

AMERICAN STUDIES

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

EDUCATION

Teaching Research Information/Library science
Higher education administration and student support services:
Admissions
Financial aid
Academic advising
Development
Alumni affairs
International education and study abroad
Career services
Residence life
Student activities and Greek life Orientation
Leadership
Multicultural student programming

Universities and colleges
Support programs (e.g., Educational Advancement Program, Upward Bound)
Community libraries Nonprofit organizations

Earn a Ph.D. to teach and research at four-year institutions. The interdisciplinary nature of American studies makes it good preparation for advanced education in a variety of fields in the humanities and social sciences.
Obtain a master's degree in student affairs or library/information science if interested in those
Get involved in leadership roles on campus such as peer mentor, resident advisor, or orientation leader.
Join related professional associations as a student member.
Volunteer to assist a professor with research or take an independent study class.
Develop strong communication and public speaking skills.

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Administration
Curatorial
Preservation and conservation
Restoration
Registrarial
Collections management
Exhibit design/preparation
Archive management
Art authentication
Education
Publications
Development
Docent coordination
Public relations

Museums: University, public, private archives
Historical homes
Special collections
Historical societies
Natural history museums
Living history museum
Art galleries
State and local government
Federal government (e.g., the National Archives, Records Administration)
Nonprofit organizations
Research institutions

Gain relevant experience through internships or volunteer positions in museums or galleries.
Earn a graduate degree in museum studies, conservation, information science, public history or related area.
Research prerequisites and take the necessary courses. The most competitive candidates may have more than one graduate degree.
Acquire strong experience with computers, databases, and software.
Get involved with relevant student organizations
Develop excellent written and oral communication skills, organizational skills, and an attention to detail.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES CONTINUED

Public history

Oral history project manager

Community historian

Reproductions and retailing

Attend professional conferences and seminars.

Earn the Certified Archivist designation.

Most curators specialize in a material or objects

Intern with preservation organizations

Learn about grant writing, budgeting, and legal issues surrounding historical artifacts.

NONPROFIT

Administration

Management

Public relations

Program coordination

Fund raising and development

Policy analysis

Grant writing

Research

Volunteer coordination

Community education

Direct service

Museums and historical sites

Historical associations and societies

Cultural heritage organizations

Historical projects

Libraries

Educational institutions

Local and national nonprofit agencies

Trade or professional associations

Special interest groups

Foundations

Charitable organizations

Labor unions

Research organizations and think tanks

Gain experience through volunteering or completing an internship.

Obtain leadership roles in relevant campus and community organizations.

Develop strong communication and research skills.

Supplement curriculum with courses in business, psychology, sociology, or social work depending upon interest.

Learn how to write grants.

Develop an understanding of budgeting and fiscal management.

Research organizations' values to find a good fit with yours. It is critical that you are knowledge-able about and committed to the work you are going to do.

Investigate term of service or service corps positions as a way to gain entry into the field.

BUSINESS

Sales

Customer service management

Insurance:

Underwriting

Claims management

Sales

Real estate:

Property management

Product and service organizations

Retail stores Hotels Restaurants

Manufacturers

Banks and financial institutions

Insurance companies

Hospitals and other healthcare organizations

Print and electronic media

Real estate agencies

Earn a minor in business or take business classes.

Develop strong verbal and written communication, interpersonal, and analytical skills.

Learn to work well on a team.

Seek leadership roles in campus organizations.

Join related professional associations.

Gain experience through internships, part-time, or summer jobs.

Get involved in student organizations and seek leadership roles.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
BUSINESS CONTINUED Human resources Training and development Labor relations Writing/Editing Corporate communication Office management Corporate social responsibility	Association management firms Other business corporations	Develop computer skills in areas such as spread sheets, databases, and presentation soft ware. Be prepared to start in entry-level positions such as management trainee pro grams. Become knowledgeable about corporate social responsibility. Look for companies that have an interest in hiring “any major.” Develop knowledge of ethical business practices and community engagement.
GOVERNMENT City or town management Translation/Interpretation Regional planning Public policy Intelligence Community affairs Campaigning Legislative assistance Public information Research Lobbying Conflict negotiation Program administration General services Social services Foreign service Legislative, executive, or judicial services Policy analyst Legislative researcher Government affairs specialist	There are over 170 federal departments and agencies. See http://gogovernment.org/ Local and state government Political parties Political action committees (PAC) Industrial, educational, and public interest groups Campaigns: national, state, or local Legislatures and other elected public officials School districts Court systems Think tanks Advocacy organizations Policy research organizations	Minor in an applicable interest area such as busi- ness, political science, or public administration. Take courses in conflict management and develop negotiation skills. Volunteer to work on a local or national political campaigns. Join related student organizations and earn leader ship roles. Get involved with student gov ernment and campus campaigns. Complete an internship with a government agen- cy to get a foot in the door. Research gov ernment internship programs. Maintain a strong grade point average as many government programs are very competitive. Learn local, state, and federal government job ap plication procedures. Visit the campus ca reer center for assistance. Develop a network of contacts through informational interviews and referrals. Consider earning a graduate degree in public policy, public administration, or similar, to qualify for more opportunities.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
COMMUNICATION Journalism Creative writing Freelance writing Copy writing Editing Research and analysis Advertising Digital storytelling Digital content strategist Documentary producer Cultural media analyst Social media manager	Publishing firms: newspaper, magazine, and book Wire services and syndicates Literary agencies Websites Television and radio stations Film industry Freelance Advertising agencies Trade, professional, or consumer publications Private corporations Digital media companies Streaming platforms Podcast networks	Obtain a minor in English or journalism or take other writing-focused classes. Write for campus publications such as college newspapers, magazines, or department/program newsletters. Volunteer to assist or tutor students in a writing center. Intern with a publishing house, magazine, or other relevant organizations. Create a portfolio of writing samples, especially those that have been published. Seek opportunities for recognition and networking through writing contests and freelance writing submissions. Become familiar with the proposal and submission process involved in freelance writing. Build a portfolio of multimedia work including writing, video, and audio storytelling
<u>LAW</u> See also What Can I Do With This Major in Law? Prosecution Defense Contractual Corporate Nonprofit or public interest Government Mediation Other specialties Law assistance	Law firms Federal, state, and local government Private practice Corporations Special interest groups Universities and colleges Legal aid societies Nonprofit and public interest organizations Corporation Legal clinics Other private legal services	Develop strong research skills and attention to detail. Participate in debate or forensic team to hone communication skills. Choose courses or a minor to specialize in a particular area of law (e.g., a minor in business for a career in corporate law). Find part-time or summer work in a law firm. Shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties. Get involved in pre-law organizations. Plan to attend law school and earn a law degree. Maintain a high GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations. Prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test). Obtain specialized certification for paralegal positions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- American Studies majors are excellent candidates for a number of graduate and professional school options because of their broad liberal arts background, as well as, specific interests that may set them apart from other students. For those wishing to pursue graduate education: maintain a high GPA, establish relationships with faculty to secure strong recommendations, and gain experience through volunteer, work, internships, or research opportunities.
- Carefully research Graduate programs in order to choose specializations and find the best fit for you.
- Common graduate programs include public policy, public administration, museum studies, historical preservation, public history, urban planning, cultural studies
- American Studies provides an interdisciplinary background that helps students develop analytical, critical thinking, communication, and writing skills while gaining knowledge about American culture and society. The curriculum exposes students to many areas including history, literature, politics, sociology, religion, music, art, folklore, and material culture. Students gain substantial integrative research experience and build upon research of other scholars across disciplines to advocate critical study of race, class, gender, sexuality, mass culture, civic engagement, social justice, and America as part of a globalized world.
- It is beneficial to pursue specialized or technical skill areas to make your experience more specific. Take courses in marketing, finance, statistics, journalism, or communications depending on your interests. Consider adding a second major or a minor.
- Some students may choose to study American Studies because they enjoy the subject but wish to pursue careers requiring “any major.” In this scenario, it is critical to develop skills relevant to targeted field through internships, part-time or summer jobs, or volunteer experiences.
- Develop strong leadership skills; run for office in school or community organizations. Volunteer to organize or lead an event or project.
- Conduct informational interviews to learn about careers of interest and develop network contacts.
- Gain experience in fund raising and grant writing techniques. Nonprofit and educational organizations are often funded in this manner.