

# MASTER OF ARTS IN AMERICAN CULTURE STUDIES



## Why the MA in American Culture Studies?

American Culture Studies (ACS) students explore and critique American culture, past and present, from an interdisciplinary perspective. ACS M.A.'s acquire essential skills and credentials for continuing on to Ph.D work in a variety of fields and for professions within and beyond traditional academic settings: they are teachers and curators, activists and artists, journalists and digital humanists, editors and student affairs professionals, cultural programmers and public intellectuals.

## Why the MA in American Culture Studies at BGSU?

The ACS M.A. program at BGSU is a small, welcoming, rigorous interdisciplinary program. Students have considerable freedom to design their own curriculum to reflect their interests, choosing from courses offered by ACS-affiliated faculty across BGSU. Because the program is small, every student has access to close mentoring. In addition, graduate assistantships are available that provide students with experience in the undergraduate classroom, in academic programming, or in other areas that help students build career goals.

## Learning outcomes

- Communicate clearly orally and in writing interpretation of the American experience, informed by relevant cultural theory.
- Evaluate and synthesize the scholarly conversations in Cultural and American Studies.
- Design and produce rigorous interdisciplinary research informed by relevant theories in the fields of Cultural and American Studies.
- Engage with profession through activities in professional societies, publication, and other scholarly and professional activities.

## Professional opportunities

Students are encouraged and expected to participate in a range of professional activities aimed at preparing them to compete successfully on the job market. These include activities such as professional conference presentations, publication in scholarly journals and edited volumes, internships, and/or other professional activities related to their chosen field. The ACS Program offers students professional development funds to aid in the pursuit of these activities.

## Program strengths and uniqueness

- ACS is a small program but with access to over 60 BGSU faculty in close to twenty different academic areas.
- The ACS program is intentional about building a diverse, collegial, supportive community.
- Our students go on to a variety of successful careers, many of them by entering top Ph.D programs.
- We work with students to tailor their graduate experience to meet their career goals.



*"I came to American Culture Studies in 2003 for a master's degree and decided to return in 2009 for a Ph.D. I love the program and its people. Being a strong example of a successful interdisciplinary program, ACS offers a variety of courses and flexibility of academic approaches that have helped me maximize my potential and become successful in my field. If I were to begin my doctoral degree again, I would definitely go back to ACS."*

— An Tuan Nguyen, '09 MA/'13 Ph.D.  
Clinical Assistant Professor in Asian American Studies,  
University of Houston

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Dr. Kim Coates, Program Director and Graduate Coordinator,  
American Culture Studies, School of Cultural & Critical Studies  
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## Admission requirements

To gain regular status admission, applicants must have a bachelor's degree (preferably in relevant field) with a minimum 3.0/4.0 undergraduate grade point average (GPA). Applicants are required to submit scanned copies of official or unofficial transcripts from all institutions attended. Upon admission, final official or notarized copies of transcripts from all institutions where degrees were earned and diplomas from international institutions must be submitted. Applicants are also required to submit official scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

All applicants must submit a résumé or CV, a statement of purpose, a writing sample, and three (3) letters of recommendation.

International applicants are also required to submit scores from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTEA), or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Successful completion of ELS 112 will also be accepted for this requirement.

## Cost of tuition

Please refer to [www.bgsu.edu/offices/bursar](http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/bursar) for current information on tuition and fees.

## Financial assistance

A limited number of teaching and research assistantships are available for full-time students who qualify. For more information, please contact the program.

Domestic students enrolled in four (4) or more credit hours are eligible to apply for financial aid using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to calculate student contribution and financial need. You may apply online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

## How to apply

Visit the BGSU Graduate College website at [www.bgsu.edu/graduate/admissions](http://www.bgsu.edu/graduate/admissions).

**Fall Application Deadline:** Applications and supporting materials should be received by January 31st to receive fullest consideration for admission and financial assistance. Applications received after January 31st will be reviewed for admission, but consideration for financial assistance may be limited based on available funds.

## Curriculum

A total of 33 credit hours of coursework at the graduate level are required.

- ACS 6300. Methods and Theories of American Culture Studies (taken first semester)
- The remaining hours are selected from appropriate courses in American Culture Studies, Art History, Communication Studies, English, Ethnic Studies, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Popular Culture, Sociology, Media Production and Studies, Theatre, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and other related fields. No more than fifteen hours should be taken in a single department or program other than American Culture Studies.

## Master's Capstone Component

- Plan I: Thesis Option:

The candidate must write an interdisciplinary thesis in keeping with the philosophy of the program. Under Plan I, students complete 30 hours of course work and receive three hours of credit for the accepted thesis for a total of 33 semester hours. For most students, completion of the Plan I option requires two years of full-time study in the American Culture Studies MA program.

- Plan II: Comprehensive Exam Option:

The basic requirements are the same as Plan I, except 33 hours of coursework are required. The student electing Plan II will sit for a four-hour written examination, covering periods in American cultural history, the student's course work, the relationship of American Culture Studies to the traditional disciplines, American Culture Studies methodology, and important themes in American culture. The examination will be based upon each student's individual course of study.



*"I love being a part of ACS because it has an interdisciplinary touch that widens your scope of knowledge and research, and also enables you to study pretty much anything about culture. As an international student, I am glad that the professors and other staff members try as much as possible to make our experiences worthwhile."*

— Amelia Amemate  
M.A. student