

# MASTER OF ARTS IN THE FIELD OF AMERICAN STUDIES

Housed in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, American studies at GW is one of the nation's most rigorous and innovative programs. With a core of eleven full-time and nine affiliated and associated faculty members, the program emphasizes interdisciplinary cultural analysis with approaches from anthropology, geography, political theory, history, architectural history, art history, folklife, performance studies, English, and media studies. The department's particular strengths are in cultural history and cultural studies, art and culture, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, transnational American studies, urban studies of space and place, political and public cultures, and religion.

Students in the master's program can pursue a general degree in American studies or a concentration in museums and material culture. The general program prepares students for advanced work at the PhD level. The museums and material culture concentration, which draws on the department's interdisciplinary strengths in the analysis of culture, provides pre-professional training with strong links to pertinent DC cultural resource management institutions, including the Smithsonian Institution. Both programs stress professional-level research and writing skills.

Visit the program website (<https://americanstudies.columbian.gwu.edu/>) for additional information.

## ADMISSIONS

**Admission deadlines:** Fall - February 1: Priority consideration for admission and funding; April 1: Guaranteed review for admission and consideration for funding, if available. (Applications for admission will continue to be accepted after April 1, when space remains available in the program.)

Spring - October 1

**Standardized test scores:** The GRE general exam is not required.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the PTE Academic is required of all applicants except those who hold a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from a college or university in the United States or from an institution located in a country in which English is the official language, provided English was the language of instruction.

Minimum scores for the program are:

- Academic IELTS: an overall band score of 6.0 with no individual score below 5.0; or

- TOEFL: 550 on paper-based or 80 on Internet-based; or

- PTE Academic: 53

Applicants to the MA who do not meet minimum English language requirements may be eligible for our full-time Applied English Language program.

**Recommendations required:** Two (2) recommendations

**Prerequisite requirements:** The degree of Bachelor of Arts in American studies or a related field.

**Prior academic records:** Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

If transcripts are in a language other than English, English language translations must be provided. The English translation alone should be uploaded into your application.

**Statement of purpose:** An essay of no more than 500 - 750 words, in which you state your purpose in undertaking graduate study in your chosen field and in American Studies at GW in particular, including your academic objectives, research interests, and career plans.

**International applicants only:** Please follow this link - <https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants> (<https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants/>) - to review the International Applicant Information carefully for details on required documents and English language requirements.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Office of Graduate Studies  
The George Washington University  
801 22nd Street NW, Phillips Hall 107  
Washington DC 20052

For additional information about the admissions process visit the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Frequently Asked Questions (<https://columbian.gwu.edu/graduate-admissions-faq/>) page.

Contact:

[askccas@gwu.edu](mailto:askccas@gwu.edu)  
202-994-6210 (phone)

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

## REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

The general requirements stated under Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate Programs (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#degreeregulationstext>).

Completion of course and other requirements in either general studies or in the museums and material culture concentration.

General studies—30 credits, including a 3-credit required course, 6 credits in research seminar courses, and 21 credits in elective courses; museums and material culture concentration—30 credits, including 6 credits in required courses, 6 credits in research seminars, and 18 credits in elective courses.

### General studies requirements

Code	Title	Credits
AMST 6100	Scope and Methods in American Studies	

At least six credits in research seminars. This may include AMST 6195 taken twice or other approved research courses.

A minimum of 21 credits in elective courses pertaining to the study of American culture approved by the department. These may include graduate courses in anthropology, English, fine arts and art history, geography, history, media and public affairs, and political science.

### Concentration in museums and material culture requirements

This concentration, offered in association with the Smithsonian Institution, emphasizes the use of physical objects and spaces in historical research.

Code	Title	Credits
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#### Required

AMST 6100	Scope and Methods in American Studies	
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AMST 6710	American Material Culture	
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At least 6 credits in designated research seminars.

At least 18 additional credits in courses pertaining to the study of American culture, museum studies, and museum education