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 training, 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 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 the faculty in the humanities and social sciences at Washington University in St. Louis, and with leading practitioners in the St. Louis professional and policy world.

Degree Requirements

Master of Arts in American Culture Studies

The Master of Arts in American Culture Studies is a 30-unit program in which students take a minimum of two courses in each of the following distribution areas:

- Humanities courses from literature, history, religion, or philosophy
- Social Sciences courses from anthropology, education, economics, or political science
- Arts courses from music, art history, or theater/film

The course AMCS 445 Introduction to American Culture Studies is recommended for all students. Remaining electives are drawn from course work in different aspects of American culture.

Courses


U89 AMCS 4101 History of American Journalism
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4109 History and Identity
Same as U08 Educ 4109
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 412 Sports and Culture: Reading Race and Racism through Spectator Sports
This course will examine the role of spectator sports in American life, seeking to understand the way athletics have influenced the politics and discourse of the United States and its citizens. In particular, we will consider the prominent role sports have played in affecting the way Americans understand race and racism. We will focus on athletes of significance since the Civil War, including Isaac Burns Murphy, Jack Johnson, Jesse Owens, Jackie Robinson, Muhammad Ali, Michael Jordan, and others. At the same time, we will examine how media shapes our understanding of athletes and the competitions we consume. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, ACS

U89 AMCS 413 Writing the Documentary Lyric
This course explores American culture through poetic accounts that focus on the personal experience of social issues ranging from ecological crisis, consumer culture, race, labor, war, and autobiography as coextensive with local history. Students will blend research with creative writing, reading exemplary texts (such as Birdlovers, Backyard; Giscombe Road; Citizen; Port of Los Angeles; Shut Up, Shut Down; and 100 Notes on Violence) while producing their own creative work. The readings and writings will be focused on documentary writing which incorporates quotations from daily life, the news, films, diaries, public documents, and maps. The readings studied are "lyric" instead of journalistic, following a poetic approach that connects inner experience and outer event, intimate and distant occurrences, people and places, private and public life. Students will engage in weekly creative-writing exercises while developing a final research-based creative-writing project. The course will include conversations with some of our books’ authors, who will offer insights into their processes of cultural research grounded in personal experience and language-conscious cultural critique. This course will count toward the major in American culture studies for day students. This course fulfills the Art distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF

U89 AMCS 4135 Tobacco: History, Anthropology, and Politics of a Global Epidemic
This course examines tobacco’s important role in shaping the modern world over the course of the last five centuries, from indigenous uses of tobacco in the New World to the politics of smoking in the 20th century. Through in-depth historical and anthropological case studies, tobacco provides a window into broad trends in government, law, economy, and society, including changing social meanings of gender, race, individualism, risk, responsibility, and health in the United States.
and worldwide. This course also introduces students to public health approaches to noncommunicable disease prevention and healthy lifestyle promotion. No background in anthropology or public health is required.

Same as L48 Anthro 4135
Credit 3 units. A&S: SS A&S IQ: SSC Art: SSC Bu: ETH

U89 AMCS 4151 Nonfiction: Reading and Writing the Memoir
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 420 The History of American Architecture
“The perennial architectural debate has always been, and will continue to be, about art versus use, visions versus pragmatism, aesthetics versus social responsibility. In the end, these unavoidable conflicts provide architecture’s essential and productive tensions; the tragedy is that so little of it rises above the level imposed by compromise, and that this is the only work most of us see and know.” —Ada Louise Huxtable.

This course examines the ideological, political, economic and social determinants that have shaped the look of American architecture. Starting with a thorough survey of the historic development of American architecture pursued in a chronological reading of styles, forms, and major architects, the course examines key tensions in the development of American architecture. Students will undertake readings, site visits, and discussions that probe whether there is a distinctly American mode of creating architecture, and what contingencies illuminate or obscure that mode. The central questions of this course: What are the definitive characteristics of American architecture? Does the American practice of architecture espouse an exceptionalism, or does it emulate international precedents (or both)? Do the characteristics of American architecture reveal the social, economic, and political structures of its production? Ultimately, can we read an American building to reveal sense of national identity, individual political agency, the evolution of gender roles, the assertion of disciplinary and economic power, and the evolution of the American artistic sensibility? This course fulfills the Humanities and Fine Arts distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program.

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH

U89 AMCS 4211 New Media Literacy, Culture and Education
At the closing of the 20th century, the “digital turn” began to shape how individuals learn, communicate, and interact with one another. Current and emerging media technologies have continued to change how individuals (youth and adults alike) gather information; consume, produce, and disseminate texts; and participate in both local and global communities through print- and screen-based platforms such as email, blog, podcast and mash-ups, among others. In this course, we will explore what we mean by technology, the various types and uses of technology, and the relationship of technology to literacy and education. We will begin with characteristics of “new media” and consequences of the digital revolution. Then, we will examine conceptualizations of literacy in a historical context — from literacy as reading and writing to literacy as multimodality, convergence, and participation. Finally, we will shift our inquiry to investigate how new media literacy and technologies are shaping (and are shaped by) different forms of popular culture in U.S. and international contexts, including parts of Asia, Australia, Europe, Africa, and North and South America. We will make explicit the connections to education and explore possible directions for research and practice, including copyright and fair use issues present in educational settings. Readings, discussions, and activities online and in actual communities will culminate in individual- and class-based new media productions. Prerequisite: at least junior standing or permission of the instructor.

Same as L12 Educ 4211
Credit 3 units. A&S: SS A&S IQ: SSC

U89 AMCS 4200 The Presidency and American Political Culture
This course seeks to analyze the ways in which the President of the United States is not only a political, but a symbolic head of the nation. This process of constructing the nation is mutually constitutive, in which the president works to construct the nation by rhetorically and materially unifying it, and the people construct the presidency, both in the powers they confer upon it and the ways in which they imagine its significance. Along with more traditional definitions of political power, this course will examine the presidential use of power through rhetoric and self-portrayal in such forms as portraiture and campaigns. Also included are the people’s depictions of the presidency, such as photography, monumental architecture, and popular films. The specific case studies of presidential administrations include James Madison, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, Ronald Reagan, and Barack Obama.

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

U89 AMCS 423 Topics in American Politics
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 424 Topics in African-American Literature:
Literature of the Black Atlantic
Same as U65 ELit 4244
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4281 Race and Science in America, 1840-2000
Same as U29 Bio 428
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 429 The Metropolis
While some humans have lived in cities for six thousand years, the world has experienced a metropolitan revolution over the last two centuries. Close to one half of the world’s population now lives in a city, suburb, or exurb. Today’s metropolises are not only larger than ever before, they are much more complex. This course examines key seminal works that analyze the past, present, and future of this evolution. It discusses key theorists who have explored the history of the urban form; the nature of socioeconomic and political metropolitan structures; the transformation of the built environment of the city; contemporary urban policy; and the future of the metropolis on a global scale.

Same as U19 SUST 329
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 430 Images of African-Americans in American Cinema
Same as U18 Film 430
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4315 African-American Language and Education:
Culture, Language, and the Education of Black Students
Same as L12 Educ 4315
Credit 3 units. A&S: SS CD A&S IQ: LCD, SSC Art: SSC
The American Culture Studies (11/28/17)

U89 AMCS 4331 Illness and the American Cultural Imagination
This multidisciplinary course examines how representations of illness in America reveal a culture that is always negotiating philosophical, ethical, and political questions about the body and disease. We will study a range of texts — medical articles, religious treatises, films, and history of public health — with a particular emphasis on fiction. Students will be asked to consider the distinction scholar Arthur Kleinman makes between illness and disease — illness as the patient's experience and disease as medicine's focus — in order to negotiate the subjective experience of illness and the biological reality of disease. We will explore how we understand illness through our metaphorical descriptions of it, our characterizations of those who contract it, and our visions of who/what cures it. Readings will demonstrate shifts in both popular and medical views of illness as we think about how different historical periods are marked by a preoccupation with specific diseases: small-pox, yellow fever, cholera, tuberculosis, polio, cancer, AIDS, etc. This course fulfills the Humanities and Social Science distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, ACS

U89 AMCS 435 Topics in African-American Literature
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 436 Black and White in American Drama
Same as U65 ELit 403
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4400 How're Things at Home? Family, Domestic Life and Material Culture since the Civil War
This multidisciplinary course is a study of the cultural meanings of the objects with which Americans surround themselves and define their worlds — particularly in the spaces of the home. These domestic things — from the decorative to the utilitarian, the locally-made to the globally-circulated — have animated the cultural imagination often in the last hundred and fifty years, evoking ideas of individualism, private enterprise, personal identity, national security, the nuclear family, and the dangers of industrialization and greed. They have also symbolized American heritage and personal as well as collective memory, motivating a preservation movement that continues to influence views of the past today. And they have served as sites of cultural critique, as in the work of Marx, Veblen and Baudrillard. As we explore some of the dramatic shifts in material life occasioned by the rise of consumer capitalism, and look at objects of particular significance during this period, we will also consider influential theories and models of material culture study. Local cultural sites and museum collections will serve as laboratories for our work, and will likely require a couple visits outside of class time (which will be scheduled with input from the students).
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, ACS

U89 AMCS 4402 Gateway to the Atomic Age: St. Louis and Nuclear Legacies of the Cold War
This course studies radioactive waste sites and illness in the vicinity of St. Louis arising from the region's contribution to nuclear weapons production in the 20th century. We will examine the context of Cold War nuclear production and subsequent attempts to address its consequences for environment and health, with attention to political pressures, public understanding, and scientific knowledge, together with the universe of federal regulation and compensation emerging around the atomic age since 1945. Source material will include federal reports and correspondence produced by state agencies, journalistic and scholarly accounts, and mass media evidence generated from the early 20th century to the present. Includes field trips to local sites.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

U89 AMCS 444 American Conspiracy
This course will trace the prevalence and power of modern conspiracy theories in American culture that have their roots in the birth of the republic and continue to flourish today. We will analyze the specificity of conspiracy theories — UFOs, Communists, the Moon landing, JFK’s assassination, AIDS and the CIA, 9/11 Truthers — but our purpose will be to "theorize" the conspiracy theory. How do Americans perceive and misperceive their culture, and for what ends? Much of our work will be methodological insofar as distrust and paranoia are produced in many realms — psychological, social, political — and we must organize and analyze these overlapping anxieties in our practice of American culture studies. This course fulfills the Humanities distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

U89 AMCS 445 Introduction to American Culture Studies
This course will introduce students to the history and methods of the interdisciplinary field of American studies. Questions we will ask throughout the semester include: How do we define "culture," and how has that definition changed over time? What are the social, intellectual, and political stakes of how we define culture and the ways we study it? Throughout the semester, students will have the opportunity to read published work by AMCS-affiliated faculty, who will join the class to discuss their work and the practice of American studies. While the course will use AMCS's four program initiatives — American Intimacies, Modern Segregation, Visual and Material Culture, and Performance and Pop Culture — as a means to consider the range of analytical methods commonly utilized by American studies scholars, the course will be useful to students in other fields interested learning more about social and cultural history and/or cultural studies.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH, ACS

U89 AMCS 4501 American Drama
Topics in American Drama.
Same as L15 Drama 453
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM Art: HUM

U89 AMCS 451 Human Nature and American Politics
Same as U25 PolSci 451
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4511 Race, Ethnicity, and Culture: Qualitative Inquiries in Urban Education
Drawing on traditional and recent advances in the field of qualitative studies, this course is the first in a series to examine ethnographic research at the interlocking domains of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and culture. The emphasis in this course is on how these concepts are constructed in urban educational institutions. The course includes a field component that involves local elementary and/or middle schools.
Same as L90 AFAS 4511
understanding of the complicated and contested role television played in the establishment of the post-WWII economy and as a mainstream arbiter of 1960s social movements. Prerequisite: Consult Course Listings. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4692 Perspectives on America in the 1950s and 1960s
This course will combine an effort to explicate particular "texts" with an exploration of how such things might be at once a way into, and the product of, a particular time and place. The material for our study will be drawn from the rich cultural tumult of post-war America and will include such books as The Catcher in the Rye, The Invisible Man, The Lonely Crowd, The Feminine Mystique; On the Road, JB: The Making of a Counter Culture; and Armies of the Night. Additional texts will include movies, political speeches, and such events as the Nixon-Khrushchev kitchen debate, the marches on Washington, and the 1968 Democratic National Convention. This course is designed for graduate students with a strong interest in doing research on some aspect of American culture and who will bring the perspectives of their home departments to this interdisciplinary class. Undergraduate admission with instructor's permission only. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 474 Studies in American Cultural Identity: The Civil War to the Jazz Age
In his "Letters From An American Farmer," J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur wasn't the first nor will he be the last to encounter the complex issues revealed by an exploration of American identity. We will do so together in this course by studying selected post-Civil War literature, music, visual art, and popular culture to see how cultural patterns of the past provide a benchmark for understanding complexities today. This underscores the central theme of the course: how visual, written, and performed art is rarely produced in cultural isolation, but rather from a matrix of social, geographic, psychological, political, historic, spiritual, economic, scientific, and accidental developments. This is a course about the cultural bridges which span divisions of time and place, and how we sharpen our understanding of both. This course fulfills the Humanities distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH

U89 AMCS 475D Landscapes Through Time: The History of St. Louis' Built Environment
From the Mississippian mound builders to the urban conditions of the present day, this course will investigate the different approaches of various cultures to creating built environments that meet the needs of their time in terms of landscapes and structures. Using the City of St. Louis and particularly its riverfront district as an example, the course will examine the layout and infrastructure of the city at various periods, discussing the effects of technological changes in the creation of structures, improvements to transportation and sanitation, facilitation of trade and the effects of these forces on the cultural and built landscape of the city. We cover the structures and landscapes that defined individual eras in the history of the city, and the ways in which these were successful or unsuccessful. Further, the course investigates the cultural needs, whims and desires that dictated certain types of structures and landscapes for civic, recreational, commercial, residential and religious purposes. Students will be expected to make a short 15-20
In this course we examine social inequality in the contemporary United States, with a particular focus on disparities related to race and ethnicity, sex, and gender. The representation of gender, and the role of gender in artistic practice, Focus on American, French, and English. Double-listed with Art-Arch L01-4771. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4771 Gender in 19th-Century Art
The representation of gender, and the role of gender in artistic practice. Focus on American, French, and English. Double-listed with Art-Arch L01-4771. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4776 Fraternal Twins: the American and French Republics Compared
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

U89 AMCS 4782 Topics in Religious Studies
This seminar seeks to explore the relation of religion and violence. Major themes include sacrifice, the scapegoat, martyrdom, scarification, forms of ritual circumcision and piercing, cannibalism, holy militias, holy terror, and holy war. Concrete examples will be discussed. Viewpoints range from the anthropological to the psychological, sociological, and theological. Among key writings to be studied are Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life; Freud, Totem and Taboo; Hubert & Mauss, Sacrifice: Its Nature and Function; Robert Lowie, Primitive Religion; René Girard, Violence and the Sacred; and Mark Juergensmeyer, Terror in the Mind of God. Same as U66 RelSt 478 Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 480 Women’s Health Care in America
This course will provide a broad historical overview of women’s health care in America. We will begin with an examination of midwifery in 18th-century America, then look at the increasing medicalization of childbirth and the new emphasis on women’s biological difference in the 19th century, and finally study changes in the medical profession and their impact on women’s health care in the early to mid-20th century. Through a wide range of material — including primary texts, such as doctor-authored tracts, diaries, letters, and fiction, as well as secondary material written by historians, feminist scholars, and medical writers — we will trace the changing perceptions and conceptions of women’s bodies and health. Authors will include: Catherine Maria Sedgwick, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Louisa May Alcott, Joan Jacobs Brumberg, and Natalie Angier. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 482 And Justice for All? American Inequalities
In this course we examine social inequality in the contemporary United States, with a particular focus on disparities related to health, wealth, housing and neighborhoods, criminal justice, and education. The St. Louis metropolitan region will serve as a guiding case study, tying together the course themes with a common example of how inequality shapes material and political life. We will investigate the current empirical reality and historical roots of American inequality, the key theories and methodological tools used to examine and explain inequality, the institutions responsible for its reproduction, and possibilities for reducing inequality via social policy and social movement. Within each topic area, we will pay special attention to the significance of race and ethnicity, social class, and gender — as well as their intersections and cleavages. We will largely constrain our inspection of inequality to American metropolitan areas as we analyze the spatial or place-based effects associated with disparities in urban America. Readings are drawn from sociology, urban history, geography, political science, economics, social epidemiology, and education. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4881 Conservatism and the American Right in the United States
This course focuses on the post-World War II conservative movement, one of the most important and successful political movements of the 20th century. The class will consider the history and definition of the “Right” and “conservatism” in the modern Western thought; trace the origins of the American Right in the reaction against a modernizing, consumer-driven American culture; assess the rise of a self-consciously intellectual conservative movement after World War II and the ways in which activists guided and manipulated the broader American Right; examine the various strands of the conservative movement, from free-market libertarianism to anti-Communism to traditionalist antimodernism; explore the way in which conservatives gained control of the Republican Party and toppled the liberal establishment; explore the rise of the New Right (including populist social conservatism and politicized evangelical Christianity) and of neoconservatism in the 1970s; and, finally, analyze the subsequent splintering of the conservative coalition. Prerequisite: admission to MA program in American Culture Studies or graduate standing and permission of program coordinator in University College (314-935-6778). Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 489 Education and Public Policy in the United States
This course takes a triangulated approach to the field of public policy as it relates to education and social problems. First, the course emphasizes theories of public policy that frame the field of policy studies. Major questions extending from this course feature include: What is public policy, policy behavior, its defining processes/features, and what social function does it serve? Second, the course emphasizes the skills related to the exercise of policy analysis. These skills include the crafting of technical documents within the field of public policy (e.g., a policy brief) and the application of scientific methods to the exploration of social problems/governmental actions. Likely issues related to this course feature include the use of scientific knowledge in political arenas, engagement with stakeholders, and the intended/unintended consequences of policy science to political decision-making. Third, this course simulates the policymaking context through students’ participation in mock congressional testimonies. These focal areas will become central to an understanding of four social concerns: school desegregation following the Brown decisions; affirmative action in higher education; Head Start programs and/or the ESEA Act of 1965, also known as No Child Left Behind. Educational opportunity, achievement inequality, and social change will be the primary interests that link these course features. Same as L12 Educ 489 Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4891 The Science and Politics of Testing in the U.S.
Credit 3 units.
U89 AMCS 4908 Advanced Seminar: Women in History of Higher Education and Professions
Same as U08 Educ 440
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 491 "St. Louis Got the Best of Me": Music in American Culture
This course will explore how music functions as a folklore, centering on the many musical styles, musicians, and fans that have shaped St. Louis from the early ragtime to today's diverse music scene. The term "folk music" may bring images of banjos and accordians, but every kind of music has a "folk" - folk who use music to represent their identities, their beliefs, and their struggles. Throughout the semester, students will question what "American" music sounds like, and what happens to music and culture as it is played, recorded, and represented. St. Louis provides us with a hothouse of musical cultures, incubating the blues and Jeff Tweedy, encouraging ethnic traditions from Ireland to Bosnia and beyond, providing a haven for fans like the Juggalos and a nationally renowned superfan, and fostering a homegrown fiddling style all our own. The course will use St. Louis' music culture - with lots of listening — to examine what music means to both ingroup and outgroup musicians and listeners but also the roles music plays in an ongoing dialogue about authenticity, traditionality, and appropriation between the individual, the community, and the larger society. This course satisfies the Fine Arts requirement for the Master of Arts in American Culture Studies.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 4937 U.S. Foreign Relations from the Great War to the Cold War
Same as U85 IA 4122
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 499 Ideologies in American Life II: From the Gilded Age to the Present
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 500 Independent Study
An independent research project under the supervision of a member of the AMCS faculty. Approved proposal must be presented at the time of registration. Open only to students in the AMCS program. For more information, contact the Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs at 314-935-6700.
Credit variable, maximum 3 units.

U89 AMCS 502 Directed Research Project
An independent research project under the supervision of a member of the AMCS faculty. Approved proposal must be presented at the time of registration. Required for Master of Arts in American Culture Studies. Open only to students admitted to the AMCS program.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 503 Master's Thesis
An independent research project under the supervision of a member of the AMCS faculty. Approved proposal must be presented at the time of registration. Prerequisite: U89 502.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5053 The Progressive Era in St. Louis and the Nation, 1900-1920
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 506 Spiritual Quests in American Culture
In contemporary American spiritual questing, Americans find respite from alienation, cynicism, materialism, and routine as they seek grounding and growth in spiritual realities. It is often through resistance to the American cultural landscape that individuals search for personal meaning and deeper social connection and understanding. Their quests take many forms, running the gamut from political to monastic. Some are religious, many are not. In this course, we identify and explore American spiritual life within social, political, and economic contexts. For historical grounding, we will read A Common Faith by John Dewey and The Varieties of Religious Experience by William James. We will examine recent scholarship on spirituality by reading works by Parker Palmer, Henri Nouwen, and Amanda Porterfield among others. We will also read a host of spiritual memoirs by writers such as Elizabeth Gilbert, Kathleen Norris, and Anne Lamott. The class will attempt to discern the uniquely American characteristics within the narratives we read. We will also pay special attention to the distinctiveness of spiritual language as it is noted by many writers in the field. Its terms, in general public discourse, are often denigrated, marginalized, sugar-coated, or omitted altogether. In this course, we legitimize and lend life to such terms as hope, vision, gratitude, silence, healing, joy, and wonder, among others.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 507 John Dewey's Vision of American Democracy
This course begins with an examination of the life and education of John Dewey. We go on to study some of Dewey's works on democracy and pragmatism with a focus on his commitment to democratic "methods" and ideals. We also focus on Dewey's notion that the moral aims and foundations of American democracy distinguish it from other democratic conceptions. We examine how Dewey links his views regarding liberty, community, and individualism to the domains of education, philosophy, and public life. Finally, we ground our studies in an analysis of democracy as it exists in America today, and consider if and how Dewey's theories prevail.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 508 America by Design
America by Design is a survey course that examines the key forms of the American built environment from the colonial period until the present. These forms include the American House, Workplace, The Street, Civic Spaces, and Shapes of the Land such as the National Park System. The course combines readings, lectures, audio-visual presentations, field trips, and class discussions to explore such "growths out of our past" in their historic and cultural contexts. This course will enable students to better understand the relationship between American culture and how we have shaped our landscape. Their new understanding should help students to better interpret the many layers of the American landscape as well as help communities thoughtfully design a more sustainable, meaningful future that grows gracefully out of its past.
Credit 3 units.
U89 AMCS 509 Philosophy in the United States
Same as U98 MLA 509
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 511 The Legal Landscape in a Changing American Society
This course is designed to examine the qualitative relationship between shifts in the transformations in law in America and the structure of American behavioral patterns and values. The course will scrutinize some of the intersections between the transformations in contemporary law and legal practices and the values that Americans impute to their legal system. Potentially, this review will include appraisals of such topics as: (a) Americans' perceptions of their legal agents; (b) claims of excessive litigation; (c) inequalities in access to the legal system; (d) law as mass media events; (e) shifting assessments of liability; (f) malaise over the capacities of juries; (g) the conversion of the legal profession to the business of law; and (h) the elusive costs of attempting to effect justice.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 512 The First Amendment: Free Speech and Free Press in the 21st Century
We will consider First Amendment history and theory with attention to current events. In the war against terrorism, how should the Supreme Court balance the demands of free speech and national security? Should the Supreme Court interpret the First Amendment to permit the government to punish "hate speech" about members of minority racial and religious groups? Are computer-generated images of children performing sexual acts protected by the First Amendment? Can government make speech denying the Holocaust a crime? Although most of the materials are Supreme Court decisions, analysis of First Amendment issues is not the exclusive province of lawyers and judges.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 513 Rhetoric of Law in American Society
Same as U98 MLA 5134
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 515 Discovering the Heartland
The central regions of the United States, most especially the prairies, were slow to find their place in America’s sense of itself. Called the “Great American Desert” on many early 19th-century maps, the interior grassland — with time and cultivation — proved able to feed a vast nation. What travelers dismissed as a “waste” and described as a kind of inland sea separating east from west came to epitomize America, became its heartland. This course will examine literary, political, and historical texts that mark our passage through this transition of thought and place. Readings will include exploration narratives, scientific reports, political speeches, and historical commentary (as well as, of course, novels and poems).
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 516 Lewis and Clark: Exploration, Encounter, and Culture
This course examines the specifics of the 1804-1806 "Voyage of Discovery" led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, and uses the expedition to investigate the dynamic conditions in North America at the turn of the 19th century. It also investigates the expedition as an adventure story, as a mythic construct, as a scientific endeavor, as a diplomatic mission, and as a geopolitical tool of national expansion. Encounters with Euro-American, African-American, and Native American cultures will also be examined.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 517 Ethics and American Culture
"How ought we live? How do we think about how to live? Who are we, as Americans? What is our character?" Robert Bellah poses these questions in his seminal work on American values, Habits of the Heart. We will explore these questions in this course by learning the ethical systems of relativism, personalism, virtue ethics, utilitarianism, deontological ethics, and some feminist ethics. We will also examine selections from Bellah's treatment of individualism and commitment in American life, and focus on more specific ethical issues in American culture.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 518 Strange Sounds: Five American Musical Pioneers
This course examines five American composers whose music represented a significant departure from the artistic conventions of their time: Charles Ives, John Cage, Harry Partch, Steve Reich, and Pauline Oliveros. By studying the challenging musical and written works of these American experimentalists, we will become familiar with some of the major currents of contemporary American art and music, and also discuss many provocative ideas advanced by these composers concerning the nature of music and its role in life and culture. Regular listening and reading assignments. No previous musical background required.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 519 Exploring America's Musical Landscape
Through recorded examples and archival video footage, students will investigate the rich and diverse character of America's musical landscape with particular emphasis on understanding American music and musical practice within the larger context of American culture. Music studied will include the traditional folk and religious music of the Appalachian Mountains and Mississippi Delta, jazz, blues, country music, popular music, and America's distinctive contributions in the realm of classical music. No previous musical background required.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 520 America: Through a Glass Darkly
This course studies depictions of America by non-Americans. We will examine the social, political, and economic aspects of their accounts and their influence on America's beliefs,
policies, and international reputation. The class will consider fundamental values as well as ethnic and gender-based differences. Comparing historical periods from both western and eastern perspectives, students will read texts written during the past three centuries from England, France, Germany, Cuba, and China. For the colonial/Revolutionary War period, we will study Charlevoix, History & Description of New France and Crèvecoeur, “Letters from an American Farmer.” Nineteenth-century readings include Tocqueville, Democracy in America; Frances Trollope, Views of Society and Manners in America; Dickens, American Notes; Francis Lieber, The Stranger in America; and newspaper articles by José Martí. Our discussions of the 20th century will focus on Kafka, Amerika; Francis Hsu, Americans and Chinese; Beauvoir, America: Day to Day; and Baudrillard, America. Same as U98 MLA 5203 Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5217 Paint It Black: Understanding American Film Noir
A product of highly diverse influences and traditions, film noir is known for its stylized visual aesthetic, cracking dialogue, moral ambivalence, and existential paranoia. Its style and language continue to inform filmmakers in Hollywood and worldwide. This seminar positions the aesthetic shapes and traumatic narratives of film noir within the context of American culture and film history during the war and post-war years. As importantly, it explores film noir as a test case in order to probe notions of film history, genre, and authorship, of cultural and intermedial transfer and the popular. Required screenings will take place during the second half of each week’s class. Films will likely include many of the following: The Maltese Falcon, Phantom Lady, Double Indemnity, Laura, Gun Crazy, Somewhere in the Night, The Glass Key, The Blue Gardenia and Chinatown. Prerequisite: Consult Course Listings. Same as U98 MLA 5217 Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF

U89 AMCS 5222 The Dysfunctional Family in American Drama
Same as U98 MLA 5223 Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5223 Film Stardom, Performance and Fan Culture
This course focuses on the Hollywood star system. We will explore stars in relation to celebrity and consumerism, especially how "stardom" is created by a system that seeks to create effects in film viewers whether conceived as audiences, fans, or spectators. We will examine the performance element of stardom and its relationship to genre, style, and changing film technology. Also of concern will be how stars and the discursive construction of stardom intersect with gender representation, race, ideology, sexuality, age, disability, nationality, and other points of theoretical interest to and historical inquiry in contemporary film studies. While emphasis will be placed on mainstream commercial U.S. cinema, students are encouraged to pursue questions beyond this framework within their own research. Required screenings. Same as L53 Film 422 Credit 3 units. A&S: LA & IS: HUM BU: BA

U89 AMCS 5234 The American Dream: Myth or Reality
This course will examine the origins and history of "The American Dream." What do we mean when we use this term? How does it resonate and influence our politics, advertising, and especially the arts? We will discuss the experience of immigration and assimilation, how foreigners with different cultural backgrounds enter American society. Beginning with the implications of America’s image as a “brave new world” in European thought and philosophy (including Shakespeare’s The Tempest), and the prescient view of our culture by de Tocqueville and others, we will examine how the dream of success and wealth has been depicted and employed in theater, fiction, cinema, and the visual arts. Texts include: Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby, Williams’s The Glass Menagerie, Miller’s Death of a Salesman, West’s Day of the Locust, Lorraine Hansberry’s A Raisin in the Sun, Albee’s “The Zoo Story” and “The American Dream,” and John Guare’s The House of Blue Leaves. We will consider cinema innovators whose work offers a commentary on the dream, such as Edward Hopper and Andy Warhol. We will also study cinematic innovators from Charlie Chaplin to Orson Welles and Francis Ford Coppola who have used “The American Dream” as significant elements in their work. Same as U98 MLA 524 Credit 3 units.
U89 AMCS 5263 The City in American and European Modernism
The city has played an ambiguous role in the modern European and American imaginations. For some, the city offers personal freedom in an environment of social diversity and experimentation, while for others the city is a place of isolation, alienation, and fragmentation. We will consider these and other conceptions of the city, with particular attention to the relationship between the city and modernist aesthetics. The course will examine literature, theory, and film, including James Joyce's Dubliners, Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway, Ayn Rand's The Fountainhead, William Gibson's Neuromancer, Lang's Metropolis and Ridley Scott's Bladerunner.
Same as U98 MLA 5263
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 527 Art, Society, and Culture in America's Gilded Age
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5291 St. Louis in the 1870s: from Revolution to Reaction: Social, Political, and Economic Change
The decade of the 1870s can be seen as one which began with great promise, a kind of "revolution" stemming from the victory of the Federal government in the Civil War and the hopes many had for further social reforms in a newly reunited America. But divisions were too strong, and growing stronger in the 1870s, between capital and labor, black and white, an optimistic electorate and a corrupt political system. The end of the decade heralded a new era of reaction, during which corruption flourished, the rich got richer, the poor got poorer, and the civil rights of African Americans and Native Americans reached a nadir. It was not until the middle of the 20th century that these conditions began once more to improve. During the decade, St. Louis went through several crucial changes involving education, transportation routes to and from the city, commerce, the rights of labor, progressive legislation, civic improvements, and political corruption. This course will chart these changes by approaching the decade year by year, focusing on a major local event with national repercussions that took place during each year from 1870 to 1879. Other local events will also be included in readings and discussions, including the creation of local parks (Tower Grove and Forest Park), a professional baseball team, philosophical thought in the community, and the local arts scene (drama, literature, graphic arts). Most of the readings will be from periodical publications, or excerpts from books, since no one book covers the period in any detail. The readings will be available on e-reserve. There will also be an emphasis on the use of primary sources, which are rich, particularly newspaper accounts. References to existing landmarks and historic sites for each week's major story will provide a sense of place and extend our studies into the community at large.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 530 Religion in American Culture: Narratives in Personal Spirituality
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 531 Vietnam and America
Prerequisite: admission to MA in American Culture Studies or Master of Liberal Arts programs.
Same as U98 MLA 5413
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 532 Power, Privilege, and the Law in America
The goal of this course is to study the role of law in producing, replicating, and disrupting hierarchies of power and privilege, particularly those based on racial groups, gender, social and economic class, and sexual orientation. The course will work from a book that includes articles, essays, and cases that cut across disciplines.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 533 Mark Twain - Humor and Politics in 19th-Century America
Mark Twain's unique status as a writer who has become a cultural icon cannot be explained merely in terms of literary gifts and aesthetic achievement. He is America's best-known author in large part because of his engagement with issues central to our institutions and political practice. The "southwestern" humorists who profoundly influenced his work used humor as a basis for political commentary and cultural criticism, a tradition to which Twain's own satirical treatment of everything from Congress to juries belongs. This course will examine both the literary achievement of Mark Twain and the ways in which his writings provide a critique — built over a lifetime — of American culture, probing the central issues of our politics (domestic and international) and our complicated relationships to one another.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 534 Theodore Roosevelt: Progressive Icon
The course will examine Theodore Roosevelt's many careers as a writer, naturalist, historian, soldier, naval theorist, police commissioner, reformer, father, husband, governor, president (a synthesis of domestic and foreign affairs), Progressive "radical," and his turn to jingoism and conservatism with the approach of the World War.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 535 Heaven and Earth Magic: Harry Smith's Anthology of American Folk Music
Harry Smith (1923-1991) was an experimental filmmaker, visionary painter, amateur anthropologist, alchemist, student of occult lore, polymath, and legendary archivist of sediments of human activity in motion. He was also a roots music anthologist whose Anthology of American Folk Music, a six-LP set released in 1952, has been called the founding document of the American folk revival and one of the most influential recorded collections of the second half of the 20th century. This course will explore the musical/cultural context, content and influence of Smith's Anthology. Topics discussed will include the musicians and musical traditions represented on the Anthology, the Anthology's impact on the American folk revival of the 1950s and early-1960s, and the Anthology's role in the emergence of folk-rock and rock in the mid-1960s. The course will also attempt to unravel some of the mysteries still associated with this important but enigmatic collection of American music. No previous musical background is required. This course counts toward the fulfillment of the arts distribution in the AMCS master's program.
Credit 3 units.
U89 AMCS 537 Women’s Health Care in America
This course provides a broad historical overview of women’s health care in America. We begin with an examination of midwifery in 18th-century America, then look at the increasing medicalization of childbirth and the new emphasis on women’s biological difference in the 19th century, and finally study changes in the medical profession and their impact on women’s health care in the early to mid-20th century. Through a wide range of material — including primary texts, such as doctor-authored tracts, diaries, letters, and fiction, as well as secondary material written by historians, feminist scholars, and medical writers — we trace the changing perceptions and conceptions of women’s bodies and health. Authors include: Catherine Maria Sedgwick, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Louisa May Alcott, Joan Jacobs Brumberg, and Natalie Angier. Same as U89 AMCS 480.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 538 Art and St. Louis History
From the first painting loaned to the Mercantile Library in 1846 to the formation of the City Art Museum (now the Saint Louis Art Museum) in 1909, art patronage in St. Louis was tied to the growth and development of the city’s merchant class. These businessmen-collectors recognized art’s potential as a tool for civic advancement and actively employed it at a variety of venues. This course introduces significant individuals in St. Louis as well as artists popular at this time and explores the growth of area cultural institutions within the context of social history.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 539 Topics in American Politics: American Urban Politics and History
This course focuses on the historical and cultural environment of cities from a political perspective. American urban areas are a cauldron of decision-making and power relationships which determine not only the shape of the physical spaces within cities, but also the allocation of resources. Topics include racial discrimination through historical and current national and local policies such as “blockbusting” or “redlining”; how economic development and redevelopment reshaped and continues to reshape the physical environment of cities and the political relationships within cities in the post World War II era; and the uses and meanings of urban public schools. This course counts toward the American Culture Studies program.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

U89 AMCS 541 FDR, the Presidency, and America in the 20th Century
This course will examine the impact of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s presidency on American politics and culture, the economic and social welfare of the country, and the nation’s role in world affairs. Did the Roosevelt presidency influence how Americans of different class, race, and gender relate to one another? Did it influence the role of the federal government during two of the most significant events of the 20th century, the Great Depression and the Second World War? We will probe these questions and related issues to assess Roosevelt’s historical legacy.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 542 White House Bound: Presidential Elections Past and Present
Same as U98 MLA 442
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5422 Anthropology Through the Arts
This course provides an overview of selected phenomena from prehistoric times to the present, illustrating how the arts and society interact. Our primary focus is on the visual arts, including fine arts and film. We will explore the process that leads to creativity in the individual. The course includes field trips to local cultural institutions.
Same as U89 Anthro 342
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5423 Oil Wars: America and the Cultural Politics of Global Energy
Same as L98 AMCS 442
Credit 3 units. A&S: SS A&S IQ: SSC Art: SSC

U89 AMCS 545 Introduction to American Culture Studies
This course introduces students to the origins and history of American studies, and to the various schools and approaches that have informed it. Through a shared case study on the American West and its mythic and mediated representations, methods of dealing with different kinds of sources — literary and historical, visual and aural, archival and ethnographic, electronic and online — are investigated. Inviting students to investigate and experiment with some of these approaches, the course ends with a project that students define and research based in part on the insights they have gained throughout the term. The course is intended for students enrolled in the master’s program in American Culture Studies. This course counts as an elective in the American Culture Studies program.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH, ACS

U89 AMCS 5461 Rise of Civilization in the New World
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 547 Violence and Nonviolence in American Culture
In this course we will look at the role of violence and nonviolence in American culture, asking ourselves whether it is possible to determine which of the two is the more powerful and effective force. We will examine some aspects of the philosophy of violence and nonviolence, using the works of Hannah Arendt, Martin Luther King, and possibly René Girard and others. We will undertake a historical analysis of the (often overlooked) role of nonviolent tactics in winning American wars from the Revolutionary War through the present war on terror. We will examine some aspects of social violence in contemporary American culture, including the school shootings at Columbine High School, and others, in order to determine the similarities and differences between social and political violence. We will look at the effectiveness of nonviolent social protest, including the civil rights movement and past and present peace movements.
Credit 3 units.
U89 AMCS 548 Wanderlust: An Exploration of Travel in American Culture
Long before the advent of the supersonic jet and Expedia.com, Americans were driven to wander by an all-consuming passion for travel. Pilgrimage and discovery narratives were widely popular in the 19th century, and contributed to the ideal of America as a mobile and self-determined society, while souvenir-hunting and grand touring became fashionable pastimes of a growing middle class. Many of our own ideas about travel — and indeed, much of its allure — can be traced back to earlier periods and practices, images and ideas. In this course, we will explore travel in American culture during the 19th and 20th centuries, focusing on the rich visual, print, and material culture associated with the traveler and traveling (guidebooks, travel narratives, advertisements, photos, paintings, souvenirs, etc.). Our exploration will take us far and wide, from popular tourist destinations (Niagara Falls and the Catskills) to what once seemed far-flung destinations (Brazil, Japan, the Middle East, and Hawaii) to a World's Fair to our own backyards. Our approach will be multidisciplinary and hands-on, as we seek to understand American wanderlust through the study of cultural artifacts.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 549 Greening of Hollywood
The class will analyze presentations of the natural world, the environment, and environmental issues in American film. Applying the methodology of Ecocriticism, we will examine how American film has responded to and portrayed environmentalism and nature. Combining Ecocriticism with Film Studies, we will discuss how the interaction between audience and film both educates audiences and illustrates the state of environmentalism in American culture. The aim will be to find a common ground between the films' portrayal of environmentalism and nature with discourses that occur publicly. We'll seek to identify any system of images, conventions, languages, and discourses that provides insight into the messages Americans are receiving. Furthermore, by demonstrating how Hollywood portrays environmentalism, nature, or environmental problems, the class will pursue a perspective on how Americans are dealing with "environmental problems," its discourses, assumptions, and stereotypes.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 550 Politics and Film
Examination of the role of film in 20th-century American political culture. The class will view eight films that reflect prominent political themes or issues such as the Cold War (Dr. Strangelove), corruption (All the President's Men), and electoral strategies (The Candidate), and discuss their relationship to the American political culture of the time. Students will be responsible for classroom discussion and several short papers. Prerequisites: admission to MA in American Culture Studies or graduate standing and permission of program coordinator in University College.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 551 The Center and the Edge: American Urban Form in Historical Perspective
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 553 Lewis and Clark: Exploration, Discovery, and the Americanization of the West
This course examines the 1804-1806 "Voyage of Discovery" led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. It will also investigate broader issues of culture by looking at how peoples of different perspectives and cultures interact; how they explore the unknown and try to explain it; how they gather and develop "knowledge" and accept or reject information. Through a careful reading of the journals written by members of the Corps of Discovery, related documents, and supplemental scholarship, we will examine the expedition from the perspectives of its participants, Native Americans, African Americans, and the Spanish and French peoples of the borderlands. We will then shift to considering how scholars have investigated themes associated with the expedition. These two pieces are designed to work together, providing both a foundation in the historical specifics of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and a scholarly context for considering North American cultures at the turn of the 19th century.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 554 "By the Sweat of Your Brow": A History of Work in America
This course traces the history of the most mundane and near-universal of human activities: work. It argues that work has a history: that who worked, what counted as work, and how work was represented in popular culture changed dramatically over the 19th and 20th centuries. We will look at the varied nature of work in American history, including the slave system, indenture and apprenticeship, housework, farm labor, factory work, and office jobs, service work, and child labor. We will, in addition, track changes in labor laws and struggles over working conditions, wages, and workers' organizations. We will consider a series of questions: Who worked? What counted as work? When and how were certain workers rendered obsolete? How were racial and gender hierarchies made and remade through labor systems? When, how, and why did workers challenge the authority of employers? When were workers' struggles successful or not? When and why did the state intervene in labor conflict? This is an interdisciplinary course; we will explore a wide variety of sources. We will read some of the major studies in American labor history along with some powerful and long-neglected primary documents — including Congressional reports, court cases, immigrant letters, slave petitions, business stationery, poetry, photographs, and film.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

U89 AMCS 555 American in the 1930s: America Responds to the Great Depression
The course is a multidisciplinary approach to the 1930s and American responses to the Great Depression. The course will consider the contradictory impulses toward experimental, escapist, documentary, modernist, and reactionary responses. Some of the topics the class will examine are the escapist nature of American cinema during the era, American literature, the development and popularity of radio, the music of Woody Guthrie, the Federal Arts Project, the rise of documentary style photography, the New York World's Fair, and political activism.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 556 Contemporary Native American Issues
Credit 3 units.
U89 AMCS 558 Songs of the American Dream: The Accompaniment of Our Social Identity
A nation’s musical heritage is more significant than a "recording" of its cultural evolution. It is, in fact, a multi-dynamic propellant of that evolution. This course examines the genesis and function of American musical genres, and the defining composers and artists who have provided the sonic architecture for society's evolution and continue to define our individual and collective American identities. The Roaring '20s, the Great Depression, World War II, the '60s Youth Revolution, the Civil Rights movement, etc., can be defined, and were often precipitated, by their signature musical styles and artists. Organized by the chronological occurrence of major cultural, socioeconomic, and geopolitical events occurring in the past century, Songs of the American Dream is a course designed to examine how the interdependence of music and social identity has nurtured and inspired our individual creative lives. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF

U89 AMCS 560 The Constitution in American Political Culture
The U.S. Constitution serves not only as the country’s supreme law but also as a powerful symbol, frequently deployed and much contested. Its meaning as a symbol derives from longstanding principles and from shared and remembered experience. Although constant in important respects, that meaning has also changed in significant ways over time. This course examines the cultural understanding that the Constitution embodies and the role it plays in American politics, using historical episodes such as the Framing and Reconstruction; recurring issues such as the commerce power and war power; materials such as court opinions, political tracts, public opinion surveys, and official acts; and throughout, the application of constitution-based claims, in both modern and historical contexts. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

U89 AMCS 5611 Visions and Revisions: 19th-Century Arts and Society
Same as U98 MLA 5611
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 562 Metropolitan America: Cultures and Landscapes of the 20th-Century City
This course introduces students to theories and issues in the study of urban and landscape history. We focus our examination of American cities, their cultures, and their built environments in the metropolitan age. We approach the American city as a landscape of socially and historically produced urban spaces, both public and private, whose forms are the result of multiple negotiations at many levels. We study cities as “texts,” as legible palimpsests upon which various groups attempt to inscribe power and resistance. At the same time, we place the “textual” city within the broad contexts of political, economic, and cultural forces that shape it over time. Same as U89 AMCS 457. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 566 What were they thinking? Founding Intent and the Institutions of the US Government
When the institutions that structure the U.S. Government were formed, they were supported or rejected by different kinds of arguments. Some of these arguments were moral in nature, but most focused on the legal and political effects these institutions would have on the nation. For example, would a low presidential salary encourage only those with pure motives to run for office, or would it encourage bribery and kickbacks once there? Were large electoral districts likely to produce representatives better able to secure the common good, or would the more distant relationship between representative and voter undermine a representative’s accountability to their constituents? Using some of the classic texts from the history of American political thought — including a large portion of the Federalist — we will investigate what the founders were thinking when they argued for, and against, the institutions that were proposed. We will look at large, constitutional institutions — like the Electoral College to select the president — as well as more recent, non-constitutional institutions — like the Senate filibuster. We will also consider some unsuccessful proposals — a 20-year presidential term of office, or giving states a veto over federal legislation. Our focus will be unpacking the expected practical effects of these institutions, and ask whether and why these expectations were met. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 567 Machine Politics in the U.S.
Machine politics practiced in American cities are unique in the Western world. Machine politics, whether in the form of a hierarchical machine or a more fragmented “machine style,” began in the mid-19th century and remains in some cities to this day. More often than not, machine politics is found in the Midwest and the eastern United States, home to many immigrant groups. Machine politics functions as a series of exchange relationships — favors — regarding employment, contracting, and the licensing of vice. It has provided an informal network of social services although it deals in individual cases and not systemic causes. Machine politics engenders its own code of ethics with a strong emphasis on loyalty. In this course, we will look in depth at a fragmented machine city — St. Louis — and the city that had the strongest and most powerful hierarchical machine, Chicago. We will be able to draw comparisons and contrasts and discern how institutions affect political culture and political behavior, including race relations. Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 568 Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States
This seminar focuses on the social, political, and cultural factors that shape relations between different ethnic and racial groups in the United States. The course will concentrate on three general areas. In one, we will examine the socio-historical foundations of contemporary race relations by looking at the treatment of different ethnic and racial groups around the turn of the 20th century. In a second, we will consider variations in the political and social engagement of different racial and ethnic groups by looking at the Civil Rights Movement, the political emergence of Native Americans, and the activism of Hispanics to name a few. And third, we will look at specific case studies that provide insight into the different social issues experienced by different groups, such as inner city life in poorer communities and the challenges of integrating into a white dominated society. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACS

U89 AMCS 569 Representing Jazz: Music, Movies, Art
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5691 Topics in AMCS
Credit 3 units.
U89 AMCS 570 The US in Vietnam, 1945-Present: The Challenge of Revolutionary Nationalism, Cold War Politics
Same as U85 IA 570
Credit 3 units. UColl: IAA

U89 AMCS 571 American Popular Singers (1920s-1980s)
Covers the voices, careers, and lives of 12 representative American popular singers who embody the cultural, economic, and social history of the United States in the realm of popular music across a span of decades when popular singers offered compelling examples of transformative changes across the spectrum of American life. Avoiding hagiography, legend, and appreciation is a primary goal of the course, which will assess these often iconic figures in fresh, resolutely historical terms to understand their place in American popular culture and history. This analysis will be based primarily on audio recordings and film and television appearances, supplemented by textual evidence connected directly to the singers, such as interviews and autobiographies. Recent secondary sources, both historical and critical, will inform the course as well. This course counts toward the AMCS MA distribution requirement in Arts.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 5711 Race & Gender: Social/Historical Transformations in the Broadway Musical
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH

U89 AMCS 5722 Comics and the Emerging Theory of Sequential Art
This course examines the emerging field of comics studies and sequential art theory as part of investigating the emerging understanding of sequential art as a medium. While not a uniquely American medium, comics have a specifically American context, and the emerging field of comics studies has a particular place and a particular role in the American academy. This course recognizes the importance of graduate students' need to understand the overall cultural and academic importance of visual culture, as represented in sequential art, and the way comics studies, as an emerging field and body of theory, fits into this larger picture. This course will investigate how a new topic (comics) develops a new suite of theory and methodology (sequential art theory) and works its way into the academy.
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 575 American Cultural Identity: The Civil War to The Jazz Age
In his "Letters From An American Farmer," J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur wasn't the first nor will he be the last to encounter the complex issues revealed by even a modest exploration of American identity. We will do so together in this course by examining selected post-Civil War literature, music, visual art, popular culture, paying special attention to recurrent themes woven into the fabric of our cultural heritage. It is a truism that understanding cultural patterns of the past provides a benchmark for grasp of the complexities we find around us today. Learning to translate knowledge from one context to another illustrates one of the course's central themes: how visual, written, performed art is rarely produced in cultural isolation, but rather from a rich matrix of social, geographic, psychological, political, historic, spiritual, economic, scientific, and accidental developments.
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, ACS

U89 AMCS 5751 The City in American Arts and Popular Culture: 1910-1940
Using visual media — painting, prints and illustration, film and animation — along with studies of vaudeville, and other forms of popular and mass entertainment, this seminar will analyze the presence of the city as a theme that registers a range of cultural attitudes toward the modern. Through close readings of visual and verbal texts, we will consider such issues as the relationship between work and leisure, and between high culture and popular arts. We'll look at critiques and celebrations as well as at how the popular arts help the ordinary man and woman to negotiate the challenges of the new mechanized and overscaled urban environment. Prerequisite: 300-level course in American 20th-century cultural history, American art, literature, or permission of instructor.
Same as L01 Art-Arch 475
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM Art: AH

U89 AMCS 5772 State Failure, State Success and Development
This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to examining the role governments play in development and economic outcomes. We will look at some of the competing arguments about governments in failed and successful states and compare those arguments to the empirical world. We will recognize that how governments affect development and economic outcomes in society is neither straightforward nor consistent with any of the ideological screeds that often dominate public discourse. We analyze readings by political scientists and economic historians.
Same as U85 IA 5772
Credit 3 units. UColl: IAI

U89 AMCS 623A American Public Art: From Monuments to Movements
Credit 3 units.

U89 AMCS 883 Continuing Master's Research
Required for continuing master of arts students. May enroll only two times. Course is audit only.