

MASTER OF ARTS IN POPULAR CULTURE



Why the Master of Arts in Popular Culture?

The Master of Arts in Popular Culture is an interdisciplinary program designed for students with unique academic interests who are attracted to the idea of studying with faculty from diverse fields such as anthropology, folklore, Asian studies, women's studies, American studies, ethnic studies, media studies, and ethnomusicology. Students choose their own academic focus within the study of popular culture.

Why the Master of Arts in Popular Culture at BGSU?

The MA in Popular Culture at BGSU is widely recognized nationally and internationally and has attracted students from all over the US and various other countries over the past four decades. Students benefit from small classes and individual attention, allowing for the development of close student-faculty working relationships. The individualized nature of the program is emphasized as students work with a graduate advisor to identify academic and research interests and to produce master's theses and alternative projects covering a wide range of topics and subject areas.

Learning outcomes

Graduates of the MA in Pop Culture will be able to:

- Interpret and critically evaluate specific case studies in diverse cultural and historical contexts using fundamental concepts, major debates, and methods of analysis of the global phenomenon of popular culture with theories of race, class, sexuality, gender, and disability.
- Produce a research project of publishable quality with a rigorous argument and strong theoretical basis that demonstrates engagement with contemporary scholarly discourse.
- Develop and communicate (verbally and in writing) clear, persuasive, and sophisticated interpretations of popular culture materials and practices.
- Evaluate how popular culture shapes and reflects personal and social experiences, diversity in a multicultural society, and American culture's relationship to global cultures.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Dr. Jeffrey A. Brown, Chair and Graduate Advisor
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Program strength and uniqueness

- Bowling Green State University is the only U.S. university that offers a master's degree in Popular Culture.
- The faculty members are widely published and globally recognized.
- Faculty and students in the department frequently organize and host popular culture conferences on topics that range from electric guitars and heavy metal music to comic books, romance novels and Asian popular culture.
- Students develop interdisciplinary projects across media, time periods and regions, and they integrate popular culture studies with studies of race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, and nationality.
- An extensive alumni network provides a variety of internship opportunities.
- BGSU is home to the Browne Popular Culture Library and the Music Library and Bill Schurk Sound Archives, which house millions of rare items accessible for research.
- The program offers thesis and non-thesis options.

Professional opportunities

The program has excellent placement for graduates admitted to Ph.D. programs. Recent graduates have pursued higher degrees in fields such as English, Communication, Children's Literature, American Studies, Music, Texts and Technology, World Arts and Culture, African Cultural Studies, and Folklore. Other alumni have chosen to pursue careers in political activism, NGO/non-profit work, media (including television, comics, journalism, social media management, digital content production, and news), counseling, museum or library work, higher or secondary education administration and teaching, business, and journalism.



My time in BGSU's Popular Culture program was full of academic challenges and professional growth. I developed close bonds with members of my cohort, and the daily interaction I had with them focused and enriched my learning. I have maintained invaluable relationships with faculty and continue to use what I learned in my current position at NAU.

— Anthony Thibodeau '14, Instructor
Department of Anthropology, Northern Arizona University

Admission requirements

The program requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution and strongly prefers applicants who have a minimum of a 3.0 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. They are also required to submit official scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

All applicants must submit three letters of recommendation, a statement of purpose articulating a specific research interest within popular culture, and a current resume or CV.

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 for current information on tuition and fees.

Financial assistance

Teaching assistantships and research assistantships are available for full-time students who qualify. For more information, please contact the department.

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.

How to apply

Visit the BGSU Graduate College website at www.bgsu.edu/graduate/admissions.

Application deadline, fall term: January 14

Curriculum

A total of 32 credit hours of coursework at the graduate level are required.

Required Graduate Seminars

- POPC 6750: Theory and Methods Seminar (Fall, 1st year) 6 hours
- POPC 6600: Folklore and Folklife Seminar (Spring, 1st year) 3 hours
- POPC 6610: International Popular Culture Seminar 3 hours

Required Research Course (3 hours required)

- POPC 6910: Research for Non-Thesis 3 hours
- POPC 6990: Thesis Research 3 hours

Popular Culture Seminars (9 hours required)

Examples of Popular Culture seminars have included:

- Heroes and Villains
- Television Comedy and Gender
- Music as Popular Culture
- Music and Sexuality
- International Women's Narrative
- Indian Popular Culture & the Middle Class
- Spy Films and Television
- Cultural Tourism
- Creativity in Everyday Life
- Heavy Metal Music and Culture
- Female Action Heroes
- Black Popular Music
- Superheros in American Culture
- Romance Novels
- TV Comedy and Gender

Elective or Independent Study Courses (6 hours required)

Recent independent studies topics have included:

- Folktales and Proverbs in Africa
- Traditional Narrative
- Postcolonial Literature
- Sherlock Holmes and Crime in Victorian England
- Performance of Gender in Popular Dance
- Philosophy of Play and Gaming
- Indian Popular Culture
- International Rock Music