Master of Arts in American Culture Studies

The Master of Arts in American Culture Studies addresses the intellectual and moral questions of American identity and belonging that no single disciplinary perspective can comprehensively and satisfyingly resolve. What does it mean to live and work in an American culture devoted to individual success and autonomy and at the same time be a citizen of a nation devoted to collective needs and well-being?

The Master of Arts in American Culture Studies provides the instruction, both in specific disciplines and in cross-disciplinary conversations, to help students answer important questions about American society. It also introduces some of the social, political and cultural issues that have shaped American culture and identity. Most fundamentally, it provides a critical skill set that fosters the analysis of an array of cultural objects — a place, an event, a work of art, a political institution — from a rich and diverse foundation of knowledge and perspectives.

Students’ studies culminate in a self-directed project that allows them to explore an area of personal interest while participating in a multidisciplinary scholarly community. Part of the excitement of this kind of learning is the opportunity to engage in creative, rigorous exchange with faculty in the humanities and social sciences at Washington University in St. Louis as well as with leading practitioners in the St. Louis professional and policy world.

Studies may span American literature, history, politics, religion, philosophy, art, music and film.

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