and fellowships are fruitful, leading to more scholars and career-ready students arguably to any Liberal Arts oriented department. This is an important consideration that I cannot stress enough and cannot be overlooked.

Because of my connections in the American Studies department, I was able to achieve a life goal of mine that would have not been considered at my previous Alma mater, to work at a State Historic Preservation Office. Although I was only on a volunteer basis for a few hours a night, I was able to gain important career information and experiences which cannot be learned in a classroom. Since I was an American Studies student, the SHPO office was able to be flexible with my schedule and was able to accommodate evening/night work which I will forever be grateful for. As a Non-traditional student, finding field-based work proved to be difficult as I have a full time job that I cannot quit for internship or conference opportunities.

The flexibility of the faculty and the American Studies program creates limitless possibilities for the student which I would hope, would be the ultimate goal for all of the Arts and Sciences

degree tracts. My logic and research has been able to evolve into the student, and person that I wanted to be in my undergraduate work. I have been able to not only excel in my understanding of my own research, but also dive into new methodologies and research that I would have never fathomed possible. Because of my research and experiences through the American Studies program, I have been able to speak to my grandparents and parents in a more personal level that I never knew I missed out on. I have reminisced with my grandma raising 6 children and hardships while being the farmer's wife, upholsterer, and master of all crafts on the plains of North Dakota. I have listened to the ups and downs of life on the farm and the value of family and friendship on a Centennial farmstead with my grandpa. I have learned about the importance of the American Agricultural Movement in the late 70's and how my father fought with the rest of the West laying over rail lines, and took two weeks to drive a tractor from North Central North Dakota to the Capital of Washington D.C. to make the powerful impact on Senators and House Representatives alike, who were siphoning the livelihoods of these American peoples. I have learned the cost of economic progress and the effects on Middle America. The deafening effects of the economic collapse of the West is copied over and over again through the abandoned town sites, all with their own unique stories of community, cultural construct, historical integrity, heritage, and traditions. All of which I would not have discovered without the American Studies department, encouragement of the faculty, and also input of the Undergraduate students who were a part of my classes.

If any aspect of this department would be cut from the institution, it would be made with no consideration or forethought. That action would be deplorable and would negatively cast the University of Wyoming to both the rest of the country and an international stage as well. I can wholeheartedly say that I am passionate about this department and stand with the faculty, staff, students, city officials, university officials, government officials, and internationally infamous sponsors who strongly oppose your decision to cut a part of this inspiring and enlightening program which I have strong adoration for, and am proud to say I am a part of.

I hope you find this letter being of upmost sincerity and that you will take into consideration this request. This is a difficult time and I wish you, and your committee nothing but the best.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jessa Novak', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jessa Novak  
JNovak@lccc.wy.edu  
970-290-9525



Dear Provost Miller,

I am writing to you as a response to the proposed elimination of the B.A. degree in the American Studies program. I am currently a second year Master's student and have been working as a teaching assistant for the last three semesters with both students inside and outside of the program. I am also an international student that has chosen to come to Wyoming based on the structural opportunity that the American Studies program offers, which includes working with undergraduate students in the field. The program is very well-recognized both in the US and around the globe and the existence of a B.A. degree is a crucial part of it.

It is my understanding that the B.A. program in American Studies has become subject to institutional review due to the fact that it does not necessarily produce excessive amounts of undergraduate majors. While I do understand how this could be interpreted as a lack of relevance within the university system, I do not share this notion. There are profound reasons why the comparably small size of the program actually marks its biggest strengths. Students in the B.A. program get the opportunity to work very closely both with students from the well-structured and funded MA program AND the program's faculty. The existence of this particular environment combined with the program's excellent relationships to other programs on campus combined provides an excellent opportunity for students in the B.A. and M.A. program. It is especially the frequent contact and interaction between undergraduate and graduate students and faculty that create a unique learning environment with both strong guidance and individual freedom that would suffer tremendously from the proposed program elimination. It is not uncommon that students declare themselves as

*expensive!*

American Studies majors after struggling with other departments and, therefore, seek to enjoy a safe haven in the current structures of our program. It is more than questionable if these students would make their path towards graduation in a much larger and less individual interdisciplinary program or with only a minor option in American Studies. I have personally worked with some students of this background as teaching assistant and know that some of them would have faced a future as college dropouts. Many of the students who find their way into our program become very successful with regards to acquiring diverse skills and receiving corresponding grades.

Furthermore, it is not only the university as a whole and the B.A. students in particular that benefit from the program's current form and the existence of an undergraduate degree. Many students in the undergraduate program have done important and valued internship work, for example in conservation and preservation, which is directly tied to the interest of both the state of Wyoming and its local economies. I am not sure if the same thing can either be said about many other programs or, again, a general interdisciplinary studies program. The American Studies B.A. program might not always have been high in quantity of students, but in its current shape it offers essential quality that the university, its students and the state of Wyoming benefit from.

Just recently the department has successfully recruited freshly declared American Studies majors and there are several promising opportunities to further recruit future students, for example a compact five year B.A. and M.A. program, which would likely put the program and therefore the University of Wyoming more on a national spotlight. In addition

to that, I consider it a dangerous signal to undermine the legitimacy of American Studies at the University of Wyoming and the potential student interests in this field when reducing its availability for undergraduates to requirement fulfillment classes and not allowing pursuing the interests created in those classes towards a degree.

Especially since it is at this point more than unclear if the elimination of the B.A. in American Studies would even make substantial sense just by financial considerations, I hope I could provide some reasons for why an elimination of the undergraduate program actually comes at a very high price. UWYO is the only university in the state and therefore would be well-advised to maintain its existing interdisciplinary and diverse programs if they are of outstanding quality and not easily available at other institutions. There are not many programs in this field in the surrounding areas. The outstanding quality of the program and its future potential through some of the mentioned techniques to increase enrollment can and will put Wyoming on the map nationally and internationally. This is an investment worth making. I therefore urge you to reconsider your proposal and regard the existence of the B.A. program as a strength and potential for the university, instead of questioning its relevance just based on the perception of low undergraduate enrollment.

Sincerely,

Constantin Jas



**Subject:** Letter of Support for AMST BA

**Date:** Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at 7:33:07 AM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Hilery Lindmier

**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Provost Miller and Doctor Lutz,

I am writing to you in support of the American Studies BA program.

I have three degrees from the University of Wyoming including an English BA, BFA, and a MA in American Studies. I have gained immensely from my three liberal arts degrees, which have led me to several professions, including historic preservation advocate and practitioner, graphic designer, photographer, author, marketing and community relations specialist, and translator. I am a beneficiary of interdisciplinary studies, and it is from this background I ask you to please not eliminate the American Studies BA.

The American Studies department is small but solid. It is recognized both nationally and internationally, as evidenced by the quality of speakers it hosts, regular participation by students and professors at conferences, and its established exchange programs with universities in England, Estonia and the Netherlands. It collaborates with other programs to offer a variety of internship experiences, many of which provide some financial support. I myself had a wonderful summer internship doing historic preservation work in the Tetons, and I occasionally work with a recent graduate of the AMST BA program, who has had an ongoing internship with my former employer, the Alliance for Historic Wyoming. Luke himself has likely written to you and shared his own experience; he is an impressive example of an undergrad flourishing in American Studies.

While AMST professors are top in their field, they are deeply invested in the students and this shows in how they guide and challenge every student, be they grad or undergrad. American Studies offers the umbrella for students to craft their studies to fit their interests, but each student is expected to be thoughtful in the direction they are taking their education and have solid reasons for pursuing the courses they propose. By allowing students to shape their degrees, the American Studies program encourages independent thinking, creativity and responsibility –important qualities for future success in the “real” world.

Although the BA program only graduates a handful of students a year, I cannot see what the savings would be by eliminating it. These undergraduate students leave the university with a degree they shaped based on their interests, with internship opportunities and with recommendations from high-quality professors who know them well and want them to succeed. AMST is not a struggling program. It is a viable, rich, and mighty program, and deserves continued support for both the MA and BA degrees by the University of Wyoming.

Sincerely,



**Subject:** A program of great distinction

**Date:** Monday, December 5, 2016 at 4:37:40 PM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Alexander Hodel

**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office, Frieda E. Knobloch

The American Studies program @ UW is the premier research collective that directly confronts our rich heritage and vast cultural wealth. The bold interdisciplinary approach allows maximum focus on a student driven education. I personally am so thankful for this path forward as an artist and non-trad student. I have also seen first hand the immense advantages of crafting *my own education*.

*This undergrad program matters*

UW as a welcoming university should embrace the inclusive ideologies they claim to preserve. The American Studies degree is the epitome of such program; one that strives for encompassing more diversity in our student body population.

Moving forward I wish that this committee will see past the numbers and consider the ideas and cultural development that is critical for our future here in Wyoming.

To discontinue this undergrad program would undercut the most ambitious approach to higher education, set forth in with its creation in the 1950s.

Alexander Hodel  
*film photographer*



Dear Provost Miller and Dean Lutz,

I'm writing to you in response to the proposed closure of the B.A. program in American Studies at the University of Wyoming. I am a second year graduate student in the M.A. program, and I also received my undergraduate degree from the University of Wyoming. While I understand that changes are necessary at this current juncture, I am strongly opposed to the elimination of the B.A. program. As most are well-aware, the M.A. program is both highly functional and well-regarded. As a corollary, B.A. students are able to benefit from interactions with their M.A. counterparts. Speaking from direct experience, after having taken classes with B.A. program members, I can attest that the symbiosis is mutual.

I have also taken courses with most of the faculty in the program and given the quality and motivation of the professors and staff, it would seem prudent to allow them to follow through with their plan to increase undergraduate enrollment. The M.A. has allowed me to grow both personally and professionally, and it would be a disservice to not afford this opportunity to prospective undergraduate students. The American Studies program is highly interdisciplinary and provides students with myriad opportunities to think and write critically, all of which are sorely needed at this critical moment.

Again, I strongly urge you to abstain from eliminating the undergraduate major. It is my opinion that very little would be gained, and a tremendous amount would be permanently lost. I appreciate your time and consideration in this manner.

Sincerely,

Rhett Epler

**Subject:** Regarding the American Studies Bachelor: Taylor Stagner  
**Date:** Monday, December 5, 2016 at 2:51:13 PM Mountain Standard Time  
**From:** Taylor D Stagner  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office  
**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Paula Lutz and the Academic Affairs Office,

After coming to the University of Wyoming after three years at Central Wyoming College I was very unsure in what I wanted to accomplish in my undergrad. And at a lot of points I questioned my ability to even graduate. I had spent years taking as many classes as I could because learning had always been a comfort to me, I just didn't have a way to utilize all my seemingly unrelated knowledge. Theater, psychology, Native American studies were some of my passions but I felt very constrained and isolated in my classes. There was always another side or angle to look at a topic of discussion. I didn't fit in to any major that I tried, and honestly, I felt that there was something the matter with how I was approaching academia. Maybe college wasn't for me if I could not fit into a psychology, theater, or Native American box?

It is by pure coincidence that I fell into an American Studies class. In this class I found that there was a place for me in academia: everywhere. I no longer had to pretend that the subjects I studied did not relate to each other. I didn't have to limit myself going forward through the interdisciplinary nature of American Studies. This led to my immediate switch in major from a large psychology undergrad to American Studies. And without this switch I am fairly positive I would have dropped out of college; a place with seemly no spot for me to succeed effectively. I have now completed undergraduate research through the McNair program and I am on my way to graduation with a minor in Native American Studies. I'm positive I will one day have a graduate degree, and maybe even a doctorate. Learning has always been a passion of mine, and until the American Studies undergrad, I did not feel welcome academically at the University of Wyoming. To get rid of the American Studies undergrad is to shut the door on people who want to study the relationship between ideas, between themselves and the world, and, most importantly, between differences.

Please do not give up on lost undergrads like me who need interdisciplinary education as a way to frame their future.

Best wishes,  
Taylor Dawn Stagner

**Subject:** support for AmSt undergrad major  
**Date:** Monday, December 5, 2016 at 2:18:47 PM Mountain Standard Time  
**From:** John D. Dorst  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office  
**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Provost Miller,

I am a senior member of the UW American Studies faculty, with over thirty years of participating in the resurrection, growth, and, I believe, flourishing of this Program. Needless to say, as I look at retirement in the not too distant future, it saddens me deeply that our undergraduate degree is being considered for elimination. I know you have been receiving many expressions of support for our major from its faculty and students, past and present, and from friends beyond our walls. I will only add here a couple of thoughts about the thing that's highest on my list of arguments for preserving the undergraduate major.

Of all UW's ups and downs over the decades I've been here, what distresses me most is the steady, and in recent years accelerating, decline of a true liberal arts education as one feature of what our University has to offer. The design of the current USP curriculum and the growing dominance of STEM education are the clearest current manifestations of this decade's long turn away from the idea of a comprehensive, broad-based, and varied college education that was alive and well when I first came to the University. I realize, of course, that I am only describing broad trends in public higher education, of which UW is but one small example.

Along with all the practical arguments for preserving the American Studies undergraduate major – the very minor cost savings that would come with elimination, the potential weakening of the a healthy M.A Program, et cetera – I would like to make an admittedly less concrete argument. In the belief that, despite the general trends I refer to above, a comprehensive university *should* preserve at least some refuges for liberal arts education, the American Studies undergraduate major offers one of the best options. The combination of its flexibility and its interdisciplinarity give it a unique academic identity that fits those students who seek a college experience that is not driven entirely by how much money they think they will make in the future. We still do have students at UW, I believe many, who wish to be surprised, provoked, excited, challenged, and inspired by what they encounter in their majors, and are not here only to be trained for an occupation. American Studies has always been a place where such experiences are offered and encouraged. This does not make it a “boutique” or elitist major, but rather a place to prepare for a life that is full and productive in ways not reducible to lifetime earnings. Even though our numbers are not great, hence the current conversation, my argument is that the University would be doing the right thing

But Amer Studies  
hasn't  
participated



to preserve (and grow) at least some of the refuges where the liberal arts remain central, especially for those students who enter them through the door of the humanities.

I will only add that even if one *does* want to focus on quantifiable outcomes, the sort of education I am advocating can hold its own. A recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* demonstrates that, “Leaders and faculty in higher education should feel comfortable making the case that graduates from their humanities programs are not condemned to lives of penury.” The authors, a former provost of the University of Chicago and the Director of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, point out that the median income of former humanities B.A.s is around \$50,000, and their unemployment rate is well below that of those with only a high school diploma. Over 40% of humanities undergrad majors go on for advanced degrees, which leads to dramatic increases in lifetime earnings. Of course most students who major in humanities fields will not match engineers or physicians or lawyers in the cold metrics of monetary reward. But perhaps the most telling statistic is that ten years after graduating with the kind of degree UW American Studies offers, 90% of respondents reported real satisfaction in their jobs. As final decisions are being made, I hope this bigger picture is part of the conversation.

Sincerely,

John Dorst,  
Professor, American Studies

Frieda E. Knobloch

From: Luke Anderson <luke.anderson.1151@gmail.com>  
Sent: Monday, December 05, 2016 12:20 PM  
To: Frieda E. Knobloch  
Subject: American Studies BA

Hi Frieda,

I just CC'd you on two messages with my statement in defense of the American Studies BA. It would be such a loss!

Luke

Here is the statement:

My name is Luke Anderson and I graduated with a BA in American Studies in May of 2016. I understand that the BA program is in consideration for being cut. I also understand what a tough position the University is in during this historic budget crisis. I am sure that Dr. Frieda Knobloch has already provided the University with all the relevant financial statistics outlining how little money the University would actually save by cutting the program due to its small size and the fact that many faculty members operate across departments. I am writing to defend the program from a more personal perspective from a student who actually went through the American Studies BA program and graduated. First of all, I believe it is wrong to assume that smaller programs are not as valuable as larger programs at an institution. The success of a department or program cannot be reduced entirely to the number of undergraduate students. In spite of its small size, the American Studies program is an interdisciplinary program, so it does not exist in a vacuum. The impact of American Studies is felt in many other programs across the school, and it is not limited to the College of Arts and Sciences either. Through my undergraduate degree, I took classes in History, Earth Sciences, Engineering, and Geography just to name a few. Through my double major in American Studies and Environment and Natural Resources, I found the field of Historic Preservation, and I was chosen to present my research in the field at the Keith and Thyra Thompson Honors Convocation in the fall of 2015, something that would absolutely not have been possible without the American Studies BA program. Additionally, the internship I did for my American Studies BA was featured just in an article published in the fall edition of the College of Arts and Sciences magazine *Elevations*. If the University of Wyoming wishes to continue to produce unique undergraduate research, it would be losing a great asset by eliminating the American Studies BA. My undergraduate peers were producing compelling research in the areas of literature and education, food sustainability, and disability studies. In conclusion, I owe a debt of gratitude to the American Studies undergraduate program. I found refuge in the department when I felt I didn't fit in elsewhere in the University. It allowed me to study my specific interests, and my internship turned into a part-time job where I am now the Preservation Programs Assistant at the Alliance for Historic Wyoming, Wyoming's only statewide historic preservation nonprofit organization. I can truly say that I would not be in that position without American Studies. To conclude, American Studies is a wonderful addition to scholarship worldwide, and eliminating it would do a great disservice to dedicated undergraduate students looking to make an immediate difference in the world in which they live, which to me is reason enough to support the program. Wouldn't you agree?

---  
Luke Anderson  
Preservation Programs Assistant  
Alliance for Historic Wyoming

Monday, December 5, 2016

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to support the American Studies program and its continued existence as a major at the University of Wyoming. It may be small but I think that it will continue to help the University of Wyoming and the state if we continue the program. The reasons are that it can be a more practical degree path, the area of focus, and how attentive the faculty is to the students.

First this major, like a handful of others, has a path towards a practical approach. The summer internship that American Studies offers allows the student to go into the field and get some hands on experience that they design. It is not a one size fits all internship that does not change. The internship I am planning for this coming summer is to work with the Wyoming Military Department with their discrimination data that they have already collected. Other students have had different internships, like restoring historic buildings within the state. The American Studies program lets you tailor your degree to what you want to after college. This allows for the students that would not complete their degree otherwise to do so and have a general idea of how to apply what they have learned. While other, larger programs are just as broad with the classes and opportunities they offer, ours has an applied spin to it. My first program was psychology and it was a broad field. Adding American Studies helped me focus on what I wanted to do.

The second reason is that the area of focus that a student has is one that he or she chooses. This allows for the student to have an eye to the future while studying what they want to. Mine has changed since I have joined the program. The area of focus allows the student to focus on their strengths and build



upon them. Other programs offer a choice for a variety of their requirements but none come close to the breadth and specificity that an American Studies focus can have.

The final reason I will talk about is that the program can pay more attention to its students. Dr. Knobloch and Dr. Adelt have helped me tremendously since I have joined the program by helping me calm down or think issues through by offering another perspective. Our program is small but we support each other. Sophie Beck, our secretary, sometimes has snacks or lunch in the kitchen for us as well as keeping the coffee and tea supply constant. Sometimes that support is what can keep someone in college or motivated to stay consistent about college. There is a high student to faculty ratio and this allows for a more connected, supportive environment for the students. This program has kept my mind focused on finishing my degree with as few breaks as possible. Many find the program later in their time as students. The size of the program allows the faculty to meet the needs of its students and give them the opportunity to complete a degree that they may not have otherwise.

Personally, this program has helped me clarify what I want to do later in life, even if I do not get into grad school. This program has been like a family to me. We help each other and we try to help the community when possible. At the Big Event, a few of the students in the program, both grad and undergrad, formed a group and helped out. I am planning on continuing that for the next Big Event. Sophie and Dr. Knobloch has been an ear to my issues and concerns. Dr. Dorst helped me expand my horizons with his Visual Ethnographies class and allowed me to think more precisely. Dr. Adelt has been a great advisor and has helped me through deciding on what my degree path should be. I hit a bit of a confusing rock a few semesters ago and Dr. Adelt and Dr. Knobloch helped me through it.

Monday, December 5, 2016

The American Studies program should be retained because of the practical approach that it uses, the area of focus unique to each student, and the attention that the faculty can give their students. We may be a small program but I think we should retain it for the students that will benefit from it.

Thank you for your time,

Britney A. Bartz

Frieda E. Knobloch

---

**From:** Mick Gidley <G.M.Gidley@leeds.ac.uk>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 05, 2016 8:58 AM  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz; Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Subject:** BA Program in American Studies

Professor Paula Lutz  
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Wyoming  
Laramie  
WY 82071  
USA  
[Paula.lutz@uwyo.edu](mailto:Paula.lutz@uwyo.edu)

December 3, 2016

Dear Dean Lutz,

**BA program in American Studies**

In 2005 I was honoured to serve as the William Robertson Coe Distinguished Visiting Professor of American Studies at the University of Wyoming. I taught American Studies undergraduate and Masters students, had an office in the American Studies building, and participated in American Studies outreach events mounted in Laramie and elsewhere in the state. Particularly memorable for me was a conference for former US Peace Corps volunteers at which it was obvious that these men and women were keen both to share their diverse international experiences and to learn more about how their service had reflected and embodied American values and US government policies.

One of the reasons I was keen to accept the offer of the Coe-funded position was that the American Studies program at the University of Wyoming has long been held in high regard by scholars in the world-wide American Studies community. For example, when I was a member of the Executive Committee of the British Association for American Studies, we were eager to run a scheme whereby young UK scholars could become teaching assistants while studying for an MA in Wyoming. It is worth mentioning that at the same meeting our committee rejected two similar schemes proposed by larger US institutions. Of course, one of the reasons for this high regard is that each of the Faculty at Wyoming has attained a level of scholarly eminence in his or her particular area of the field. But it is also because the *program*, as such, has an excellent educational reputation. When, for example, Professor Sandeen was awarded the Mary C. Turpie prize by the US American Studies Association (ASA) in 2002, it was because the ASA recognized that the Wyoming program, despite its relatively small size, demonstrates the true inter-disciplinarity that is a hallmark of the best American Studies.

I was shocked and saddened to hear that there is a proposal to close the BA program. In my opinion – an opinion based, I admit, on only one cohort of students – native Wyoming students greatly benefit from exposure to the inter-disciplinary approaches to their own history and culture manifested in the program. But my main concern is for the international students who participate in the American Studies BA program. I was once an international student myself – at the University of Chicago, in the 1960s – and can vouch for the value of the opportunity to study one's host country from a structured, evidence-based viewpoint while one is also absorbing,



inevitably in an haphazard manner, the raw sights and sounds of the surrounding world. For the international student, the American Studies program provides knowledge and perspective unobtainable in any other way. The relative autonomy of the Wyoming American Studies program enables, too, the recruitment of most of these international students. (While I was in Laramie, one course included two Russians among the international students, their presence providing a totally new experience for me.) I know there are other ways of recruiting international students and I am sure that UW appreciates such students as much as comparable HE institutions do, but it would still be a pity to lose those there specifically as a result of the BA American Studies program.

I sincerely hope that the various relevant committees of the University will ultimately agree to continue to support a program that, when all is said and done, has been a success for over sixty years. Please excuse the emotional element in this letter, but I feel I have an almost personal investment in the continuing success of the Wyoming American Studies BA. For the same reason, I would be most grateful if you could let me know, in however brief a form, the nature of the final decision.

Yours truly,

Mick Gidley  
Emeritus Professor of American Literature & Culture  
University of Leeds  
Leeds LS2 9JT  
England  
UK  
[g.m.gidley@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:g.m.gidley@leeds.ac.uk)

**Subject:** In support of the American Studies BA  
**Date:** Monday, December 5, 2016 at 8:15:03 AM Mountain Standard Time  
**From:** Carly-Ann Anderson  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office, Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Attachments:** Letter of Support\_AMST BA.pdf

Dear Dean Lutz and Dr. Miller,

Please find attached a letter of support for the American Studies BA from the Alliance for Historic Wyoming. The text of my letter is also included below in this email.

Thank you for your time,

Carly-Ann Anderson



Carly-Ann Anderson, *Executive Director*

**Alliance for Historic Wyoming**

207 E. Grand Avenue

Laramie, WY 82070

307-333-3508

[ExecDirector@HistoricWyoming.org](mailto:ExecDirector@HistoricWyoming.org)

[www.HistoricWyoming.org](http://www.HistoricWyoming.org)

[Sign up for our e-newsletter](#)

[Support the Alliance today!](#)

Dear Dean Lutz and Dr. Miller,

On behalf of the Alliance for Historic Wyoming, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting Wyoming's historic places and spaces, I would like to express my support for the American Studies BA. As a nonprofit, we consider ourselves lucky to be based in Laramie with access to the University and all of the benefits that brings to a community. One of our strongest partnerships has been with the American Studies program at the University of Wyoming. Our past president, Mary Humstone, taught in the department for many years, folklorist Andrea Graham serves on our board of directors, and our former executive director, Hilery Walker Lindmier, and I are both graduates of the MA program.

Dr. Knobloch, and before her Dr. Sandeen, have been supportive of sponsoring internships and joint programming to enhance the interdisciplinary and immersive nature of the American Studies program. We are pleased to have been able to offer these internships, and find that American Studies undergraduates are astute, well-rounded, eager, and prepared to excel working both independently and as team members. This is a direct reflection of the strength of the American Studies undergraduate degree program.

One of the most valuable aspects of a degree in American Studies is the flexibility and interdisciplinary opportunities it offers. The American Studies faculty weaves together lessons, talent, knowledge and experiences available across the campus and beyond to further the mission of their program. By providing careful guidance to a small number of students, they are able to foster a meaningful education that truly prepares their graduates for work in the public sector or wherever they may choose to go.

One of our most recent interns was Luke Anderson, who was entering his senior year in American Studies and Environment and Natural Resources. Luke came to the American Studies internship program interested in historic preservation in Wyoming, and we are thankful to have been paired with him. His coursework in American Studies prepared him well for understanding cultural resource management, public sector outreach, and grant-writing and he hit the ground running with his internship. By the end of the summer, Luke had organized a preservation workshop, participated in board meetings, reformatted one of our grant programs, and rebuilt our website to better suit our needs.

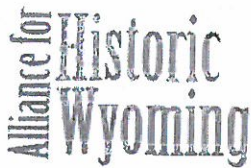
Luke approaches his work with professionalism and candor that I believe was fostered by his experiences with the American Studies program. We are thrilled to be able to keep him on as our Preservation Programs Assistant, and know that he will do well in applying to graduate school or pursuing a career because he has received a high quality education, and because he took advantage of all of the opportunities available to him from the University of Wyoming American Studies BA. We urge you to please reconsider the elimination of this program which is fostering amazing students.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Carly-Ann Anderson  
Executive Director





## Protecting Wyoming's Historic Places and Spaces

Julia Stuble (Lander) • Thom Tisthammer (Bellvue, CO) • Paul Irish (Laramie)  
Andrea Graham (Laramie) • Trish Ullery-Whitaker (Kaycee) • David Vitek (Pinedale)  
Audrey Cotherman (Casper) • Mary Humstone (Fort Collins, CO)

207 E. Grand Ave. | Laramie, WY, 82070 | 307.333.3508 | [ExecDirector@HistoricWyoming.org](mailto:ExecDirector@HistoricWyoming.org) | [www.HistoricWyoming.org](http://www.HistoricWyoming.org)

Dean Paula Lutz, College of Arts and Sciences  
Provost Dr. Kate Miller  
University of Wyoming  
1000 E. University Avenue  
Laramie, WY 82071

December 5, 2016

Dear Dean Lutz and Dr. Miller,

On behalf of the Alliance for Historic Wyoming, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting Wyoming's historic places and spaces, I would like to express my support for the American Studies BA. As a nonprofit, we consider ourselves lucky to be based in Laramie with access to the University and all of the benefits that brings to a community. One of our strongest partnerships has been with the American Studies program at the University of Wyoming. Our past president, Mary Humstone, taught in the department for many years, folklorist Andrea Graham serves on our board of directors, and our former executive director, Hilery Walker Lindmier, and I are both graduates of the MA program.

Dr. Knobloch, and before her Dr. Sandeen, have been supportive of sponsoring internships and joint programming to enhance the interdisciplinary and immersive nature of the American Studies program. We are pleased to have been able to offer these internships, and find that American Studies undergraduates are astute, well-rounded, eager, and prepared to excel working both independently and as team members. This is a direct reflection of the strength of the American Studies undergraduate degree program.

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Luke approaches his work with professionalism and candor that I believe was fostered by his experiences with the American Studies program. We are thrilled to be able to keep him on as our Preservation Programs Assistant, and know that he will do well in applying to graduate school or pursuing a career because he has received a high quality education, and because he took advantage of all of the opportunities available to him from the University of Wyoming American Studies BA. We urge you to please reconsider the elimination of this program which is fostering amazing students.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you for your time.  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carly-Ann Anderson".

Carly-Ann Anderson  
Executive Director

**Frieda E. Knobloch**

---

**From:** Maya Angelina Adelt  
**Sent:** Monday, December 05, 2016 1:03 AM  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office  
**Cc:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Subject:** Review of the American Studies BA program

Dear Provost Miller,

I'm writing to ask you to seriously consider keeping the American Studies BA program. I am a freshman American Studies major, and I have already witnessed the significance this program has within our university.

I became an American Studies major after some resistance – my father is an American Studies professor and I was determined to do something different. I looked into several of the BA programs offered here, including anthropology, art history, English, and history, and felt like none of them quite fit my goals for my undergraduate study. I wanted a liberal arts degree with a broad scope, but also opportunities to focus on my interests. I didn't want to be required to take a restrictive curriculum that might not have value to me. Most importantly, I wanted to learn to engage with the world in a critical manner. I wanted my education to aid me with my lifelong quest of understanding the interconnectedness and complexity of human experiences.

I believe the purpose of a university is to offer a course of study to match every student's goals. Humanities programs are an essential part of this framework – they are for those of us whose goals are to learn for the sake of learning, to cultivate our minds, to call assumptions into question. The American Studies program does an excellent job in helping its students attain their goals. I believe this major offers its students skills which can be applied to every path they choose in life: critical thinking, drawing connections, understanding underlying patterns.

Please think about keeping this option open to UW undergraduates. American Studies graduates – and humanities graduates in general – make meaningful contributions to the world thanks to an education which enables them to look beyond the surface.

Thank you for your consideration.

Maya Adelt



**Subject:** American Studies BA

**Date:** Sunday, December 4, 2016 at 11:12:52 PM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Emma Grace Thielk

**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office, Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Ms. Miller & Ms. Lutz,

Hello, my name is Emma Thielk. I am a junior here at University of Wyoming. I am writing this letter because my declared major, American Studies, is up for elimination. This makes me sad because being an American Studies major has made my college experience even better.

I came to the University as a Freshman in the Fall of 2014. Unlike most American Studies majors, I declared it during the summer after graduating high school. After doing countless research and meeting with the American Studies and History departments during the summer, I knew that American Studies was the perfect major for me for countless reasons. One of them is the fact that the departments is so small. I didn't feel like I was just "one of the many" but instead my college experience from day one was tailored to me. I knew the professors and they all said hello when I would go into the Cooper House. The openness of American Studies also helped greatly with emailing and advising. I never had to worry about not getting a reply from anyone in American Studies; everyone responded quickly. Advising was also nice with such a small major because I feel like my advisors genuinely care about me and really helped me to take classes that interested me and will meet my future goals.

What drew me to American Studies was how diverse it was. My future goal is to work in a museum. I am also minoring in Museum Studies which will help me to achieve this goal as well. American Studies allows me to take a wide variety of classes spanning multiple departments which is helping me to become more well-rounded for the future. I feel that by choosing American Studies over History will set me apart from the many History majors not only at University of Wyoming, but at other schools as well.

Everyone is so supportive in American Studies. My story with American Studies is a nontraditional one, but I would not have succeeded as much in college as I have without American Studies.

Thank you for your time and consideration of keeping the American Studies BA program.



Sincerely,

Emma Thielk

**Subject:** Support for American Studies Program BA  
**Date:** Sunday, December 4, 2016 at 6:06:03 PM Mountain Standard Time  
**From:** Krista Park  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office  
**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Dean Paula Lutz and Provost Kate Miller,

I graduated from the American Studies MA Program in 2001 and went on to study American Studies at the University of Maryland, where I eventually earned my PhD. I am now a GS-14 Federal Employee at the US Census Bureau where I work on resource management (primarily budget and staffing) for the Research and Methodology Directorate at the agency.

I was a graduate assistant at the University of Wyoming, and I taught undergraduate American Studies courses at the University of Maryland.

As a graduate student, the learning community at the University of Wyoming gave me a solid foundation in a broad range of approaches to our interdisciplinary field. Due to the large international exchange program, I was one of the most aware of the international aspects of American Studies when I arrived at the University of Maryland. Due to the well-constructed joint undergraduate-graduate classes and well thought out approach incorporating Graduate Student teaching at Wyoming, I was able to suggest curriculum changes to improve the efficiency of the Maryland program.

The presence of an undergraduate program in American Studies alongside our graduate program also encouraged friendship and conversation among the students. The conversations I had with my students and classmates of all ages, but especially the Wyoming residents, helped me better understand the struggles of rural America when I returned to the East Coast for graduate school and eventually helped run the public participation aspects of the 2010 Census tabulation geography programs during my first five years at the Census Bureau. Those students' testimonies to me have, more recently, helped me start conversations with my current neighbors and coworkers about the economic and infrastructure struggles of people living in rural America.

The many non-traditional students or late major-change students in the American Studies program at the University of Wyoming also helped me to truly embrace inter-, multi-, and transdisciplinary academic approaches. One of my tasks in my current federal position is to coach people through the Federal application process (USAJobs and the agency's Human Resource staff who Qualify applicants). Due to my exposure to people with a broad range of academic backgrounds, which began at the University of Wyoming, I provide valued and sought-after advice to everyone from staff trying to shift from the career-limiting "Administrative" series to the "Professional" series to the most prestigious professors in statistical and survey methodology research who need to be "Qualified" to work as Schedule A (Expert) staff for the agency. I can do this task because my experiences at Wyoming helped me learn to piece people's real, lived experiences together into a coherent narrative that can be "read" by bureaucratic processes. The change-focused-reality of our country's and global economy's situation makes irregular recruitment patterns of the Wyoming American Studies program a strength that should be embraced not a problem. The reality of life is that we will all re-train multiple times, and my fellow students and program prepared me well for both my own career change and coaching others.

Please allow to the American Studies to continue as a gem. It truly is one of the best American Studies programs in the country, and it prepares a broad range of students to succeed in a complex world.

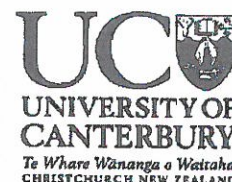
Thank you,

Krista Park  
6100 Westchester Pk Dr #502  
College Park, MD 20740

## School of Humanities and Creative Arts

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5 December 2016

Professor Paula Lutz  
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Wyoming  
Laramie, WY 82071

Dear Professor Lutz

### **American Studies: Institutional Review**

I am writing in support of the retention of the BA in American Studies as one of numerous international scholars who has had close ties with the Wyoming Program over many years.

I have had the honor and delight of visiting the American Studies Program at your campus on several occasions and once taught a short summer school course to American Studies Masters students. My department at the University of Canterbury, American Studies, had a student exchange with the Wyoming Program and Professor Sandeen kindly acted as an external examiner for several years for our Honors Program in American Studies. I have sat in on classes in American Studies and on Wyoming students' conference presentations at American Studies Association conferences. As a former Chair of the International Committee of the (US) American Studies Association, I can state with confidence the high regard in which the Laramie Program is held in both domestic and international circles.

The outreach of the Wyoming American Studies Program is, quite simply, phenomenal. On the international front, of which I can speak with in-depth knowledge, your faculty have gone to extensive efforts over years to build up connections with universities overseas and put Wyoming on the map in terms of the internationalization of American Studies. The Program is a leader in such endeavors, and was certainly well ahead of the game when the internationalization of the field became a predominant trend in the teaching and practice of American Studies world-wide. The time taken to establish such international connections through student exchanges and the trust and confidence which accompany their successful operation needs to be honored and maintained as it would be exceedingly difficult to reconstruct if removed or adversely affected in any way.

The stand-alone departmental model for American Studies has become the primary form of administrative structure in the United States, something which denotes the maturity of the field and the rigor required of training in it. Unfortunately we have been witnessing in tertiary education the diminishment of the humanities in particular, based on assumptions that its individual disciplines can be easily reduced and merged. This has mostly been a response to



declining state-funding right across the globe, and the New Zealand university sector has certainly experienced this over the past twenty years to the extent that our graduates' now have an exceedingly narrow and focused education, one that does not equip them sufficiently for the demands of a rapidly changing global economy and an increasingly ethnically diverse society. As a department in the Arts, American Studies provides a plethora of skills and an invaluable understanding of our complex society for students of all majors, especially those which are more vocationally oriented such as criminal justice, commerce and engineering.

I urge those involved with the institutional review at Wyoming to avoid the downward spiral that comes with departmental mergers and the deleterious impact these have on the standing of discrete fields of study, both disciplinary and interdisciplinary. The reduction in the choice of majors inevitably leads to a decline in student enrolments, and I sadly have to say that this has been the case at the University of Canterbury where the College of Arts, after years of erosion, is fighting for its very existence.

Yours sincerely

*ME Montgomery*

Dr Maureen E Montgomery  
Adjunct Associate Professor  
Department of History

December 4, 2016

Dear Provost Miller,

I'm writing to voice my support for the B.A. degree program in American Studies at the University of Wyoming.

I graduated from the American Studies M.A. program in May of 2014. During my time as a graduate student in the program, I had the privilege of interacting with American Studies undergraduates in a variety of settings, both formal and informal. As a graduate assistant working under faculty members teaching 2000-level AMST courses, I was able to read some of the program's undergraduates' writing and lead them in discussion. As a part of my own course of study, I enrolled in several dual-listed AMST classes alongside some of these undergraduates, allowing me to learn with (and from) them, collegially. In the informal community environment of the Cooper House, I spent time with many of the AMST undergraduates, engaging in conversation and doing homework together. And when my M.A. cohort graduated in 2014, four undergraduates walked across the stage to receive their degrees with us. This closeness between the American Studies program's graduate and undergraduate worlds is one of its greatest assets. It fosters community, and in doing so, it encourages a natural exchange of ideas, ultimately sharpening all students' abilities to articulate and refine their academic goals.

Without exception, all of the AMST undergraduates struck me as deeply thoughtful and eager to engage with complicated ideas across disciplinary boundaries. In many of our conversations, these undergraduates expressed a sentiment very similar to one voiced by those in my graduate cohort: profound excitement and gratitude at being able to find a genuinely interdisciplinary academic home that allowed them to study and integrate a variety of subjects in a rigorous and purposeful way. They were delighted with the academic opportunities afforded to them: personalized internship placements, opportunities to encounter new cultures, either through studying abroad or through close interaction with visiting international students, and the constant support of a passionate faculty dedicated to facilitating all students' pursuit of their individual academic objectives. In this, the American Studies B.A. provides its students with an educational environment that most students do not experience until graduate school.

Before returning to UW to pursue my M.A., I taught 8<sup>th</sup> grade English in Newcastle, Wyoming. As a member of the Wyoming educational system, part of my job was, of course, to teach in a way that would prepare my students to be "college- and career-ready" upon graduation. In pursuit of this goal, I worked hard to structure my English classes to be integrative: I wanted my students to understand that the concepts they were learning in their math, science, social studies, art, health, and music classes all had bearing on what they were learning in my classes. I wanted them to understand that after they left high school, they would encounter academic and professional environments that would demand that they be able to think critically across disciplinary lines. I was not alone in using this approach in my classroom; the focus on the importance of interdisciplinary education is heavily emphasized in current K-12 educational policy and practice, both at the state and national level. As Wyoming students who have been taught to think about ideas that do not fit neatly into discrete disciplinary categories graduate, many of them will be looking for academic homes that make room for this type of learning. The American Studies B.A. program has provided this academic home for many students in its 65-year history, and it is my genuine hope that it can continue to welcome undergraduate students in the years to come. Because of this, I urge you to reconsider the University's plan to close the American Studies B.A.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Best,

Molly Sublett





HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO  
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET  
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Dr. Paula Lutz  
Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences  
Department 3254, 1000 East University  
Laramie, WY 82070  
United States

Helsinki, December 4, 2016

Dear Dean Lutz,

It has come to the attention of the wider European community for American Studies that the B.A. program in American Studies at the University of Wyoming is under the threat of termination in the near future, to be consolidated with other bachelor's programs in the College of Arts and Sciences. As the President of the Nordic Association for American Studies and a board member of the European Association for American Studies, I urge the University of Wyoming to reconsider this decision.

Established already in the early 1950s, the American Studies program at the University of Wyoming is among the oldest and best-known in the whole world. During its 65-year history, the program has offered unique opportunities for its students and faculty in Wyoming, the United States, and in the international American Studies movement. Over the years, the program has attained wide international recognition and carries far more weight than the small size of its faculty may lead to think. The faculty of the program are all distinguished and internationally renowned scholars, who have built extensive scholarly networks both in the United States and abroad. I know that the scholarly work of the program's senior faculty—Eric Sandeen, John Dorst, and Frieda Knobloch—has been highly regarded in Europe for a long time, and that the younger faculty are extremely active and well on their way to become leaders in the American Studies community, both in the United States and internationally.



The B.A. program in American Studies at the University of Wyoming is also known as truly interdisciplinary, offering the best possible learning environment for international exchange students—including many from Europe—interested in the liberal arts and humanities. Its current autonomy as a full program facilitates support and development of international opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students from the United States and abroad. To my knowledge, the American Studies Program at the University of Wyoming also extends its work into the benefit of the whole state of Wyoming. For instance, the international students in the program regularly take historic preservation courses at the University of Wyoming. Furthermore, almost all international students enroll in classes giving them the opportunity to do field work in American culture. Thus the program has considerable reach in the culture of the whole state but furthermore affects the ways that international students come to conceive and understand American culture. To my understanding, the discontinuation of the B.A. program in American Studies would seriously damage the international reputation and academic allure of the University of Wyoming as a whole.

Sincerely yours,



Mikko Saikku, FT (Ph.D.)  
McDonnell Douglas Professor of American Studies  
President, Nordic Association for American Studies (NAAS)  
Board Member, European Association for American Studies (EAAS)

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## Department of North American Studies

## Faculty of Arts

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Dr. Paula Lutz

Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

University of Wyoming

Our reference

Your reference

Telephone

Date December 4,  
2016

Subject: BA American Studies

E-mail: [h.bak@let.ru.nl](mailto:h.bak@let.ru.nl)

Dear Dr. Lutz,

I am writing to you to express my profound concern about the proposal to abolish the BA program and degree in American Studies at the University of Wyoming. In its 65 years of existence as one of the oldest and preeminent programs in American Studies in the US the BA program at Wyoming has offered a strong, internally consistent and truly interdisciplinary program to train generations of American and international students in a prime set of transferable skills and the degree of intellectual flexibility and critical thinking which they need to cope with a regional, national and global world of astounding – and mounting – complexity. It has also been the necessary and foundational stepping stone for students ambitious to pursue advanced graduate studies in American Studies in Wyoming's excellent MA program.

For many years we have been sending our best undergraduate students from Radboud University in the Netherlands to study American Studies at Wyoming, and I can personally vouch for the strong personal, intellectual and professional impact the experience of doing AS at your university has had on and for our students. In addition to meeting and working with both American and a wide assortment of international students, many have profited immensely from the high intellectual and scholarly calibre of the program and the staff, and have benefited in particular from Wyoming's special offerings in historical preservation and the program's emphasis on public outreach, through field trips and excursions. For many of our Dutch students these have been unique and eye-opening experiences; in many cases the Wyoming experience has helped them to land excellent jobs, both in academe and in public and diplomatic service. (One of our Nijmegen students is currently doing his MA in American Studies at Wyoming.) In the BA at Wyoming our students have gained insights into American culture, society, politics and the special significance of Wyoming's unique environment, and gained an understanding of how learning must be understood as grounded in the local and the regional as well as in the national and global. This is a lesson pre-eminently offered by the BA program in American Studies at Wyoming, precisely because it can work from a strong

Radboud University Nijmegen





autonomous base as an independent degree-awarding program, with a highly qualified staff centered in both research and education in the field.

Here, also, I would in particular like to emphasize a dimension that may not be immediately apparent: the strong and wide resonance of the BA program in American Studies outside of Wyoming and the United States. As former President of the Dutch Association for American Studies, former board member and treasurer of the European Association for American Studies, former member of the International Committee of the American Studies Association, and a member of the Committee on Programs and Centers for American Studies of the ASA, I have for many decades been deeply aware – and impressed – by the immense outreach of the Wyoming program in the arena of international American Studies. In numerous meetings and debates on the state and development of American Studies both inside and outside of the US the undergraduate program and degree at Wyoming has often been in the limelight as a prime example of how to tackle problems in interdisciplinarity, student recruitment, professional prospects for undergraduates, internationalization – to name just a few of the areas in which the Wyoming program has been a pioneering and concretely successful model that American and European colleagues have been eager to emulate.

It is, no doubt, in large part to be attributed to its independent and autonomous status as BA program in American Studies that its staff and students have played so eminently visible and effective a part in international American Studies. I have personally been impressed by the academic acumen, intellectual astuteness and sense of professional purpose of the Wyoming students, both at home and abroad, at Nijmegen university on undergraduate exchange, or during their participation in RUDESA, the annual week-long American Studies Spring Academy jointly offered by the universities of Nijmegen, Duisburg-Essen in Germany, and the University of Wyoming. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that an important impulse to foster and maintain this high quality of professionalism, academic responsibility and purposeful orientation in the humanities, in both staff and students, is grounded in the inspiration, critical creativity and perseverance that comes with enjoying an autonomous status as a degree-lending program. It is, accordingly, with a strong sense of conviction and urgency that I want to ask you to reconsider your proposal to abolish the BA program in American Studies at your university. There is little to be gained, and everything to be lost, not in the last place the strong international radiance of one of your university's strongest and most effective programs.

Yours faithfully,



Prof. dr. Hans Bak  
Professor of American Literature and  
American Studies





Prof. Dr. K. Schmidt Lehrstuhl für Amerikanistik  
Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt 85071 Eichstätt

Prof. Paula Lutz  
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Wyoming

paula.lutz@uwyo.edu

December 3rd, 2016

### Letter of Support: BA in American Studies

Dear Prof. Lutz:

As chair of American Studies at your partner institution, the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany, and as a member of the board of directors of the Bavarian American Academy (BAA), please consider this letter of support regarding the B.A. program in American Studies at your institution.

The University of Wyoming and the Catholic University of Eichstätt/Ingolstadt have had a long-standing and very active exchange agreement; at this precise moment, my Wyoming colleague in American Studies, Prof. Eric Sandeen, is guest professor here in Eichstätt. We are team-teaching a graduate seminar on American documentary photography and collaborating on a series of further research and teaching projects. I, in turn, spent Fall 2016 in Laramie as an international fellow at the Wyoming Humanities Research Institute (WHRI), with strong affiliations to the American Studies department. So I am well acquainted with the Wyoming American Studies department which I consider a truly interdisciplinary program, offering the best environment for international exchange students interested in the liberal arts and humanities. I have witnessed how the international students enliven the American Studies community in Laramie and was surprised to see how large it truly is – it is not just growing number of U. S. students but a truly international roster of students that benefits from an education at your institution. It is also impressive to witness how American Studies extends its work into the state. For instance, many international students have taken historic preservation courses at UW and almost all have enrolled in a class which has given them the opportunity to do field work in American

#### Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaftliche Fakultät

Prof. Dr. Kerstin Schmidt  
Lehrstuhl für Amerikanistik  
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D-85072 Eichstätt

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Kerstin.Schmidt@ku.de  
www.ku.de/slf/anglistik/amerikanistik/

culture. Not only does the Program have considerable reach in the culture of the state but it affects the ways that international students understand everyday life in America which I consider the main objective in a globally oriented education.

I consider the WY American Studies program with its long and rich academic history a 'bedrock' of the international American Studies community and movement, and I say this as a scholar who, at an early time in her career, went to graduate school at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst, who has been an exchange professor at Weber State University of in your neighboring state Utah, and who has had research scholarships to Yale University, Indiana University/Bloomington, the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City, the Universities of Toronto and British Columbia in Canada, among others.

All in all, I consider the WYO American Studies program a unique and truly prominent learning environment, especially at the BA level, and so I am sending this letter of support without hesitation and in full knowledge of the career opportunities that the Wyoming American Studies presents to current and future students, both U.S. American and international.

Sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Kerstin Schmidt

Chair of American Studies and Full Professor of English



**Subject:** American Studies BA Program

**Date:** Friday, December 2, 2016 at 4:39:08 PM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Dan Schumacher

**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Dean Lutz and Provost Miller,

I am deeply saddened to hear that the American Studies BA is under review by the University of Wyoming for possible elimination as I am one of its products.

I entered the American Studies program in 2005 and graduated from the School of Arts and Sciences with my BA in American Studies in the Spring of 2008. I graduated Summa Cum Laude, a Phi Beta Kappa inductee, and one of the A&S' top twenty-five students that spring. Because of the topnotch level of education and expectation for excellence that I experienced in the American Studies BA program, I was accepted into Princeton Theological Seminary to pursue graduate level work before I had even received my degree from UW. There have been no greater influences in my academic career than Drs. Frieda Knobloch and John Dorst, both of whom invested numerous hours in my personal education — as only a smaller program will allow.

That is the great strength of this program — it's size. I fear that, perhaps, that is what has led you to put the American Studies BA on the proverbial chopping block; that you have mistaken the number of students for the quality of the education. Nothing could be further from the truth. The small number of students who commit themselves to a BA in American Studies are often some of the brightest, most gifted students the School of Arts and Sciences produces, because by pursuing a BA in American Studies they will inevitably work both closely with graduate level students and one-on-one with their professors. They will read books most undergraduate students at the University of Wyoming cannot even imagine undertaking and they will explore subjects that will push their minds to horizons they did not know possible. They will be better readers, better writers, and better thinkers than most of their classmates. I am not writing these things as an outsider, but from a place of experience. Other programs may draw larger populations of students, but it would be an incredible mistake to confuse quantity of students with the quality of student that is being produced.

I do not presume to understand all of the decisions or circumstances that have led the University to believe that cutting a program as exemplary or sturdy as the American Studies BA is healthy for the institution or for the future of the Arts and Sciences, but I fear it must be related to a "bottom line" and not the quality of student or class that is coming out of the Cooper House. The responsibility of your respective positions and the gravity of the decisions with which you are tasked must be great, but I would appeal to the academic in you not to cut this program. What could possibly be gained from cutting this program cannot compare to what will be lost.

Sincerely,

Dan Schumacher

BA American Studies, 2008

Dan Schumacher

Pastor

First Baptist Church, Colorado Springs

(719) 632-6603

[pastor@firstbaptist-cs.org](mailto:pastor@firstbaptist-cs.org)

**Subject:** American Studies BA

**Date:** Friday, December 2, 2016 at 11:03:04 AM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Andrea M. Graham

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office, Paula M. Lutz, Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Provost Miller,

I am writing in regard to the proposed elimination of the American Studies BA degree. I am an Associate AP Research Scientist in the program, working as a public sector folklorist and overseeing our internships, and teaching a class in public sector American Studies. The American Studies Program has a strong focus on training students for public sector work, in addition to our nationally-recognized academic strengths, and since that is my background I will direct my comments to that aspect of the program.

We have graduates of both our BA and MA programs working in cultural organizations across the state—for state parks and historic sites, museums, Main Street programs, arts organizations, and statewide nonprofits. Their coursework in historic preservation, folklife, museum studies, and public sector work in general has prepared them well to become leaders in the state's historic and cultural organizations. In addition, our internship program has provided invaluable hands-on training for both undergraduate and graduate students, as well as giving Wyoming government agencies and nonprofit organizations the benefit of extra help and fresh ideas. One of our students had an internship at the Old West Museum in Cheyenne as an undergraduate, went on to an out-of-state museum studies MA program, and is now back in Wyoming and on the staff of the museum; the museum director is also an American Studies graduate.

Our undergraduate majors are well-prepared to work in public-sector jobs, both government and nonprofit, as well as to go on to graduate programs (including our own). They have taken combined upper-level and graduate-level classes, and have benefited substantially from interactions with graduate students in our collegial program.

As a land-grant university, and the state's only four-year institution of higher education, we have a mission to teach Wyoming students, and to serve the state by educating them for jobs right here. The American Studies Program does exactly that. Eliminating the BA will not save the university any money, and will remove an interdisciplinary major that introduces students to a wide range of intellectual traditions, challenges them, prepares them for work in a variety of sectors and for future study, and benefits the state by helping to continue a tradition of Wyoming graduates serving their communities.

I strongly encourage you to keep and strengthen the American Studies BA at the University of Wyoming.

Sincerely,

Andrea Graham  
Folklife Specialist  
UW American Studies Program



**Frieda E. Knobloch**

---

**From:** David Nye <nye@sdu.dk>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 02, 2016 5:04 AM  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz  
**Cc:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Subject:** American Studies

Dean Paul Lutz  
College of Arts and Sciences  
December 2, 2016

Dear Dean Lutz,

I am writing you to explain how important Wyoming's American Studies BA and MA programs have been for the Center for American Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. We now are the largest such program in Denmark, with more than 200 hundred students. Every year several of them have gone to Wyoming for a term abroad. They have been uniformly pleased with the experience, which I can well understand, as we chose your program after careful evaluation of several where we might have established exchanges. We gave also had BA and MA students from Wyoming come here, and they have been a welcome addition to our program. We would hate to see them disappear! Your program has also attracted international students from Holland, Germany, and other European nations, and because it is interdisciplinary can attract a wide range of people.

I know the Wyoming faculty not only from conferences but also from a visit I made there along with 30 teachers from Europe who were being sent around the United States by the USIA. As an American in Denmark, I helped to bridge the cultural gap between that group and their hosts. The reception in Wyoming and the quality of the teaching was excellent. I also know Eric Sandeen and John Dorst because each of them has been a Fulbright in Denmark, where I for many years was a member of the Danish American Fulbright Board. These are outstanding faculty who fully deserved their awards.

I am fully aware of the economic pressures that academia faces in these years, but I urge you to consider several facts that might not easily enter a standard economic calculation.

- (1) The international branding that American Studies brings to your faculty.
- (2) The value of interdisciplinary programs that get faculty from different departments into dialogue, which can often lead to new research projects.
- (3) The attraction of such programs for people who may wish to make a gift to your university. American Studies in Wyoming benefitted early from the William Robertson Coe Endowment, and it has been my observation that such programs can tap sources that might not give as readily to History or English or one of the other participating disciplines that makes up the field. Raising endowment is not a zero sum game, in which the money will always come. Some donors will only give to science, for example, and others will only give to Wyoming history or to music. Is it wise at this time to signal to potential donors a declining university interest in the civilization of the United States?

There is much more I could write about Wyoming's American Studies program, but I will simply say on behalf of our faculty, that should your BA disappear, it will be a real loss for both your university and mine, and send a signal heard far from Laramie.

Sincerely Yours,

David E. Nye  
Professor of American Studies



**Founder of the Center for American Studies  
University of Southern Denmark**

**Subject:** American Studies BA

**Date:** Thursday, December 1, 2016 at 2:58:53 PM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Lora Bottinelli

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** paula.lutz@uwyo.ed, Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Dr Miller,

I am writing to you in support of the AMST BA program at UW. As an alum of the program, I feel compelled to share my perspective on the value of the program.

I graduated with my MA in AMST from UW in 2002. I have been successful in applying my degree, finding employment immediately after graduation. I have returned to UW to speak to the AMST program about my career experience and value of the education and professional credentialing received during my stay at the Cooper House. Just 4 years after leaving UW, I was promoted to be the Executive Director of an accredited museum that is part of a 4-year public college- the Ward Museum at Salisbury University.

I had earned my BA in AMST from Rutgers, and transferred to UW for graduate work. Like many of your UW AMST BA's I came to the major in my junior year. This is an incredibly common experience for AMST majors. I understand late major enrollment is a challenge for university recruitment and admissions staff, and ultimately the budget office.

Please consider how students finding their way to the major in junior and senior year is a positive factor for undergrad retention and student achievement. Those students struggling to find a home in other majors tend to thrive in AMST due to its interdisciplinary approach. It keeps them from transferring or dropping out of college all together. Further, AMST serves often as a dual major, which supports student achievement and adds incredible value to the undergrad experience. While the AMST BA may not drive admission stats, but it does support retention and student achievement goals of UW.

The quality of the UW AMST program is not in question. As I understand your challenge, it's a budgetary concern. Please consider the feedback you are receiving about the other values of this program and weigh them against the line item savings you will enjoy from the eliminated BA. There will be a loss to future students whom only experience AMST as part of a consolidated program. The visibility and stature of the UW AMST department has as one of its hallmarks that its alums to fund success while enrolled at UW and after graduation.

The program is not small, I expect you are discovering this from letters of support coming from public and private sector in support of its work. Why does this matter, the UW name has been carried far from Laramie through the impacts of the AMST program. The BA and the MA efforts contribute to this impact. Don't break it in half. Don't diminish one of your strongest outreach tools for UW.

Find a way to save the BA, and use the many previously unsung values of the program as part of your strategic initiatives to advance UW for future students. We have much to offer in forging a successful partnership.

Sincerely,

Lora Bottinelli, UW '02

Executive Director, Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University  
Salisbury, MD

Lora Bottinelli  
Executive Director  
Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, Salisbury University  
410-742-4988 x111

**Frieda E. Knobloch**

---

**From:** Madison Taylor Williams  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 01, 2016 10:57 AM  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz  
**Cc:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Subject:** American studies

Dear Paula,

I am writing to you in regards to the American studies bachelors program and was hoping that you would reconsider shutting down this program. While there may be a small number of graduates within the program it allows students much like myself who struggle with large classroom settings to be able to get an education. While the small classroom settings made getting my bachelors possible, I was also able to gain knowledge of the outside world through field trips to historic sites and guests lectures from authors such as Lucy Lippard who writes about many enviromental issues that effect our lives in Wyoming such as fracking through the artists point of view. I feel that it is very important to keep programs such as this one in the university because it allows much more creativity and hands on leaning for those students such like myself who struggle to learn in the normal classroom setting and for the many other students who wish to have a more creative and hands on college experience.

So again I would please ask you to reconsider shutting down the American studies bachelors program for the futures of the many more American studies graduates who will come through the University of Wyoming  
Thank you  
Madison Williams.

Get Outlook for iOS



**Subject:** American Studies at the University of Wyoming

**Date:** Thursday, December 1, 2016 at 10:44:08 AM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Peter Rodd

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

Dear Provost Kate Miller

It has come to my attention from staff members of the American Studies department that the University of Wyoming has plans to cut a portion of its American Studies programme. It would be an unfortunate turn of events if the recent links between that area of study at the University of Wyoming and academics such as myself here in the United Kingdom were put in jeopardy due to such a cut.

Best regards

Peter Rodd

# BAAS

BRITISH ASSOCIATION  
FOR AMERICAN STUDIES

Chair: Professor Brian Ward  
Northumbria University

Secretary: Dr Jenny Terry  
University of Durham

Treasurer: Dr Cara Rodway  
Eccles Centre for American Studies  
The British Library

November 30, 2016

Dear Professor Lutz,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the British Association for American Studies (BAAS) in strong support of the American Studies BA Program at the University of Wyoming, which I understand to be the subject of an internal review at present.

While I appreciate that there are many factors which will contribute to the University's decision about the future of the Program, I feel it is important that those making that decision should be left in no doubt that American Studies at Wyoming has long been internationally recognized as a leading, indeed pioneering, area of excellent interdisciplinary teaching and research. Since its foundation in the early 1950s and through a rebirth in the 1980s, American Studies at Wyoming has been a flagship program within the US and international American Studies community – one that has helped significantly to enhance the reputation of the University more generally.

The BA Program is at the heart of this reputation. It offers in-state, US, and international students an imaginatively blended education in arts, culture, humanities and social sciences, together with an emphasis on the global contexts within which the American experience is best understood. Moreover, it incorporates internship opportunities that allow students to apply their academic learning to an employment situation. This is precisely the kind of globally sensitive, inter- and multi-disciplinary, real world-oriented education which will give students the intellectual and practical skills to become informed, compassionate and productive citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

It would seem a tremendous shame to abandon a Program that clearly ticks so many of the right boxes for an effective modern "Arts and Humanities" degree, particularly in an area of study that has for many years been one of the University of Wyoming's most internationally recognized strengths. On behalf of BAAS, I would respectfully urge you and the University to support the BA in American Studies and allow the excellent teaching and learning being done by your faculty and students to continue.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Brian Ward  
[brian.ward@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:brian.ward@northumbria.ac.uk)  
cc: Frieda Knobloch

Dean Paula M. Lutz  
College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Wyoming  
Department .3254, 1000 East University  
Laramie, WY 82070

Jean-Paul Horsch  
Sibergstraat 42  
2593 SN The Hague, the Netherlands

Subject: Letter of support for the BA program in American Studies at UW

The Hague, December 1, 2016

Dear Dean Lutz:

It was an extremely sad moment for me when I heard that after 65 years the BA program in American Studies at the University of Wyoming might be coming to an end. The interdisciplinary nature of this special program and the uniqueness of Laramie and the state of Wyoming within the United States, were the main reasons for me, an international exchange student from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands, to study American Studies at UW for a semester in 2007.

I have deeply cherished my time at UW for many reasons, both personal and professional. The supportive, interdisciplinary academic environment was very inspiring to me as a young student. The teaching staff provided high-level courses and the Cooper House was an oasis for intellectual development with practical implications (I especially enjoyed a course with field trips on historic preservation in the West). I was also invited to a luncheon with Senator Alan Simpson by the Political Science Department, an event which made a profound impression on me. I wouldn't be where I am today, representing the U.S. government at the U.S. Embassy in The Hague, if it weren't for these kinds of transformative experiences I had at UW.

I also very much appreciated the on-campus contact with so many local students from Wyoming, an interest that I believe was entirely mutual. It brought me, as a Western European, in contact with a very different way of life in the American West, and gave the students from the state an insight into another culture. I believe this kind of contact and dialogue is essential for meaningful international understanding, something I also see reflected in the International Visitor Exchange Program (IVLP) which I coordinate for the U.S. Department of State.



Please allow me to urge you to reconsider your decision to close the American Studies BA program at UW. The impact it had on my life is hard to express in a short letter, but I do hope the program's strong suits as experienced by me and many others will remain available to both U.S. and international students who seek to research American culture in such a quintessential American place like Wyoming.

Sincerely,

Jean-Paul Horsch

Frieda E. Knobloch

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**From:** Subarno Chattarji <chattarji\_s@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 30, 2016 11:19 PM  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz  
**Cc:** Frieda E. Knobloch  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for the AMST BA

Dear Dean Lutz,

I have just learned that your office proposes to close the BA in American Studies Program at the University of Wyoming and merge it with other programs. I am dismayed and alarmed at this decision and am writing to express my strong support for the continuance of the BA American Studies Program.

My support arises out of my long association with the Program dating back to 2004-2005 when I had the honor of visiting your University to deliver a series of lectures. The lectures were a part of the Fulbright Occasional Lecturer Program (I was at La Salle University, Philadelphia, as a Fulbright Senior Research Fellow). Over the course of my stay and interactions with Professor Eric Sandeen, his colleagues, and students I was impressed by the level of commitment to American Studies as well as the engagement with a larger community in Wyoming and across the world. Much before the transnational turn in American Studies became academically significant the Program in Wyoming was truly interdisciplinary and interested in the ways in which the rest of the world thinks of the US and its impacts. I still recall long and informed conversations with students and faculty during my visit. Some of those conversations have continued over the past several years. I teach American Studies at the University of Delhi where it is a somewhat endangered area of study. My work is sustained by my connection and interaction with Programs such as the one offered by the University of Wyoming. It would be a great loss if the American Studies BA Program were to be closed and merged with a larger entity. Such a merger would, I believe, rob the program of its distinctive national and international character and would deprive scholars (and students) worldwide access to quality American Studies resources. In a globally interconnected world such a loss would diminish your University as well as our collective academic work.

I very much hope you will reconsider your proposal and I look forward to more interactions with American Studies at the University of Wyoming.

Warm regards,  
Subarno

Subarno Chattarji  
Associate Professor,  
Department of English,  
University of Delhi,  
Delhi 110 007, India.

[schattarji@english.du.ac.in](mailto:schattarji@english.du.ac.in)

<http://englishdu.ac.in/index.php/staff-pages/subarno-chattarji-d-phil-oxon/>  
<http://englishdu.ac.in/index.php/centers/center-for-studies-vocational/>



Professor Paula Lutz  
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Wyoming

Dear Professor Lutz

I understand that the University of Wyoming is considering closure of its BA in American Studies. Having known the programme for many years, I hope that you will take into account these comments in order to assist your decision-making.

Between 1993 and 2000, while I was Head of the School of American & Canadian Studies and Dean of Arts at the University of Nottingham, UK, I and my colleagues reached a view that the BA in American Studies at the University of Wyoming and its parent department were a rare combination of a programme that was rooted in its immediate and state-wide locality but with an international reach, the latter based on the reputation of the academic staff, the outlook of the UWY students who came to Nottingham and the education offered to our students on exchange in Laramie. In the following decade, while I was Nottingham's Pro-Vice-Chancellor [Vice-President] with responsibility for the University's international strategy of overseas campuses and high-quality academic partnerships, this view of UWY's American Studies programmes only strengthened, not least when UK institutions (and their Humanities departments, more than most) had to learn specific ways to prepare students for the world of work. We adapted some of the internship and placement projects that Professor Eric Sandeen and his colleagues made so central to their BA, while continuing to admire their commitment to the value of international student exchange in making students more employable and opening up their aspirations globally.

I was so impressed by the inter-disciplinary achievements of American Studies at UWY that when, in 2009, I took a similar post as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International) and Head of the College of Arts, Humanities & Law at the University of Leicester I encouraged our American Studies Centre to pursue the partnership. More specifically, other Leicester departments, in common, I know, with American Studies at UWY, energetically promoted to employers the added-value that expertise in heritage and conservation in BA degrees gave to students, together with, more generally, the extra skills that came with an inter-disciplinary BA. Even though the partnerships and overseas campuses that occupied much of my time at Nottingham and Leicester were often on a very large scale, the link with American Studies at UWY was a gem. I remained committed to it until retirement a short while ago.

I have had twenty-plus years of senior roles and many more as an academic and appreciate the pressures upon senior management. I hope, therefore, that you might take some note of an experience I had of restructuring at the University of Leicester that involved me in the curtailing of selected programmes and, eventually, closure of a unit. In spite of all the modeling we undertook, it was difficult to forecast the future and once

a key programme had gone, an erosion of related activities and loss of staff then occurred. The unfortunate outcome was that, as demands and expectations changed (yet again) in UK higher education, it was not possible to re-open and then kick-start the programmes in question. A strategy that had seemed valid at the time, proved to be short-sighted. I have taken some time to read your web-site, probably for the first time since I last visited Laramie and UWY. So much of what the University of Wyoming stands for in its headline mission statement is represented in your inter-disciplinary programme of American Studies.

I hope that my very high opinion of the BA in American Studies at the University of Wyoming may help to persuade you to maintain your support.

Yours sincerely

*Douglas Tallack*

Emeritus Professor of American Studies  
University of Leicester, UK

Copy: Frieda Knobloch

30 November 2016

Kate Miller, Provost  
University of Wyoming

Dear Provost Miller:

I was alarmed to learn that you are considering closing the BA degree program in American Studies and I am writing to urge you and your colleagues not to take this action.

In 2009 I retired after spending my entire professional career as a Professor of American Studies at the University of California, Davis. My American Studies degrees (see my brief bio, attached) were all interdisciplinary, and our American Studies Program (now department) at UC Davis is an undergraduate program. So I have been immersed in undergraduate teaching for nearly forty years, and I want to make the case for the important role of BA programs in American Studies.

I am sure you are getting letters like mine that will make various arguments in favor of keeping the Wyoming BA program, but I want to focus here (as briefly as I can) on the issue of interdisciplinary education for undergraduates.

At the heart of the American Studies "project," founded in the 1930s, is genuine interdisciplinarity. Everyone now claims to be "interdisciplinary," I know, but most of those claims are merely rhetorical and not operationalized or practiced. It is common in Research I universities to believe that students should take disciplinary majors as undergraduates and only then, as graduate students, add other disciplines to their repertoire. I think that view has things upside down. An undergraduate education is where students should develop the skill of *interdisciplinary thinking*, of how one can approach a discipline in search of ideas and methods useful in working on a particular project. In my experience, American Studies teachers are the most experienced and most thoughtful in the humanities and social sciences about this educational project of acquiring the skills of interdisciplinary thinking. While the university's organization communicates to students that disciplines are walled-off enclaves of knowledge, American Studies works on making clear the *connections* between ways of knowing the world.

You have a distinguished American Studies Program at Wyoming, and I know your faculty well. I know that they give their students, from their undergraduate majors to students acquiring their General Education in American Studies courses, the skills we now call "critical thinking," and it is a genuinely interdisciplinary critical thinking. In a university environment under pressure to show "added value" in individual courses and in whole curricula, the Wyoming American Studies faculty is in a very strong position to make the case for the undergraduate degree according to the criteria of added value, and I am sure they are.



As I said, I have taught undergraduate American Studies courses for nearly forty years. We in American Studies work with graduate students in the Cultural Studies Program, and over the years I have served on examination and dissertation committees in history, English, sociology, anthropology, psychology, communications, community studies, education, and geography. My heart, though, always was in the undergraduate teaching, and I still hear (through Facebook, mainly) from many former students who take the occasion to tell me how much they value the undergraduate American Studies education they received at UCDavis. Most did not go on to graduate school in American Studies, but many went to law school and a few even went to medical school. They are in all sorts of professions, but they take the occasion to tell me quite specifically what course or book they think about as they engage in problem-solving in their profession. What better testimony to the value of an undergraduate American Studies education is there than these stories? And I guarantee you that your Wyoming American Studies faculty have heard the same stories from their graduates.

Cordially,

JAY MECHLING

Professor Emeritus of American Studies

University of California, Davis

**Subject:** response to proposal to eliminate the American Studies B.A.

**Date:** Tuesday, November 29, 2016 at 11:25:39 AM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Ulrich Adelt

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Provost Miller,

I'm writing to you in response to the proposed closure of the B.A. program in American Studies at the University of Wyoming. I am an Associate Professor in the program and have been with UW since 2007.

While I understand that restructuring is necessary at the university, I think closing the B.A. is ill-advised, would do a grave disservice to our students without saving money and threaten to undermine one of the university's "pockets of excellence." The American Studies program is currently celebrating 65 years of existence and is nationally and globally known for its outstanding achievements in public sector work and transnational cultural studies; reducing it to an M.A. program would simultaneously prohibit undergraduate students from choosing a truly interdisciplinary major and tarnish the reputation of one of UW's pillars of humanities teaching and learning.

The undergraduate students we recruit in American Studies benefit from a well-funded and highly functional M.A. program, and we have been both successful in attracting some of the best students at UW and in supporting the retention of at-risk students. We are currently in the process of increasing our enrollment, discussing a 5-year B.A./M.A. program and possibilities to cooperate with community colleges and the Honors program for joint efforts in offering the B.A. My own experience with American Studies majors have been overwhelmingly positive, and I am proud to say that my daughter is an Honors Freshman at UW majoring in our program (she decided to major in American Studies after she realized that she could best pursue her own academic goals with us, despite being adamant that she wanted nothing to do with her father – this speaks to the breadth and diversity of our relatively small but mighty program).

As a truly interdisciplinary B.A. program, American Studies has a lot to offer for prospective undergraduate students in Wyoming. Our focus on diversity, critical thinking, the public sector, and transnational identities equips students for employment in various places and challenges the limited vocational-school model that has failed to meet the demands of a globalized and complex world. As a fellow American Studies scholar put it at the recent annual meeting in Denver, the question should not be "What can you do with an American Studies degree?" but rather "What can't you do with an American Studies degree?"

I urge you to reconsider the decision to eliminate the American Studies B.A. at the University of Wyoming. We have a lot to lose and nothing to gain, and by we I don't just mean the American Studies community but also the university as a whole.

Sincerely,

Ulrich Adelt

Dr. Ulrich Adelt  
Associate Professor  
American Studies and African American and Diaspora Studies  
The University of Wyoming  
Cooper House  
Dept. 4036, 1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, WY 82071  
(307) 766-3884  
(307) 766-3700 (fax)



**Subject:** Comment on AMST review

**Date:** Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at 10:20:53 AM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Robert McGregor Cawley

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** Paula M. Lutz, Frieda E. Knobloch

*I have been an adjunct faculty member in the American Studies (AMST) program since the late 1980s. I start with this disclaimer by way providing context for my comments. Read one way, of course, this is a polite way to say I have a bias. Read another way, it also provides evidence of the extent to which I think the folks in AMST have been making a significant contribution to the University community. Simply put, my adjunct status is voluntary and if I didn't think the program was valuable, I could have walked away a long time ago.*

*I realize the central issue at question with this process is the BA program in AMST, not the program itself. At the same time, the approach being used in this process strikes me as coming close to the adage about cutting off a nose to spite a face. It is certainly the case that the AMST BA program has had few numbers over the past few years. But it is also the case that the regular faculty in AMST have maintained one of the strongest MA programs on campus as well as providing courses and valuable support to a network of other programs on campus. Once again, two possible interpretations present themselves here. One is that eliminating the BA would not detract from the other activities carried out by the program faculty. The other is that the BA program is not really costing the University anything.*

*To put the second interpretation into a more academic phrasing, we could think of the AMST BA in terms of the Pareto Optimal. The Pareto principle is often used in the real world of policy as both a decision approach and an assessment approach. Although a bit more complicated, the essence of the Pareto Optimal is: a*



*policy/decision/program is good as long as no one is harmed by it and at least one person is benefited. Seems to me that the AMST BA passes this test easily. No one would be harmed by continuing the program and those students, few though they may be, who receive the degree are benefited by it.*

*I have one other comment which is both based on my history with the program and a bit sensitive in nature. As the documentation for the review indicates, the leadership of AMST has changed relatively recently. While there are a variety of factors involved, the fact of the matter is that the old leadership of AMST tended to be less attentive to the BA program than was warranted, at least from our current perspective. In contrast, the current leadership has developed a series of proposals which have the possibility for increasing the number of students in the BA program. On this basis, I would suggest two questions. First, does it really make sense to penalize the current faculty in the program for lack of attention to the BA by the old leadership? Second, since the current BA program costs the University virtually nothing, what harm would be caused by allowing the current leadership to implement these proposals? If the proposals work, then the BA program will blossom. If they do not work, the program can be eliminated in a subsequent review process.*

*Gregg Cawley  
Professor, Political Science.*





SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION PROGRAM  
McWhinnie Hall 210 • Dept. 3374  
1000 E. University Ave. • Laramie, WY 82071-3374  
phone: (307) 766-3250 • fax: (307) 766-2018  
email: mhelmsin@uwyo.edu

December 8, 2016

Dr. Paula Lutz  
Dean, College of Arts & Sciences  
University of Wyoming  
1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, WY 82072

Dear Dean Lutz:

I am writing to you, Dean Lutz, and other interested parties, to share my concerns about proposed program changes within American Studies here at the University of Wyoming. As coordinator of the Secondary Social Studies Education (SSSE) Program in our university's College of Education, I help oversee the preparation of social studies teachers who, upon successful completion of their program, are recommended for state certification from Wyoming's Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB) to teach all social studies subject areas in Wyoming's middle, junior high, and senior high schools. While many of the program's graduates do enter classrooms in Wyoming and Colorado, several other graduates pursue teaching careers in other states or pursue careers that utilize their preparation in social studies education for teaching in non-school settings, such as museums, state and national parks, and other spaces of informal education. In service of these occupational demands, the fields of American Studies and social studies education share many shared purposes: (1) cultivating an appreciation of the history, heritage, and cultural landscapes of America, broadly defined; (2) engaging in reading, writing, research, and critical thinking that enable a nuanced understanding of America's past, present, and future in local, regional, national, and transnational contexts; (3) equipping students with experiences to collaborate with schools, communities, and other public institutions to support local and regional historical and natural resources through historic preservation, traditional arts and folkways, cultural programming, to name just a few. Universities that have strong traditions of educating teachers for social studies subject areas have programs and departments in American Studies, including a long history here at UW of partnerships between American Studies and the preparation of social studies teachers in our College of Education. Reducing, weakening, and/or eliminating the teaching and scholarship of American Studies at the University of Wyoming prevents expected growth and progress in the dimensions I outline below.

1. American Studies courses and faculty exemplify the very best practices in teaching that our social studies candidates can observe and implement for their own teaching. As social studies education in K-12 classrooms demands an interdisciplinary integration of history, geography, the arts, literature, and the social sciences for exploring broad themes and issues through inquiry and deliberation for engaged citizenship, American Studies is one of the primary fields that models such curriculum and instruction. Schools in Wyoming (and in most other states) continue to race towards adopting state and national standards that prioritize reading, writing, and related literacy skills within English language arts and social studies curricula. As such, our students at UW remain in need of learning how to achieve this instructional integration that American Studies best exemplifies. Sharing the talents and creative works of our American Studies faculty with social studies education candidates enables UW's SSSE program to meet continued benchmarks of distinction in national accreditation through the National Council of the Social Studies.

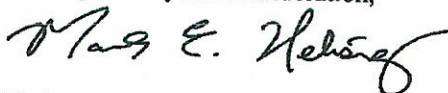


2. Faculty in American Studies currently offer a number of courses at the undergraduate and graduate level that provide rich learning opportunities for our students pursuing teaching careers in social studies. Superintendent Balow, Wyoming's chief officer for overseeing education and our schools, has issued recent calls for bolstering and expanding civic education in schools through robust curriculum development that puts citizenship once again at the forefront as the democratic mission of our public schools. American Studies is a unit on campus that can best meet this call for engaged citizenship through the field's own intellectual endeavors that require no new configuration, deliberation, or expansion. If American Studies loses its presence amongst our undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students across campus, UW's ability to express a strong commitment to civic education and engaged citizenship will be significantly compromised. American Studies faculty and students (at all levels) offer some of the most publicly engaged scholarship. Losing this presence and image at a time when the university must be vigilant at maintaining its engagement with the people of Wyoming would be problematic on many levels. Furthermore, the scholarship of American Studies faculty opens doors for future collaboration that will shrink away if programming in American Studies is reduced or eliminated. For example, as the College of Education embarks upon a significant statewide initiative for supporting energy education in Wyoming's K-12 schools, students from both AMST and SSSE can draw on the work of our American Studies faculty to shape curriculum on cultural landscapes, nature, wilderness, and human-environment interactions through both historical and contemporary lenses that will undoubtedly mark UW's Energy Education Initiative as the premiere framework in the U.S. for an integrated STEM/social studies model in energy education.

3. I, along with faculty in Secondary Education and American Studies, have worked over the past two years to envision future pathways that will allow UW's students to complete programs of study in both American Studies and Secondary Social Studies Education. Wyoming's PTSB in Cheyenne have apprised us positively of this options' feasibility and it is an attractive option for students in a time when many new undergraduate students are apprehensive about pursuing an education degree due to public perceptions of teaching and public schools in the United States. Efforts to recruit and retain students in the College of Education's teacher preparation programs should not occur in isolation. Rather, this moment of reorganization and re-visioning for UW should bring faculty and academic units together to explore how they can mutually support each other, grow enrollment, and offer opportunities for students to maximize their undergraduate career at UW by offering multiple, complementary pathways of study. Many of the academically strongest students whom I have advised at UW consider declaring their major program of study in Secondary Social Studies Education, only to leave the program early in their time at UW because they desire more intellectual and scholarly opportunities within the College of Arts & Sciences. I sense a similar scenario exists for students in the College of Arts & Sciences who wish to study a field that is steeped in humanistic inquiry, such as American Studies, only to confront a concern that such a course of study is perceived as "unemployable." Retaining both programs as they currently exist in the good faith of articulating mobile pathways across programs for students can only result in boosting our efforts to recruit and retain talented high school graduates for UW.

Rather than eliminate American Studies I urge interested parties charged with program review at UW to establish a timeframe by which faculty and staff across the colleges can bring to fruition these plans for collaborative academic efforts between American Studies and secondary social studies education.

Thank you for your consideration,



Mark Helmsing  
Social Studies Education Program Coordinator  
Department of Secondary Education



# American Studies, BA



University of Wyoming

## JUNIOR YEAR

Fall Semester				Hrs	Spring Semester		Hrs
AMST	2010	Introduction to American Studies *		3	Theme Courses **		9
AMST	2110	Cultural Diversity in America *		3	Upper Division AMST Core Course **		3
		Theme Courses **		6	Electives ***		3
		Upper Division AMST Core Course **		3			
TOTAL				15	TOTAL		15

## SENIOR YEAR

Fall Semester				Hrs	Spring Semester				Hrs
AMST	4010	Independent Study **		3	AMST	4985	Senior Seminar *	C3	3
		OR					Upper Division Electives		12
AMST	4970	Internship (3 hrs) **							
		Theme Courses **		3					
		Upper Division AMST Core Course **		3					
		Electives ***		6					
TOTAL				<u>15</u>	TOTAL				<u>15</u>

TOTAL UW HOURS 60

TOTAL UW BA DEGREE HOURS 120

Successful completion of the 2+2 plan requires that a student remain continuously enrolled and graduate with the associate's degree from his or her respective community college. • This is a guide for course work in the major; actual course sequence may vary by student. Please refer to the online student degree evaluation. • Not all courses are offered every semester and some electives may have prerequisites. Students should review the course descriptions in the catalogs of their respective institutions and consult with their academic advisor to plan accordingly. • Academic plans and course schedules may need to be altered if ACT or Math Placement scores require a student to take pre-college courses (e.g., MATH 0900, 0921, or 0925) before taking required math or English courses.

### University of Wyoming requirements:

Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to graduate. • Students must complete 42 hours of upper division (3000-level or above) coursework, 30 of which must be from the University of Wyoming. • Courses must be taken for a letter grade unless offered only for S/U.

### UW College of Arts and Sciences requirements:

Students must take two "core" courses in addition to UW's University Studies Program requirements: Diversity in the United States (ASD) and Global Awareness (ASG). • No more than 60 hours in the major subject may be used toward the 120 credit hours required for graduation. • At least 30 hours in the major subject must be completed with a grade of C or better (the major may require more).

### American Studies Program Notes:

The American Studies major lends itself to completion in the junior and senior years, thus accommodating transfer students and students that change majors. • Because American Studies is considered an international field with scholars all over the world and the US has transnational influence, students are strongly encouraged to consider participating in an international exchange opportunity and completing two full years of foreign language coursework.

# American Studies, BA



## University of Wyoming

### American Studies Program Notes con't:

**\* Foundation Courses:** Students will take 12 hours of courses to include:

- AMST 2010 Introduction to American Studies (3 hrs)
- AMST 2110 Cultural Diversity in America (3 hrs)

▪ Two (2) additional lower-level, interdisciplinary courses (6 hrs) selected in consultation with an academic advisor. In the past, courses fulfilling these requirements have included: AAST 1000 (Introduction to African American Studies), AAST/INST 2240 (Introduction to African Studies), AIST/SOC 1350 (American Indians in Contemporary Society), LTST 1100 (Introduction to Chicano Studies), LTST 1300 (Introduction to Latina/o Studies), WMST 1080 (Introduction to Women's Studies), ENR 2000 (Environment and Society), HIST 1210 (United States History I), HIST 1211 (U.S. to 1865), HIST 1220 (United States History II), HIST 1221 (U.S. from 1865), and RELI 1000 (Introduction to Religion). Other courses may be available and an academic advisor can help identify those courses that best meet students' interests and career goals. It is also possible that the courses may fulfill a University Studies Program (USP) requirement. Academic advisors will be able to assist in this identification as well.

**\*\* Concentration Courses:** Students will take 27 hours of courses to include:

- *Core Courses* (9 hrs): Three (3) American Studies upper division courses, excluding the senior seminar.

▪ *Theme Courses* (18 hrs): Students will work with their academic advisor in their junior year (or after completion of 60 hours of course work toward graduation) to develop and refine a proposed course of thematic study. Courses included in the thematic study must include six to nine (6 - 9) hours of credit in a single discipline. Of the 18 required hours, 15 must be at the upper division.

- *Capstone Courses* (6 hrs): Courses include AMST 4985 (Senior Seminar) plus an individual project stemming from either AMST 4010 (Independent Study) or AMST 4970 (Internship).

**\*\*\*** The University of Wyoming requires students to take 42 hours of upper division (3000-level and above) coursework, which is reflected in the plan. However, the American Studies faculty strongly encourage students to take 48 hours of upper division credit when possible through elective credits.



**Subject:** in support of the American Studies BA

**Date:** Thursday, December 1, 2016 at 12:33:53 AM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Drew Lyness

**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Dean Lutz & Provost Miller,

I am writing to you both as a proud alumni of the University of Wyoming's graduate program in American Studies (MA, 2009), and as a four-year instructor and mentor in the UW Upward Bound Program. I have heard troubling news of the pending institutional review of the American Studies BA, and the possibility that this fantastic and unique program may be closed. I feel strongly that if this were to happen, it would mark a very sad day for the University of Wyoming, a tangible loss for the community of Laramie, and would quite seriously have long standing repercussions for the wider state of Wyoming itself that may not become fully apparent for years to come.

In my estimation, there can be very few university programs in the country that offer undergraduate students such a solid grounding in the particular history, identity, and cultural heritage of their region, as well as helping them develop a sense of their place and roles in the wider community of Wyoming and the West. Anyone who loves the state of Wyoming and it's people will recognize the many misconceptions and stereotypes this region struggles with, and perhaps nowhere more than Laramie and UW. During my time with the Upward Bound program, I got to know generations of teenagers and incoming freshman from all over the state, and I can ensure you that UW undergraduates come to our campus with the kind of questions that very few other programs can hope to answer in any satisfactory way. The American Studies BA exists expressly to help undergraduate students grapple with these very questions, and helps them build their own cultural identities at a critical time in their educational and social development. Its loss would leave a significant void.

The American Studies BA program is also intrinsically global in its mission and outlook, and this is also one of its most valuable contributions to the UW campus. I myself arrived in 2007 as the first postgraduate fellow from the British Association of American Studies, and served as a TA in the Cooper House for 2 years before going on to complete my PhD at The Ohio State University. The fellowship that enabled my study in Laramie, was quite a prestigious connection for the University of Wyoming, and it is only one of the many impressive international links the American Studies program maintains. Furthermore, the program has strong local links to public sector organizations such as historic preservation and state folklore. These are invaluable resources for UW undergraduate students, as they enable a connection between abstract academic study and the real worlds in which they live.

We live in a moment when critical interdisciplinary study is, more than ever, the key to helping our undergraduate students navigate the rapidly changing world they are to grow up in. The American Studies BA, along with the talented and unique faculty who teach in the program, offers these tools and it is my sincere belief that the University of Wyoming would be far worse off without it.

Yours,

Dr. Drew Lyness

North Vancouver, BC

**Subject:** American Studies Undergraduate Degree Must Stay!

**Date:** Monday, November 21, 2016 at 7:10:36 PM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Korie Christine Johnson

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** Kate Miller, Laurie Nichols

Hello,

I had the honor of taking a 4000 American Studies undergraduate course a few semesters ago. During the time, I was studying for my graduate degree in another program and the American Studies Literature class looked appealing. Not only was I exposed to a reading list that challenged me, but the class helped me grow as a teacher. The professor, Dr. Loffreda, had us reading theory and fiction that were challenging and inspiring. I'd never seen a reading list quite like that before. The students in the course were both graduate and undergraduate level, and Loffreda was able to engage all of us. It was a smaller group and sometimes smaller classes can be hard, because everyone has to contribute in order for the class not to lag; Loffreda was able to inspire the class to participate in an honest and exciting way.

I'm now an adjunct instructor on campus and often when I see a freshman student who is interested in the humanities, but not sure where they fit, I always direct them to the American Studies courses. I feel relieved to know that this department provides these students a home.

The training in preservation one can receive is also invaluable for such a historic state like Wyoming.

The biggest tragedy in losing the undergraduate American Studies program would be the loss of the different diversity-type of courses offered. Many students at UW are from such small, isolated communities, and they've never learned about difference. For some of them, being on campus is their first time meeting people who are different from them.

Loffreda's Queer Theory course, and American Studies courses like it, help create bridges between groups who may not have another chance to understand each other. Not to mention, the students from marginalized groups are able to see their histories and identities treated as though they have worth and are important.

Continuing the undergraduate American Studies program is vital to the UW campus community and the prestige of the University, and without the program, many students would suffer.

Thank you for your time,

Korie Johnson

To whom it may concern:

I am a former BA and MA graduate of the American Studies program at the University of Wyoming. As a BA student, I had taken many English and History classes, but I found my home in American Studies through the recommendation of several professors towards the end of my community college experience. As a transfer student, I found the community of the Cooper House incredibly welcoming and it soon became apparent this was where I belonged. Looking at history through mediums such as film and novels provided fascinating new ways to think about the knowledge I'd accumulated in my life.

I am primarily a working freelance musician, and I feel today that seeing music not just as notes on a page or as simply sound, is a valuable thing that started to come together during my period as a BA student. The realm of creativity that was offered in many of the classes I took allowed me to literally bring my drums into the Cooper House and perform a composition, and to think about the meaning of performance in jazz and rock and roll. I found myself writing about the role of bebop drummers not only as artists that stretched the jazz idiom, but as individuals who were stretching the boundaries of the racial and social climate of the 1940s. Being able to do this type of work, along with the incredible professors I worked with (notably Frieda Knobloch, Ulrich Adelt, and John Dorst) created a rewarding, challenging, and also highly creative bachelor's degree.

While I received a BA in the program, I continued on as an MA student. I switched from jazz as a concentration to rock and roll and film during my time as a graduate student. I was a graduate assistant for two courses (Cultural Diversity in America, and Intro to African American Studies) which allowed me the opportunity to lead discussions and to grade essays. Making the transition from a BA student to the MA program was a good way to begin graduate school, as I still had a community of great professors and was able to venture more deeply into my areas of interest through independent studies and a self- designed course load (once the capstone classes were taken).

On the undergraduate or graduate level, one learns everything in the world can be deemed a text, from the films we view, the art that gets produced, magazines that get written, music that is recorded and then streamed, to photographs and images that are published. American Studies is about understanding that a deeper meaning can be ascribed to something that may seem simple on the surface. This major is what college should provide for all of us: a way to sharpen and grow our critical thinking skills, and then apply those skills in the world around us.

Thanks and best regards,

Jascha Herdt





Helga Otto Haub School  
of Environment and  
Natural Resources

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December 16, 2016

Dr. Kate Miller  
Vice President of Academic Affairs  
University of Wyoming

Dear Dr. Miller,

I am writing to express support for the American Studies program within the College of Arts and Sciences. The American Studies department has provided high quality education to UW students, enhanced the land grant mission of the university, and has been a valuable partner to the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources. Specifically, the American Studies faculty has contributed excellent teaching to students in the Haub School and to many other majors across the university at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Our Haub School program would not be what it is today without the partnership of the American Studies department.

It is unfortunate that enrollment in the American Studies bachelor's degree has been so low in recent years and is therefore recommended for closure. It is my hope that a new interdisciplinary degree in environmental humanities could be designed to replace the outgoing degree. I recommend that a new interdisciplinary degree be built on the strong tradition of the American Studies department by engaging in partnerships with faculty and programs across campus. The Haub School would welcome the opportunity to assist the American Studies faculty in the exploration of a new degree geared to prepare students for interdisciplinary careers in the environmental humanities.

I express my gratitude for the excellent work of the American Studies faculty and reiterate my support for their contribution to the mission of the university.

Sincerely,

Doug Wachob, Ph.D.  
Interim Dean and Director of Academic Programs  
Haub School of Environment & Natural Resources University of Wyoming  
Bim Kendall House, 804 E Fremont St., Laramie, WY 82072  
Office 307-766-5081 Cell 307-413-0767 [wachob@uwyo.edu](mailto:wachob@uwyo.edu)

**Subject:** Comments on the Decision to Eliminate the American Studies Major  
**Date:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 at 11:01:22 AM Mountain Daylight Time  
**From:** Sofi Thanhauser  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

Hello,

I am a graduate of the Environment and Natural Resources and Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing dual degree at the University of Wyoming and I am writing because I recently became aware of the plans to eliminate the undergraduate major in American Studies.

Having seen up close the work that this particular program does, and having taken several courses in the department, I wanted to write to say that I strongly disagree with this decision.

The American Studies program at the University of Wyoming is unique, and an international destination. Because of the University's placement in the American West, and the proximity of the documents held in the American Heritage Center, there are avenues of research that literally cannot be pursued anywhere else: research that the skills and methodologies of American Studies prepare students to undertake. The program draws international scholars who need to access these materials to continue the scholarly discussion of the American West, and the role of the frontier in shaping American history and American ideology. I am afraid that the shutting down of the undergraduate American Studies major will critically impact the program more broadly, and strip the University of Wyoming of a role that it has been known for, internationally, since the inception of the program. I am afraid of what this would mean for the University as a whole, let alone for the individual students who would be impacted.

Graduates of the American Studies program grow on to play critical roles in historic preservation, curation, public radio programming, teaching, and the public humanities in Wyoming. This program more than any other provides critical skills for engaging with local history and culture in ways that are multivalent, thoughtful, public spirited, and critical to the development of the region as it moves forward.

I strongly encourage you to reconsider the decision to eliminate a program that is so critical not only to the life of the University but also to the future of the city and the state.

Very Best Wishes,

Sofi

**Subject:** FW: Concerns about the plan to eliminate American Studies Major  
**Date:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 at 11:30:30 AM Mountain Daylight Time  
**From:** Kate Miller  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

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**From:** Sofi Thanhauser <sofithanhauser@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Thursday, September 22, 2016 at 11:03 AM  
**To:** Laurie Nichols <Laurie.Nichols@uwyo.edu>, Kate Miller <kate.miller@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** Concerns about the plan to eliminate American Studies Major

Dear Ms. Nichols and Ms. Miller,

Hello, my name is Sofi Thanhauser, and I am a proud graduate of the Environment and Natural Resources and Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing dual degree at the University of Wyoming.

I am writing because I recently became aware of the plans to eliminate the undergraduate major in American Studies. Having seen up close the work that this particular program does, and having taken several courses in the department, I wanted to write to say that I strongly disagree with this decision.

The American Studies program at the University of Wyoming is unique, and an international destination. Because of the University's placement in the American West, and the proximity of the documents held in the American Heritage Center, there are avenues of research that literally cannot be pursued anywhere else: research that the skills and methodologies of American Studies prepare students to undertake. The program draws international scholars who need to access these materials to continue the scholarly discussion of the American West, and the role of the frontier in shaping American history and American ideology. I am afraid that the shutting down of the undergraduate American Studies major will critically impact the program more broadly, and strip the University of Wyoming of a role that it has been known for, internationally, since the inception of the program. I am afraid of what this would mean for the University as a whole, let alone for the individual students who would be impacted.

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I strongly encourage you to reconsider the decision to eliminate a program that is so critical not only to the life of the University but also to the future of the city and the state.

Very Best Wishes,

Sofi



**Subject:** Comments regarding the American Studies BA elimination  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 5, 2016 at 7:59:36 PM Mountain Daylight Time  
**From:** Carly Fraysier  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

10/5/16

To Whom it May Concern,

I graduated from the University of Wyoming's MFA Creative Writing Program as well as the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources in May 2016. I write because, among the many rumors I hear about the difficult financial situation the University is dealing with, I am troubled and saddened to hear that the recommendation has been made that the American Studies Program BA be eliminated. I wanted to write, while the University is taking comments on the matter, and voice my values for the American Studies Program's curriculum as well as a handful of its outstanding faculty.

As an MFA/ENR student, a couple of the electives I took to satisfy dual degree requirements were listed under American Studies. Ecology of Knowledge, taught by Frieda Knobloch was a standout. The content as well as Frieda's teaching opened my eyes (as well as many others in the class) and pushed our ways of thinking and knowing and understanding into new dimensions. It was, quite honestly, one of the most valuable classes I took while at UW – a truly special experience.

I believe that the presence of American Studies (the specific classes as well as the faculty I worked with) offered a connection between the two masters programs I was enrolled in – a connection I had a difficult time finding elsewhere. I know a handful of other American Studies classes served similar roles for fellow graduate students, and assume that the specific undergraduate offerings did the same for undergraduate students as well. Should the American Studies BA program be eliminated, many graduate and undergraduate students would suffer from a lack of course offerings and the opportunity to share class space with so many other students of diverse interests (undergrad and grad mixed in the same classroom). Furthermore, the interdisciplinary nature of American studies – the far-reaching and deep thinking nature of it – seems to me a very important aspect of University offerings and an overall mindset.

I wish to also speak to a few specific faculty members in the program with whom I spent a significant amount of time. I worked very closely with Beth Loffreda well as Frieda Knobloch, both of whom were incredible members of my thesis committee (Beth being Chair). Not only were they tremendous teachers and great thinkers (some of the Universities finest, I have thought on multiple occasions), but they were wonderful mentors. I owe the deepest of thanks to both of them for their support. I believe the relationships I fostered with them, Beth specifically, will be lifelong connections. I speak to these two individuals knowing that the proposed American Studies cuts will not directly eliminate their jobs, rather I write out of fear that it might eventually. I worry that undergrads will not have access to these individuals as mentors and teachers; I worry they won't have access to the important classes they teach.

I know the challenge the University faces is real and demands action in some form or another, but I also think that an entire elimination of program/degrees would be highly unfortunate, as would be a merge with other programs that seem to embody a similar ethic (such as Gender and Women's Studies). I felt moved enough by the news I heard to write to say how much of a difference American Studies' presence on campus made to me in my time at UW. Thank you for the opportunity to have my comments heard, it is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Carly Fraysier

[Carly.fraysier@gmail.com](mailto:Carly.fraysier@gmail.com)

**Subject:** Concerning Degree Program Elimination

**Date:** Sunday, September 25, 2016 at 11:51:37 AM Mountain Daylight Time

**From:** Vande Vaarst, Maxine Allison

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

Dear Dr. Miller,

My name is Maxine Vande Vaarst, and I am a recent graduate of the M.A. program in American Studies at the University of Wyoming. I was saddened to hear last week that your office is considering the elimination of sixteen degree programs, including the vital undergraduate degree in American Studies. While I recognize that university resources are limited at this time, I would like to make a case for the retention of the AMST bachelor of arts degree.

Let me be clear: American Studies is absolutely essential to the overall mission of our university. We are, of course, the oldest such program in the West, having been founded alongside the American Studies department at Yale by legendary philanthropist William Robertson Coe. According to Wyoming historian Liza Nicholas, Coe believed that "there was no better place than the West for Americans to learn about America," and I am certain that his conviction remains as true today as it was in 1952.

American Studies at Wyoming provides undergraduate students with a remarkable opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary research, and offers them new tools with which to approach the study of the United States. From our historic home in the Cooper House, our reach extends throughout Wyoming and beyond, as our six core faculty members and roughly one-dozen affiliated professors guide students toward careers in historic preservation, museum work, public arts, academia and more. Our director, Dr. Frieda Knobloch, has worked tirelessly to maintain a high level of student engagement and world-class instruction, while our previous director, Dr. Eric Sandeen, has generated deep connections with American Studies departments throughout Europe, making our program one of the few in existence with a truly global scope.

Because American Studies is interdisciplinary, our majors are granted a unique degree of creative flexibility—something that our faculty has always encouraged. We believe that this approach gets at the very heart of Spencer's bold imperative, written into the face of the Arts and Sciences Building: "Prepare for complete living." Likewise, our university itself would be incomplete without American Studies. I implore you to speak with our current students, and to reconsider the proposal to eliminate this degree. Participation in the American Studies program at Wyoming has made all the difference in my life, and I think it would be a great loss to see future students deprived of that experience.

All the best,

**Maxine Allison Vande Vaarst**

Department of American Studies

Managing Editor, *South: A Scholarly Journal*

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

973-461-3302 | mvandeva@live.unc.edu

PID: 7204-75505



**Subject:** American Studies Program

**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at 3:22:02 PM Mountain Daylight Time

**From:** Kali Fajardo-Anstine

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

My name is Kali Fajardo-Anstine and I'm a 2013 graduate of the UW MFA Program. I'm writing in support of the American Studies Program, as it's been brought to my attention that the Program is under review. While a student at UW, I worked closely with Dr. Beth Loffreda and her professional and academic guidance has continued to serve me years after my time at UW. In my mind, Dr. Loffreda exemplifies the type of creative inquiry and academic rigor present in the American Studies Program.

Though I wasn't an American Studies student myself, I felt their program and ours were so closely aligned that we were academic siblings. We resided in the Carriage House. They had the Cooper House. Their students supported our public readings, and we attended their presentations and events. Moreover, I loved the presence of the American Studies students—their seriousness of thought, their dedication to intellectual investigation, and their expansive worldviews. I am privileged to have been in their company.

Last year I taught at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. When one of my brightest students was considering transferring to another institution for American Studies, my first suggestion was the University of Wyoming. But why there, she had asked.

Because first and foremost students work with faculty whose expertise is so far ranging that it includes scholars from African-American Studies to Environment and Natural Resources. The opportunities for professional and academic partnerships are unparalleled in the West. And it's a growing program, a needed program, and a valuable program.

Please do not eliminate the American Studies BA. If allowed to thrive, the Program will continue to grow and reflect everything positive about the University of Wyoming.

Sincerely,

Kali Fajardo-Anstine

**Subject:** FW: American Studies Program  
**Date:** Monday, October 3, 2016 at 4:29:38 PM Mountain Daylight Time  
**From:** Kate Miller  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

-Kate

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**From:** Kali Fajardo-Anstine <kali.fajardo.anstine@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 28, 2016 at 3:19 PM  
**To:** Kate Miller <kate.miller@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** American Studies Program

Dear Dr. Kate Miller,

My name is Kali Fajardo-Anstine and I'm a 2013 graduate of the UW MFA Program. I'm writing in support of the American Studies Program, as it's been brought to my attention that the Program is under review. While a student at UW, I worked closely with Dr. Beth Loffreda and her professional and academic guidance has continued to serve me years after my time at UW. In my mind, Dr. Loffreda exemplifies the type of creative inquiry and academic rigor present in the American Studies Program.

Though I wasn't an American Studies student myself, I felt their program and ours were so closely aligned that we were academic siblings. We resided in the Carriage House. They had the Cooper House. Their students supported our public readings, and we attended their presentations and events. Moreover, I loved the presence of the American Studies students—their seriousness of thought, their dedication to intellectual investigation, and their expansive worldviews. I am privileged to have been in their company.

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Please do not eliminate the American Studies BA. If allowed to thrive, the Program will continue to grow and reflect everything positive about the University of Wyoming.

Sincerely,  
Kali Fajardo-Anstine

**Subject:** Comment for Academic Programs Shutting Down

**Date:** Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 5:36:30 PM Mountain Daylight Time

**From:** Evan Townsend

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

Thanks for taking comments Dr. Miller. As I imagine you will be getting a few of these comments, I will try to keep this concise.

I just read the UW News and couldn't help but be a little bummed out. I know you have not been given much money to work with. I offer this paragraph to say that I can at least put some of my self in your new shoes.

As an alum of UW's grad programs, it makes me sad to read about the humanities programs getting cut as well as the sciences. In fact, they need one another for either to prosper. As a Stanford and Princeton grad, I no doubt know you know this.

I am writing specifically in hopes that you will reconsider cutting the American Studies undergraduate program. As students grow ever more dependent on screens and social media to inform them on the world, or rather, *their* world, a undergraduate program like American Studies is the perfect academic media to allow for our changing students to (re)connect with not only what it means to be a more educated human but how, as American, we function, feel, and learn in an ever more globalized world. Imagine an undergraduate student who is not sure what to major in but found home in the AMST program as a way to channel various interests while still being challenged by critical theory - quoting Foucault or Willa Cather. Those student may become historic preservationists, politicians, scientists, engineers, city planners, writers, etc...all leaders in their field able to consider other's opinions to the highest understanding. The beauty of AMST's undergrad program is it its not quantifiable. William Robertson Coe knew this too.

Or, imagine an undergrad asking a question in an undergraduate American Studies class, "what is American Studies?" Then imagine the professor replying, "Well, it is up to you where you want the field to go next."

That initiative, drive, and trust from amazing UW AMST faculty to undergrads is essential for preparing students for "complete living" let alone our quest to make lifelong learners against apathy. Yes, AMST's undergraduate numbers have been low but they will bounce back.If given another chance, the program will gain more students, albeit slowly. Just because so many people don't know what AMST is, does not mean it has less value. Just because I don't know the first thing about experimental quantum physics doesn't mean it has less value among the many people it takes to run a well balanced society.

The AMST undergrad program prepares students to listen well and write and think better than any other undergraduate program I know at UW. Please consider my words.

Thank you



**Subject:** FW: Comment against AMST B.A. consolidation | Adrian Shirk, alumna  
**Date:** Friday, September 23, 2016 at 2:11:08 PM Mountain Daylight Time  
**From:** Kate Miller  
**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office  
**CC:** adrian.shirk@gmail.com

I am forwarding this to the email address where we are assembling comments.

Dr. Kate Miller  
Provost

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**From:** Adrian Shirk <adrian.shirk@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Friday, September 23, 2016 at 11:39 AM  
**To:** Kate Miller <kate.miller@uwyo.edu>  
**Cc:** Laurie Nichols <Laurie.Nichols@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** Comment against AMST B.A. consolidation | Adrian Shirk, alumna

Dear Ms. Miller,

My name is Adrian Shirk; I'm a graduate of the University of Wyoming's MFA program in Creative Writing ('14) and the author of *And Your Daughters Shall Prophesy* (Counterpoint Press, forthcoming). Currently, I am a Visiting Instructor and Internship Coordinator in the BFA Creative Writing program at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. I'm writing to recommend against the proposal that the American Studies B.A. program be merged or consolidated with any other UW program.

As you know, the MFA program and the American Studies program have, over the years, shared a number of faculty and students. I was one MFA student who benefited immensely from this partnership, which included not only access to graduate-level AMST courses and faculty like Frieda Knobloch, Lillia Soto, Beth Loffreda and John Dorst, but also to amazing 4000-level topic courses like Knobloch's Ecology of Knowledge, which brought upperclassmen and graduate students together, and was -- by no exaggeration -- one of the most trans-formative courses of my life. I think you can ask, literally, any student that has ever taken that course, at any level -- or any of the 4000-level AMST courses -- and you will almost uniformly get that same response.

I cannot begin to express the level of rigor, care, and academic exploration that I experienced because of the existence of a *robust* AMST program, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. I was, as an MFA student, able to serve as a TA for Intro to American Studies in Fall 2013. During that semester, I witnessed the ways that this course served as a generative intellectual refuge for brilliant and creative students who hadn't found their academic homes on campus yet. I saw AMST playing that role over and over again, as the site where many undergraduate students were able to identify important lines of inquiry. Moreover, the undergraduate students who completed their B.A.s in AMST were often by far the most prepared B.A.s I encountered on campus to continue with graduate work in the humanities.

I fear that the loss of autonomy that comes with the proposed merger makes the program vulnerable to other weakening changes or cuts. I fear for the students and the faculty who would be negatively effected by this merger. While there is much I may not understand or know about the proposal, I do feel that it poses an immediate threat to AMST's level of service to not only undergraduate students, but UW humanities as a whole.

I appreciate your time and attention. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions you may have.

Many thanks,  
Adrian Shirk

--

**Adrian Shirk**

**Subject:** American Studies consolidation

**Date:** Tuesday, September 20, 2016 at 2:38:15 PM Mountain Daylight Time

**From:** Gregory M. Nickerson

**To:** Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

Hello,

I am glad to see that the American Studies program will be consolidated rather than eliminated. There are some excellent teachers in this program, many of whom I drew on while earning my MA in History at UW in 2010. It was one of the humanities programs at UW that attracted excellent international graduate students (UK, Eastern Europe, etc.), many of whom have gone on to successful careers in academia. I earned my BA in American Studies at another institution and it gave me the confidence to learn quickly about a variety of fields in American society (history, politics, industry), which was an excellent foundation to have while working as a journalist in the Wyoming Capitol.

Some care should be taken to maintain donor William Robertson Coe's wish that UW have an American Studies Program, or at least offer the courses that have a similar focus. He was the 1950s-era donor who funded the American Studies program, which I think was originally in the Department of History, which is why his bust is in the entryway of the History Building. He funded UW's American Studies program as part of a nationwide effort to promote the study of American ideas and culture in response to the Cold War, making UW a pioneer in that field nationwide. The university used part of the gift to build the new library, which is why the History Building is attached to Coe Library. Later on the American Studies program separated from history and was moved to the building across Iverson Street.

My concern with consolidating American Studies with other interdisciplinary studies in the humanities is that the opportunities to learn about this country will be diminished or diluted by the other fields that will be consolidated with it. If that's not the case, then the consolidation should work well. I would also hope that the Cooper House be maintained and well-used by the university, even in the absence of the American Studies program being a standalone unit. It is one of the finest and most distinctive buildings on campus.

Wyoming needs good students of history and American culture in order to maintain its civic institutions like museums, journalism, and government. Civic knowledge and historical memory is not always widespread in our state, and it is crucial that the state's only university be able to provide such training in American humanities in this time of economic change. If consolidation manages to preserve that capacity then I am all for it.

Thank you,  
Greg Nickerson  
UW MA '10 History

**Subject:** American Studies program review

**Date:** Tuesday, December 20, 2016 at 1:15:10 PM Mountain Standard Time

**From:** Kelley Gove

**To:** Paula M. Lutz, Program Review - Academic Affairs Office

**CC:** Frieda E. Knobloch

Dear Dean Lutz and Provost Miller,

I am writing this belated note in support of the American Studies BA at the University of Wyoming.

I hold an MA from the program and am currently a PhD candidate at the University of California, Davis.

When I was an undergraduate at the University of New Hampshire, I was an English major who was fortunate enough to take a class from someone who had received a PhD in American Studies. I was a junior; it was the first I heard of the field, and it changed things for me as it opened a new way of doing scholarship. However, UNH did not have an American Studies program, so it wasn't until I looked into pursuing a higher degree that I was able to find a place that offered this field as a major.

American Studies as a field is not one which students enter college knowing about but for those of us lucky enough to find it, it offers something that other, disciplinary focused degrees don't, and that is a way to bring together ideas, methodologies, and subjects of study in a way that other majors don't have room for.

I think offering the BA in American Studies is something the University should be proud of and tout as unique rather than seeking to close the program. American Studies in itself is a vibrant field, but American Studies at UW is a special program because of its history and the current areas of study. For example, those with the BA have the chance to concentrate on historic preservation or on the environmental humanities (and often pair with ENR). Both of these concentrations seem particularly important and relevant to the state of Wyoming.

American Studies does not fit under the umbrella of other programs, as it allows for interdisciplinary thinking and flexibility, both of which are important skills that will serve students well after graduation, regardless of the field they enter. Rather than eliminating the program, it should be held up as an example of what is important at the University and what UW does well.

Thank you for taking the time to read my feedback.

Kelley Gove

UW M.A. 2007, American Studies and ENR



AMST 1101 First Year Seminar: Cultures of College (Beth Loffreda)

Fall 2016

Student comments on the class

"This class really surprised me. It started with a confusion about what the class was actually about (thinking it was an American history class), having my doubts, to actually really enjoying it. I found that the discussion foundation of this class was very refreshing from the rest of my courseload. It was very interesting and intellectually challenging to sit down and discuss issues with others and hear their opinions. I definitely learned much more about the cultures of the University of Wyoming. It was a good experience to get to understand multiple aspects of college life and how other people experience college. It was in my opinion the perfect first year class."

(from a chemistry major): "As far as this class goes, I have actually enjoyed it a lot and I think it has prompted me to more strongly consider the humanities as a path of study. I really liked doing the fieldwork assignments. I thought they were relevant to my time here on campus and really encouraged me to explore. I am very glad I chose American Studies for my first year seminar. I really appreciated the discussion-based format, especially when talking about our own cultures here at UW."

"This class has been very reflective and full of discussion that was almost like a deep breath when it came to all my classes throughout the day. The discussions we brought up were real and relevant."

"This class has been my favorite to go to because I have learned so much. Most of all I learned how to respect someone else's opinion and to rebut in a respectful way."

**AMST 2010 Introduction to American Studies (Frieda Knobloch)**

**Fall 2016**

**Student comments on the class and American Studies approaches (all non-majors)**



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of Environment and  
Natural Resources

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December 16, 2016

Dr. Kate Miller  
Vice President of Academic Affairs  
University of Wyoming

Dear Dr. Miller,

I am writing to express support for the American Studies program within the College of Arts and Sciences. The American Studies department has provided high quality education to UW students, enhanced the land grant mission of the university, and has been a valuable partner to the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources. Specifically, the American Studies faculty has contributed excellent teaching to students in the Haub School and to many other majors across the university at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Our Haub School program would not be what it is today without the partnership of the American Studies department.

It is unfortunate that enrollment in the American Studies bachelor's degree has been so low in recent years and is therefore recommended for closure. It is my hope that a new interdisciplinary degree in environmental humanities could be designed to replace the outgoing degree. I recommend that a new interdisciplinary degree be built on the strong tradition of the American Studies department by engaging in partnerships with faculty and programs across campus. The Haub School would welcome the opportunity to assist the American Studies faculty in the exploration of a new degree geared to prepare students for interdisciplinary careers in the environmental humanities.

I express my gratitude for the excellent work of the American Studies faculty and reiterate my support for their contribution to the mission of the university.

Sincerely,

Doug Wachob, Ph.D.  
Interim Dean and Director of Academic Programs  
Haub School of Environment & Natural Resources University of Wyoming  
Bim Kendall House, 804 E Fremont St., Laramie, WY 82072  
Office 307-766-5081 Cell 307-413-0767 [wachob@uwyo.edu](mailto:wachob@uwyo.edu)



## Anne M. Alexander

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**From:** Paula M. Lutz  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2016 1:51 PM  
**To:** Anne M. Alexander; Kate Miller  
**Subject:** FW: American Studies program review

I'm forwarding this along since I'm not certain if the website has shut down.

*Paula*

**From:** Kelley Gove [mailto:kgove@ucdavis.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 20, 2016 1:15 PM  
**To:** Paula M. Lutz <paula.lutz@uwyo.edu>; Program Review - Academic Affairs Office <progrevw@uwyo.edu>  
**Cc:** Frieda E. Knobloch <Knobloch@uwyo.edu>  
**Subject:** American Studies program review

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Thank you for taking the time to read my feedback.

Kelley Gove  
UW M.A. 2007, American Studies and ENR