

**Programme Specification**  
**Date amended: 15 March 2004**



**1. Programme Title(s) and UCAS code(s):**

BA American Studies (T700 and T701)

**2. Awarding body or institution:**

University of Leicester

**3. Typical entry requirements:**

BBB at A Level or 300-360 points (T701) and BBC at A Level or 280-340 points (T700), 2 AS Levels considered in place of one A Level. Alternative entry routes include: European Baccalaureate pass with 65% or International Baccalaureate pass Diploma with 32 points.

**4. Programme aims:**

The BA American Studies programme aims to:

- provide an intellectually challenging and stimulating curriculum that draws on the research expertise and teaching strengths in, or closely associated with, the Centre for American Studies;
- deliver a multidisciplinary American Studies syllabus with a clear line of progression from introductory modules in Year One (e.g. Introductions to American History, Literature and Politics), via intermediate modules in Year Two (e.g. Ethnicity and Diversity in American History and Literature), to opportunity for all students to concentrate on aspects of particular interest in specialist modules in the Final Year (e.g. American Studies options and year-long dissertation).
- create a supportive environment to assist the students' academic, cultural and personal development;
- develop students' ability to initiate and carry out independent research on topics relating to American history, politics and culture;
- harness students' individual interests and enthusiasms through the diverse academic approaches that are embedded in the multidisciplinary structure of the American Studies degree – a structure that also reflects diversity in the curriculum;
- provide a learning experience in which transferable skills can be developed alongside specific subject knowledge to equip students for a range of career opportunities;
- develop students' ability to access, organise, and present information to professional standards of accuracy, articulacy, and explicitness, including the acquiring and use of relevant bibliographical skills;

**5. Reference points used to inform the programme specification:**

- QAA Benchmarking statements for Area Studies  
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/crntwork/benchmark/phase2/areastudies.pdf>
- QAA Subject Review  
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/revreps/subjrev/All/q137-99.htm>
- University of Leicester Learning and Teaching Strategy  
<http://www.le.ac.uk/teaching/pdf/strategy/lts2002.pdf>
- University of Leicester Academic Review Report
- First Destination Survey
- Graduate Survey
- External Examiners' Reports

## 6. Programme Outcomes:

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
<b>(a) Discipline specific knowledge and competencies</b>		
<b>(i) Mastery of an appropriate body of knowledge</b>		
Demonstrate mastery of an appropriate body of multidisciplinary knowledge pertaining to the study of the United States of America.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, resource-based learning.	Essays, essay-based examinations, dissertations, seminar presentations, seminar discussions.
<b>(ii) Understanding and application of key concepts and techniques</b>		
Demonstrate an understanding of the multidisciplinary approach to the study of American culture, history and politics.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, application of IT and numeracy skills, team work	Essays, essay-based examinations, seminar presentations, dissertations, seminar discussions.
Demonstrate a variety of critical approaches to the interpretation of American culture, history and politics.	Tutorials, seminars, independent research, application of IT and numeracy skills, team work	
<b>(iii) Critical analysis of key issues</b>		
Analyse and integrate an understanding of the culture, history and politics of the USA.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, team work, dissertations.	Essays, essay-based examinations, seminar presentations, independent research, seminar discussions, dissertations.
Analyse historical, cultural and political processes in the formation and development of the USA as a nation.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, team work, dissertations.	
Develop ability to effectively utilize the critical methods that contribute to the field of American Studies.	Lectures, tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, team work, dissertations.	
<b>(iv) Clear and concise presentation of material</b>		
Present and develop key ideas and arguments in a variety of written and oral formats.	Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, team work, dissertations.	Writing tasks, seminar presentations, seminar discussions, dissertations.
<b>(v) Critical appraisal of evidence with appropriate insight</b>		
Develop and sustain argument and analysis of historical, political, literary, and visual texts, formulating appropriate questions and utilizing evidence.	Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, team work, dissertations.	Essays, essay-based examinations, seminar presentations, independent research projects, seminar discussion, dissertations.
Read, analyse and reflect critically and contextually upon a range of texts, documents and other source material.	Tutorials, seminars, directed reading, independent research, IT and numeracy skills, team work, dissertations.	
<b>(vi) Other discipline specific competencies</b>		
Design, research and present a sustained and independently conceived piece of writing reflecting an understanding of one or more contributing disciplines in American Studies.	Independent research, long and comparative essays.	Independent research projects, dissertations, final year module essays.

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
(i) Oral communication		
Demonstrate clarity, fluency and coherence in oral expression of issues pertaining to American Studies as a field of inquiry.	Seminars and presentation of team work projects.	Formative and summative assessment of seminar presentations (in Years 1 and 2), contribution to seminar discussions.
Participate effectively as an Americanist in group discussion.	Seminars and presentation of team work projects.	
Appropriate use of visual aids and supporting material.	Seminars and presentation of team work projects.	
(ii) Written communication		
Demonstrate clarity, fluency and coherence in written expression relating to American Studies as a field of inquiry.	Written exercises and group work projects.	Essays, essay-based examinations, seminar presentations, independent research projects, contribution to seminar discussions.
Demonstrate the ability to write to varying lengths, audiences and levels of formality.	Written exercises and group work projects.	
(iii) Information technology		
Use IT to effectively support American Studies, including use of IT for bibliographic and archive searches, data analysis, and written/visual presentation of evidence and interpretation.	Induction programme, computer practical classes, data analysis, independent research	Independent research projects, computer-based exercises, problem-based exercises.
Utilization of word processing, email, blackboard, internet and powerpoint as writing, data retrieval and research tools.	Computer practical classes, taught modules, independent research,.	
(iv) Numeracy		
Analyse historical and political data using statistical and graphical techniques.	Computer practical classes attached to American history and economic history modules.	Independent research projects, computer-based exercises, problem-based exercises.
(v) Team working		
Collaboratively solve problems, identify methodologies, manage distribution of effort, and collectively arrive at conclusions.	Seminars, formative and summative group work projects.	Group seminar presentations, contribution to discussions, contribution to team work exercises.
Students will be able to reflect constructively on the challenges of team working.	Seminars, formative and summative group work projects.	
(vi) Problem solving		
Demonstrate ability to solve historical, literary, political and media-related problems.	Seminars, essays, team work, independent research.	Essays, independent research projects, statistical and computer-based exercises.
Demonstrate ability to design research methodologies and make links between contributing disciplines in American Studies.		

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
<b>(vii) Information handling</b>		
Demonstrate the ability to retrieve, manipulate and assimilate sources and critical information.	Seminars, independent research, computer practical classes, team work.	Essays, independent research projects, computer-based exercises, problem-based exercises.
Develop the ability to transfer and analyse information in construction of arguments.	Seminars, independent research, computer practical classes, team work.	
<b>(viii) Skills for lifelong learning</b>		
Reflect upon own learning achievements and plans for personal, educational and career development.	Seminars, career development programmes, resource based learning, tutorials with personal tutor, year abroad, dissertations	Seminar exercises, profile from year abroad, abstract for dissertation, curriculum vitae.
Time management.	All of the above, particularly independent research.	Seminar exercises, essays, dissertation, team work projects.
Demonstrate intellectual independence through the setting of research tasks and the solving of historical, political and cultural problems.	All of the above, particularly independent research.	All of the above.

**7. Special features:** The Centre for American Studies has two degree routes running in parallel: a three-year degree in Leicester and a four-year degree in which the third year is spent at one of the University's partner institutions in the USA. The year abroad enables four-year students to develop specific disciplines of interest and to work closely with archives and primary documents that are unavailable in the UK, in preparation for writing the dissertation. The structure for both degree routes has flexibility and student choice built into it: from multidisciplinary courses in Years 1 and 2 (on The West and The City), to American History options in Year 2, to specialist options across American Studies in the Final Year. The two major contributing subjects to American Studies – History and English – both received a Grade 5 in the Research Assessment Exercise (2001) for research of international standing. The Centre received a 23/24 and graded 'Excellent' in the 1999 Teaching Quality Assessment, and students learning experience is enhanced by the Centre's commitment to developing synergy between its research and teaching activities.

**8. Indications of programme quality:** The programme has been consistently praised by external examiners for its breadth, innovation and rigour. It was rated 7th nationally in the Guardian pole for top American Studies providers in 2003

## Appendix 1: Outline of Programme Structure

BA American Studies (T700 and T701)

First Year Modules

Semester 1		Credits
AM1001	American History, 1607-1861	20
AM1002	Classic US Texts	20
PL1001	Introduction to American Politics	20
Semester 2		
AM1004	American History, 1861 to the present	20

AM1005	Modern American Writing	20
AM1006	The West	20

## Second Year Modules

### Semester 1

AM2014	Ethnicity and Diversity in American Life	20
HA2224	Introduction to American Film and Visual Culture	20
HS2614	Transformation of the USA in the C19th and C20th	20

### Semester 2

AM2013	Ethnicity and Diversity in American Literature	20
AM2011	The City	20
	American History option	20

## Year 3 (T700 only)

### Semester 1

AM3018	Dissertation 1	20
	American Studies Option 1	20
	American Studies Option 2	20

### Semester 2

AM3019	Dissertation 2	20
	American Studies Option 3	20
	American Studies Option 4	20

Year 3 (T701 only)	Approved and accredited courses of study and Independent research at partner institution in the USA	
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## Year 4 (T701 only)

### Semester 1

AM3025	Dissertation 1	20
	American Studies Option 1	20
	American Studies Option 2	20

### Semester 2

AM3026	Dissertation 2	20
	American Studies Option 3	20
	American Studies Option 4	20

## Appendix 2: Skills Matrix

## Appendix 3: Module Specifications