FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE PROGRAMS

MASTER OF ARTS IN AMERICAN STUDIES

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The graduate program in American Studies at Fairfield University is an interdisciplinary course of study drawing upon the expertise of full-time faculty members representing nine departments and programs including Black Studies, English, History, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology, Religious Studies, Women’s Studies, and Visual and Performing Arts. The American Studies program engages students in the idea of America as it has been culturally imagined throughout history, both within and beyond U.S. national borders. America is a culture of cultures, and our offerings are inclusive and respectful of the enormous diversity in the American people and their experience. The program is specifically designed to meet three student populations.

TEACHERS
The new “Teacher Track” provides middle and high school teachers in the humanities with the resources to develop curricula that focuses on strengthening the integrative skills of their students while providing the flexibility to customize their projects to accommodate school specific student learning outcomes.

BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS
Employers demand advanced analytical thinkers and writers who are crucial to the success of their respective businesses. The program’s emphasis on high-level analytical thinking, writing and research trains students to meet the challenges of the increasingly competitive marketplace.

PREPARATION FOR PH.D. PROGRAMS
The program’s dynamic interdisciplinary curriculum, taught by professors who are leading scholars in American Studies, readies students for a wide variety of Ph.D. programs.

In response to the personal and professional time constraints of our student population, classes normally take place in the late afternoon, evening, and occasionally on weekends. To facilitate a supportive mentor-learning environment, all courses are offered in a seminar format. Students design a curriculum to meet their specific needs in consultation with an academic advisor.

COURSE OF STUDY
The master of arts degree in American Studies requires 33 credits. This includes one required course totaling three credits, nine electives totaling 27 credits, and a required Graduate Project of three credits. Students choose from a range of courses that have been designed specifically for the M.A. program.

REQUIRED COURSE
The core course provides a general introduction to the method and matter in the field of American Studies:

• AS 400 Critical Issues in American Studies

GRADUATE PROJECT
With the guidance of a faculty mentor, the student undertakes a major research project focused on an approved American Studies topic. The faculty mentor and student will choose a second faculty reader from another discipline within the American Studies Program.

At the outset, the student will register for AS 404 with the faculty mentor and will provide a proposal and preliminary bibliography. The project carries three credits and usually is completed over the course of one semester.

There are three types of graduate projects:

1. Thesis. The student may choose to write a traditional thesis, which is a substantive paper embodying original research. The scope and length of the thesis will be determined in concert with faculty mentors.

2. Curriculum Development. For graduate students who are in the “Teacher Track,” this project involves developing a detailed American Studies course curriculum.

3. Artistic. The student may choose to complete a project by creating original art, music, theatre, film, fiction, photography, or other artistic work. A project of this nature will usually require an accompanying essay and/or literature review.

The Graduate Program Director must approve all projects prior to their inception. The Director also will provide students with detailed guidelines for completing the project and may assist in determining appropriate faculty mentors, if desired by the student.

Fairfield University
College of Arts and Sciences
ELECTIVE COURSES
In consultation with their faculty advisors, students select nine courses to create an individualized program of study. The following list of courses suggests the breadth of recent elective offerings:

• The Frontier in American Culture
• America in the 1930s
• Civil Liberties
• Feminist Theory and Gender Studies
• Art and Entertainment in America: 1950 to the Present
• The Supreme Court in the 1960s
• American Prophetic Tradition
• The Tumultuous 20th Century: Key Issues in U.S. Political & Social History
• Immigration, Ethnicity, and Race in U.S. History
• Crises and Turning Points in U.S. Foreign Relations, 1776 to 2009
• Who Built America? Working People in American History
• Historical Cultural Geography
• Poetry in America
• American Drama and Society
• Visions of Italy and America in Film
• The Italian-American Experience
• American Master Artists and Their Times
• Fine Arts vs. Anti-Art: 1917-1967
• The History of Jazz
• The History of Rock
• Critical Issues in American Popular Music: Blues to Hip Hop
• American Popular Entertainments and Social History
• The American Presidency
• Jews and Judaism in America
• Islam in America
• Contemporary American Society
• Urban Sociology: New York
• Women: Work and Sport

GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Dr. Peter L. Bayers
Phone: 203 254-4000, ext. 2797
E-mail: pbayers@fairfield.edu

Dr. Bayers is the appropriate person to contact with questions, or to learn more.

For a complete faculty listing, see www.fairfield.edu/asfaculty.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
The program welcomes students of ability from all academic and professional backgrounds. Students who hold a bachelor’s degree in any field from a regionally accredited college or university (or the international equivalent) are encouraged to apply.

FORMAL ADMISSION PROCESS
Applications to the graduate program are accepted on a rolling basis. Applications are reviewed by the Graduate Admission Committee. Students seeking admission must complete and submit the following online:

1. A completed application.
   (Apply online at www.fairfield.edu/applynow.)
2. A non-refundable $60 application fee.
3. A professional résumé.
4. A two (2) page double-spaced personal statement describing:
   • How your educational, professional, and personal experiences have prepared you to be a successful student in this master’s program.
   • How your participation in this program will assist you in achieving your future goals.
5. Official transcripts from all universities/colleges attended. (All foreign transcripts must be evaluated by an approved evaluating service. A list of approved evaluators is available at www.fairfield.edu/eval.)
6. Two recommendations, one of which must be from a current supervisor or professor, completed online.
7. All international students whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in the English language by taking either TOEFL or IELTS exams. For admission to the graduate school, a TOEFL composite score of 550 for the paper test, 213 for the computer-based test, 80 on the internet-based test or an IELTS score of 6.5 is strongly recommended. Scores must be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service (TOEFL) or www.IELTS.org. Fairfield’s ETS code is 3390.

Submit transcripts and any other documents that cannot be uploaded to:
Fairfield University
Office of Graduate Admission
Kelley Center
1073 North Benson Road
Fairfield, CT 06824

MANDATORY IMMUNIZATIONS
Connecticut State law requires each full-time or matriculated student to provide proof of immunity or screening against measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chicken pox), meningitis and tuberculosis. Certain exemptions based on age and housing status apply. Matriculating students are defined as those enrolled in a degree seeking program. More detailed information and the required downloadable forms are available online at www.fairfield.edu/immunization. Completed forms should be submitted directly to the Student Health Center. Although this is not required to complete an application, you must provide proof of immunity/screening prior to course registration. Please consult your private health care provider to obtain the necessary immunizations. Questions may be directed to the Student Health Center: 203-254-4000 ext. 2241 or e-mail health@fairfield.edu.

TUITION/FINANCIAL AID
Academic Year 2016/2017
Tuition: $725 per credit hour

A graduate education can provide countless professional and personal rewards in the future. However, the costs associated with earning a master’s degree may be challenging. Many students need to look beyond their own financial resources or the resources of their employer for assistance. There are many ways to finance a graduate education, including graduate assistantships, federal direct loan programs and our Veterans Pride Program which are discussed at www.fairfield.edu/gradfa.
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

Advisors from the Office of Financial Aid are committed to helping students find the options that best suit each of their needs. We encourage all Fairfield University graduate students to contact the Financial Aid office with any questions or to make an appointment to speak with a counselor.

FINANCIAL AID CONTACT INFORMATION
Phone: 203-254-4125
Fax: 203-254-4008
E-mail: finaid@fairfield.edu

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE OPERATIONS
Days: Monday-Friday
Hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location: Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Center

MORE INFORMATION

ADMISSION QUESTIONS
Questions about the application process should be directed to the Office of Graduate Admission.
Phone: 203-254-4184
Fax: 203-254-4073
E-mail: gradadmis@fairfield.edu

OFFICE OPERATIONS
Days: Monday-Friday
Hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location: Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Center

MASTER OF ARTS IN AMERICAN STUDIES WEBSITE
www.fairfield.edu/amst

ONLINE CATALOG
For detailed course descriptions and other University information, please refer to our online catalog www.fairfield.edu/catalogs.