Master of Arts in



SPRING 2026 **COURSE CATALOG**

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WHO ARE WE?



The only program of its kind in the University System of Georgia, Kennesaw State University's Master of Arts in American Studies program (MAST) boasts fifteen years of boundary-crossing excellence in creative — and innovative — scholarship and programming related to the Americas. Situated in KSU's Interdisciplinary Studies Department, our faculty affiliate from multiple colleges and departments – from the Departments of History, English, Art, and Theatre and Performance Studies, to interdisciplinary programs in Black Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Latin American and Latinx Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies, and Peace Studies. Our students, likewise, come from multiple academic backgrounds to study and engage communities and issues from across the Americas.



This 30 credit hour program includes four required courses (History, Literature, Methods, and Scholarship) and is designed to be flexible so that students can devise pathways reflecting their individual research interests and career goals. Remaining courses are taken in three clusters: Cultural Production; Place and Identity; and Historical Studies. We encourage interdisciplinary approaches, traditional and public scholarship, and civic and community engagement. As part of the program requirements, students finish the degree by working with a faculty advisor to complete a Capstone thesis or project of their own design.

We produce informed and motivated citizens who often point to the openness of the field of American Studies and to our individualized approach to guiding students through the MAST program as highlights of their grad school experience.

Engage in intersectional research, receive one-on-one mentorship from interdisciplinary faculty – and make your intellectual curiosities a career!

CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM

Core Requirements (12 hours)

AMST 6201 History and Culture of the Americas

AMST 6401 Literature and Culture of the Americas

AMST 7000 American Studies Scholarship

AMST 7100 American Studies Methods

Disciplinary Electives (9 hours)

Any 7000-level AMST courses

Related Electives (3 hours)

Any 7000-level AMST courses or other approved graduatelevel courses

Capstone Experience (6 hours)

AMST 7901 Capstone Literature Review and Proposal

AMST 7902 Capstone Experience

PROGRAM TOTAL: 30 CREDIT HOURS



ELECTIVES

Historical Studies

AMST 7200 American Social Movements

AMST 7210 Historical Period

AMST 7230 Public History and Culture

AMST 7240 Enterprise & Labor in American Culture

Cultural Production

AMST 7410 Literature and Performance in American Culture

AMST 7420 American Popular Culture

AMST 7430 American Popular Music

AMST 7450 American Visual Culture

AMST 7460 Movements in American Culture

Place and Identity

AMST 7300 American Cities, Suburbs, and Countryside

AMST 7330 Identities and Social Groups

AMST 7510 Passages to America

AMST 7520 America in Transnational Context

LITERATURE & CULTURE OF THE AMERICAS

Online Synchronous
Wednesdays at 6:30pm-7:45pm

This section will trace the development of **American identity through** various literary movements, from the colonial and early national periods up to postmodern and contemporary literatures. We will focus on authors and texts that have both shaped and challenged mainstream ideas of American literature, considering the ways that our country has been engaged in and formed through transnational and multicultural conversations since its very beginnings.



We'll sample a broad range of genres, ranging from poetry to travel narratives, from literary theory to novels, and we'll hear from authors who represent a broad range of periods and perspectives. Ultimately, this class will **explore** the ways that America imagines itself through the stories we tell.

Professor of English and American Studies, as well as Director of the M.A. in American Studies program. She is the author of Encountering the Sovereign Other: Indigenous Science Fiction (Lansing: Michigan State UP, 2021), and her work has appeared in such journals as Studies in American Indian Literatures, Native South, and Studies in Comics.



AMERICAN STUDIES METHODS

Online Synchronous Mondays at 7:00pm-8:40pm

The methods course introduces students to current methods in American Studies **research and public practice**, preparing students to write their MA theses or capstone projects. The course focuses on core concepts, objects of analysis, and evolving research practices used for working in American Studies. In this class, students will grapple with the concept of interdisciplinarity, examine the values of a variety of disciplinary methods, and think consciously about which methods make the most sense for their



Dr. Rebecca Hill completed her PhD in American Studies minoring in Gender Studies at U of MN in 2000, going on to teach at City University of New York until 2010 when she began directing the MAST program at KSU until 2020. Her research focuses on intersections between social movements, state power, and popular culture with attention to race and gender. Her early publications are on the history of the Communist Party of the US, later broadening her scope to anarchism and socialism. Her academic work has generally come from questions developed in the context of grassroots organizing and activism.

own research project in
American Studies. Students
will read works emphasizing
methods in historical
research, visual culture,
ethnography, literary
criticism and combinations
of these methods, and will
practice applying those
methods to their own original
research projects.



AMERICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Online Synchronous Thursdays at 6:00pm-7:40pm

In this course, we will examine the evolution of various **women's and feminist movements around the world** including their priorities, challenges, and successes. Drawing upon a range of sources and the work of activists and scholars, we will consider the formation, expansion, and intersections of select movements and how transnational feminism has shaped geopolitical landscapes.

Further, we will discuss the role of women's and feminist movements in shaping political and cultural discourses on human rights around the world.





Dr. Katharine Schaab's work is situated in American Studies, Women's & Gender Studies, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Her recent work has appeared in The Journal of Popular Culture, Women's Studies, Critical Studies in Television, Feminist Formations, The Journal of American Culture, and Issues in Interdisciplinary Studies.

AMERICAN CITIES, SUBURBS, & COUNTRYSIDE

Online Asynchronous

We will examine the history of **suburban development in metro Atlanta since 1945**, starting by studying suburban trends in general and what encouraged Americans to move to the suburbs in the post-World War II era. We'll discuss how suburbs changed from 1945 to the 2020s, and investigate different forms suburbs took. In addition to reading a variety of scholarly analyses, we'll use our own research and observations of how Atlanta evolved "outside the perimeter" to consider new arguments about **Atlanta's suburban infrastructure**, **culture**, **immigration patterns**, **environment**, **and political landscape**.

We'll talk about malls, traffic, stadium building, placemaking, environmental challenges, suburban stereotypes, housing, skyscrapers and business parks. All are welcome, and no previous knowledge of Atlanta or suburban development is necessary.





Dr. LeeAnn Lands is a Professor of History at Kennesaw State University. She is author of Poor Atlanta: Poverty, Race, and the Limits of Sunbelt Development (UGA Press, 2024) and Culture of Property: Race, Class, and Housing Landscapes in Atlanta, 1880-1950 (UGA Press, 2009).

CAPSTONES & PRACTICUMS

Required capstones and optional practicums are the signature features that allow students to individualize their MAST degrees. Aside from focusing on a topic that relates to the broad field of American Studies, there is no limit to what you can do in these courses. Over the years, students have completed their capstones in a variety of ways, from creating documentary films to analyzing representations of race in pop culture to designing public history exhibits for local museums.

MAST alumna Mandy McGrew thought she wanted to study the Romani in her graduate career. But, after she met her mentor, Dr. Alan LeBaron, she became an integral part of his Maya Heritage Project. For her capstone, she created the Maya Healthcare Toolkit, which was shared with local hospitals that often treat Maya immigrants. Similarly, alumna Kimmy Rae Fisher engaged in public scholarship by researching arguments about transgender rights for Dr. Amy Donahue's Vada project, a collaborative debate platform designed for classroom use.

MAST graduate Ann Burkly fulfilled her Practicum by cleaning up and documenting the most famous, and arguably most gorgeous, section of Howard Finster's Paradise Gardens in Summerville, Georgia, in what's known as Mosaic Garden. Along similar lines, for her Capstone, Annie Moye created a digital archive for her partners at the Pasaquan Preservation Society, which later contributed towards a major restoration effort at the site, funded by the Kohler Foundation.

In graduate school, you never know what will grab your interest or inspire you. Through Practicums and Capstones, MAST students have the opportunity to get creative, using what they learn in the classroom to support local communities and organizations.







ALUMNI & CAREERS



Our graduates work in a variety of fields but are especially drawn towards jobs in education, museums, nonprofits, human relations, and community engagement. Our students also go on to enter Ph.D. programs at schools like University of Massachusetts Amherst (Afro-American Studies), Georgia State (Sociology), and University of South Florida (Anthropology). As part of her Capstone project, 2011 graduate Wende Ballew even established her own non-profit, which she still operates today. A few graduates have landed lucrative careers in marketing in the Atlanta area, and a few more have followed their passions into the art world, 2016 graduate Gabriel Greaves works as an Education Assistant at the Prince George's African American Museum and Cultural Center: alumna Paola Garcia leads diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across the Southeast through her role at Year Up; and 2023 graduate Breighlynn Polk recently became the inaugural fellow for the HBCU Radio Preservation Project.

TESTIMONIALS



""The MAST program at Kennesaw State was a great way to do in-depth graduate study on a variety of topics in American culture and history. The interdisciplinary nature allowed me to take classes toward both my professional goals and personal interests. Through MAST, I was also able to participate in a study abroad program in Oayaca, Maxico for 2 weeks during take classes toward both my professional goals and personal study abroad program in Oaxaca, Mexico for 2 weeks during the summer — it was an amazing opportunity I will never forget."

-Jacqueline Winters-Allen

"The MA in American Studies opened doors for me. Before this program, I did not know what I wanted to do professionally other than find a way to earn a living writing. I especially did not envision a career in academia, because I wasn't a particularly involved undergraduate. I stayed quiet, completed my work, and hurried off campus as quickly as I could once class was over. My experience in graduate school was completely different. Though the program was regulated, the challenge. I learned that I liked unpacking difficult theoretical concepts and talking about them with others. I have been been a something with my passion for something with my passion with my passion for something with my passion with different. Though the program was rigorous, I learned I enjoyed learned that I could do something with my passion for social justice. I loved the flexibility of the program. The students I took classes with all came from different academic backgrounds. I was an English undergrad, but I learned with students with degrees in Theatre and Performance Studies, History, Education, Sociology, Anthropology, and Business. The faculty I studied under are brilliant, dedicated, and passionate about helping students succeed. Since I have graduated, I continue to collaborate with some of my professors from American Studies for writing projects, conference presentations, scholarly service work, and activism."

-Ashley McFarland



"The MAST program changed the way that I see the world; it opened my mind to the many varied perspectives of everyone around me and helped me take a critical view of everyday experiences. This practice has helped me to be successful in my career as an educational developer where I work with faculty and students from different backgrounds, motivations, and views of the world. The high expectations set by my professors and faculty mentors in the program showed me what I was capable of accomplishing.

-Mandy McGrew

HOW TO APPLY

MAST IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS NOW!

To be considered for admission to the program, applicants must complete the application process through <u>KSU's Graduate Admissions Office</u>. The following application materials must be included for consideration:

- Letter of Application: The letter should be specific to the program and should be 2-3 double-spaced pages in length.
- Writing Sample: The sample should be relevant to the field of American Studies broadly defined, and it should be refined and revised to fit within 5-7 double-spaced pages.
- **GPA**: The program minimum is 2.75 for all undergraduate courses from the degree-granting institution, but we expect the class will average above 3.0.
- Two Letters of Recommendation: At least one letter should be from a faculty member at the last school you attended (unless you have been out of school for more than five years).
- C.V./Resume: (Optional).
- \$60 application processing fee: The MAST program can offer application fee
 waivers as needed. Please contact the program director, Dr. Miriam Brown
 Spiers, to request a waiver.

We also offer Graduate
Research and Teaching
Assistantships on a
competitive basis. If you
are interested in
obtaining a graduate
assistantship, you are
encouraged to apply
early for consideration.
GAs come with a tuition
waiver and a small
stipend.



Deadlines for Applications:

Fall: July 1
Spring: November 1
Summer: April 1

For more information, visit us online or contact the Program Director

Dr. Miriam Brown Spiers mspiers 1 @ kennesaw.edu

DOUBLE OWL PATHWAYS

The American Studies program offers 6 pathways:

- · Anthropology BA
- English BA
- · English Education BS
- History BA
- · History Education BS
- · Interdisciplinary Studies BS





Double Owl Pathway Info Double Owl Pathways afford undergraduate students the opportunity to obtain their undergraduate and graduate degrees faster and at a significantly lower cost than if they pursued each degree independently. By bundling both degrees into Pathways, highly motivated and committed students will graduate sooner than their peers and with a head start on their careers. KSU has a variety of Pathways to choose from.



Review Double Owl Pathway Talk to your advisor and the Pathway contact Apply and get admitted to the Double Owl Pathway

Working with your graduate contact, apply to the graduate program Get admitted and join the graduate program!