

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Graduate Student Handbook that introduces you to the Department of American Studies. We have learned that this Handbook is useful to students in different ways over the years that you pursue your Ph.D. We have tried to order the sections so that what may be useful to a first year student will begin the Handbook. You will find copies of all relevant forms that are needed to take these steps in the handbook in its appendices as well. We hope that you will consistently consult the Handbook at all of those important transition points in your graduate program. This handbook is updated as policy and procedures change at the graduate, collegiate or department level. The most current version of the handbook can be found on the web: <http://americanstudies.umn.edu/grad/handbook.html>. We will also note changes in the Digest as they happen.

- ◆ In section One we begin with what may be the first question on entering that students ask: who serves as my adviser and what is a temporary adviser?
- ◆ In Section Two you will learn about how students maintain good standing in the department, which is required not only to progress but for holding most fellowships and TAs.
- ◆ In Section Three you will learn about all degree requirements and the steps that you take to proceed through each phase of graduate education.
- ◆ In Section Four we provide an overview of the structure of American Studies. In this section you will learn about who serves as a faculty member of the department, and how they function in relationship to graduate student advising and committee membership. You will also learn about how the department is governed, the roles students play in that governance, and your rights and responsibilities as a graduate student.
- ◆ In Section Five we list an overview of financial aid and intellectual resources.

This Handbook should be supplemented with the most current policies, information, and additional resources from the Graduate Student Services and Progress office (GSSP), available on the web at: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/index.html>. The Graduate Student Services Office is part of the One Stop Student Services center located in [160 Williamson Hall](#) (East Bank). The American Studies Department Policies, located in the Appendix of this handbook, should also be consulted.

The faculty and staff of American Studies wish all of our students a productive, satisfying, and successful year.

Please bookmark these important websites:

- Graduate School: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/>
- ASA: <http://www.theasa.net/>
- U of M American Studies: <http://americanstudies.umn.edu/grad/>

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Advisers

Informal Advisers

Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)

The Director of Graduate Studies oversees all aspects of the graduate program affecting graduate students' academic standing and progress. All students will have a temporary first-year adviser appointed by the DGS. Nevertheless, they should also feel free to direct questions to the DGS throughout the year.

Temporary Adviser

Each incoming graduate student is assigned to a faculty adviser by the DGS in consultation with the faculty member. The adviser will serve as the temporary (first-year) adviser, guiding the new student through the first few semesters of course selection and identifying relevant faculty with whom the student may work. The temporary adviser may or may not have expertise in the student's subject matter area, but some care is taken to assign students to faculty with parallel interests. The role of the temporary adviser is to provide the students with a faculty contact who is not necessarily one of the student's course instructors but is knowledgeable about the Department of American Studies faculty and resources.

Formal Advisers

Program Adviser

During the first or second year of coursework, students should choose a faculty member to serve as their adviser. Advisers for Ph.D. students must be senior members of the graduate faculty in American Studies. At the graduate level, the distinction between "core" and "associate" faculty is not really significant. Rather, we have a "graduate faculty" that includes faculty members from a wide range of departments, including the entire core faculty in American studies and a large number of faculty from other units. Tenured members of our graduate faculty can, and do, advise dissertations, whether they are tenured in American Studies or in another department. Untenured members of the American Studies graduate faculty can also advise doctoral students, but they do so with co-advisers until they have tenure. A student can select as an adviser any member of the American Studies graduate faculty, from any department, to serve as adviser. If that faculty member is not yet tenured, the student will need to have a tenured co-adviser as well. (See "Organization" for a description of senior, member/advising and member status). If students wish to work with a member/advising graduate faculty member, they must also select a senior member graduate faculty member to serve as co-adviser. (Advisers for M.A. students may be senior or member/advising members.) American Studies faculty is listed on our website at <http://americanstudies.umn.edu/people/faculty.html>.

The List of Faculty with Graduate Education Responsibilities is available online at <https://faculty-roles.umn.edu/institution/UMNTC/programs/005660217/responsibilities>

The selection of adviser(s) should be made in consultation with both the DGS and the faculty member who is the student's prospective choice. The selection of the adviser is usually formalized at the time the official degree plan is filed and the Program Statement is reviewed. The adviser(s) should be familiar with the student's area of academic interest and informed about the resources (faculty, courses, and research facilities) in that area available at the University of Minnesota. See the section on "Filing the Ph.D. Degree Plan".

The duties of Program Adviser include:

- Assisting the student in choosing appropriate courses and in developing a coherent and complete program of courses.
- Preparing an annual review of student's progress.
- Responding to drafts of the student's Program Statement.
- Assisting the student in selecting a preliminary examining committee.
- Signing and submitting the approved Degree Plan to the DGS after the Preliminary Examining Committee has met.
- Serving as chair of the student's Preliminary Oral Examining Committee.
- Assisting students in formulating their subfields.

Thesis Adviser

Upon successful completion of the prelim portfolio and oral preliminary examinations, the Ph.D. student should choose a faculty member to serve as adviser for the dissertation. The thesis adviser should be expert in the field with which the dissertation deals and knowledgeable about resources available both locally and nationally in the field. The thesis adviser must also be a senior member of the graduate faculty. A member/advising graduate faculty member may be a thesis adviser but a senior member of the graduate faculty must be designated as co-adviser.

The duties of Thesis Adviser include:

- Assisting the student in selecting a Final Oral Examining Committee.
- Responding to drafts of the student's dissertation proposal.
- Serve as one of the three required Final Oral Reviewers.
- Sign the final dissertation copy submitted to the Graduate School.

Annual Review of Students

Late fall semester, all faculty advisers and students will receive notice from the Director of Graduate Studies that the annual review of students will occur. The student should submit a copy of the completed Student Activities Report (SAR) to the DGS Assistant by the date listed in the American Studies graduate calendar. The SAR is an informational report that guides the meeting with your adviser and also allows the department to collect information about your professional activities. (See Appendix.)

Students should also submit a SAR to their advisers at that time and make an appointment to discuss their academic progress toward the degree. The adviser also receives a report of milestone progress. Goals, problems, research interests, and timelines for completion should be reviewed. The adviser will then submit a brief written report for each advisee (by hard copy or e-mail) to the DGS.

During spring semester the DGS reviews all Student Activity Reports (SAR) and adviser reports. Students will be informed that they are **not** “In Good Standing” if they 1) fail to contact their adviser, 2) are carrying more than 2 incomplete courses or, 3) are not making good progress (see section on ‘Academic Expectations’).

If a student is not in good standing, he or she will develop a plan for achieving good standing, with a timeline. If the student is still not in good standing by the time of the review the following spring, the adviser and the Director of Graduate Studies will discuss what measures should be taken, including possible termination from the Program. Please note that student progress and maintaining good standing is an on-going process.

Academic Expectations

Student Status -- “Good Standing”

The Graduate School and American Studies together determine what constitutes good standing status for a graduate student. This status is necessary for registration, for application for some fellowships, and for appointment to teaching positions throughout the university. Please note that student progress and maintaining good standing is an on-going process and you are encouraged to pay close attention to the following guidelines:

In general, students are in “good standing” if they:

- Maintain regular contact with their adviser,
- hold at least a 3.5 grade point average,
- have taken 6-8 courses during each of their first two years,
- have no more than two incomplete courses, and
- are making timely academic progress toward their Ph.D. degree as measured by the following benchmarks:

Student Standing Benchmarks By Year:

First Year Students:

- Complete 3-4 courses per semester
- Select permanent adviser, ideally by end of the academic year
- Meet with temporary adviser to discuss academic progress (and to discuss course selections and Preliminary Portfolio Examination Committee composition).

Second Year Students:

- Complete 3-4 courses per semester
- Consult with adviser to approve Degree Plan.
- Assign Preliminary Examination Committee by end of spring semester.
- File Degree Plan (form OTR198) with the Department by end of spring semester.
- Meet with adviser to discuss academic progress and to plan for Preliminary Examination.
- Thesis credits may be taken beginning in the semester prior to the semester in which Prelim Exams are taken. Doing so prior to the same semester as Prelims requires adviser and DGS approval.

Third Year Students:

- File Program Statement with the Department of American Studies by the first day of the fall semester. (Adviser signature(s) required on the first page of the statement).
- Complete all coursework before taking the preliminary exams.
- Submit the foreign language certification form with the Graduate School prior to submitting the preliminary portfolio.
- Submit Preliminary Portfolio Exam materials on either the Fall or Spring submission date and complete Oral Preliminary Examination no later than the last day of the semester in which written portfolio materials are submitted.

- Thesis credits may be taken beginning in the term prior to the term in which the Preliminary Exam is taken.
- Thesis credits must be taken in the term the Preliminary Exam is taken.
- Complete the online procedure of assigning Doctoral Final Examination Committee by the semester following passing the Preliminary Oral exam: If you passed your Preliminary Oral exam in the fall, your final exam committee assignment must be submitted no later than the last day of spring semester of your 3rd year.

Fourth Year Students:

- Complete the online procedure of assigning Doctoral Final Examination Committee by the semester following passing the Preliminary Oral exam: If you passed your Preliminary Oral exam in the spring semester or your 3rd year, your final exam committee assignment must be submitted no later than the last day of fall semester of your 4th year.
- Complete total of 24 thesis credits by semester following completion of Prelim Oral Exam.
- Meet with adviser to discuss academic and dissertation progress.

Fifth Year and Beyond:

- Complete the Dissertation by the end of the 7th year in the program.
- Meet with adviser to discuss academic and dissertation progress

NOTE REGARDING MAINTAINING GOOD STANDING:

Maintaining good standing is important as this status is necessary for registration, departmental funding, appointment to TA or teaching positions throughout the University, and for consideration for department fellowship nominations.

NOTE REGARDING STUDENT STANDING BENCHMARKS:

Students who enter the program with an MA that is relevant to the PhD program and who plan to transfer credits from their MA degree are expected to meet these benchmarks on an expedited schedule.

Student Files

The University's policy of "open files," allows students to see all materials in their own files unless they have waived the right to see a letter of recommendation. No student has access to the files of any other student under any circumstances. Request for documents in your files must be made using the instruction sheet or via e-mail with enough time to allow the staff to act upon the request (at least two business days). Students may never look through the files of the Graduate Program without permission of staff.

Sample Files

Students are given access to the "Active Directory" (AD) shared-drive called where sample files can be found in the folder "SAMPLE FILES".

The Graduate Sample Files may be accessed via the web by logging into: webfiles.umn.edu
Once logged-in, drill down through folders on left-hand side.

Under "Gradstudents" folder then open "SAMPLE FILES"

Subfolder categories:

- Fellowships
- Job Applications
- Research
- Student Milestones
- Teaching.

If a committee finds Program Statements, prelim portfolios, fellowship applications, etc. highly commendable, the DGS will ask permission from the student to add their work to the Graduate Sample File. These files will be available for all American Studies graduate students to view.

Grades & Incompletes

Graduate students in the Department of American Studies are required to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.5. Should a student's GPA fall below this point during a given semester, the Director of Graduate Studies issues a warning letter.

Graduate students in the Department of American Studies are expected to complete all courses taken during a given semester. Should a student accumulate two or more incomplete courses, the student will be contacted by the DGS and will be required to provide a schedule for removal of the incompletes to maintain good standing status.

Leave of Absence

The Graduate School has a formal Leave of Absence policy and process for graduate students. You will find the Policy and more information here:

<http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADSTUDENTLEAVE.html>. You are advised to consult with your adviser and the Director of Graduate Studies when considering a leave of absence. In most cases, leaves of absence will affect graduate student admission funding packages.

Publications and Conferences

As you progress through the program, the Department of American Studies encourages students to publish papers in scholarly journals. Class instructors are encouraged to work with students who have written publishable papers and to advise them on potential journals and the publishing process. Students are also encouraged to discuss publishing opportunities with their adviser, the DGS, and the Chair.

Graduate students are also encouraged to submit papers to local and national scholarly conferences. Calls for papers received by the American Studies Department are posted in the American Studies Department weekly Digest, sent weekly via email to active graduate students at their University of Minnesota email address, as well as posted on the American Studies Department BLOG: <http://blog.lib.umn.edu/amstdy/main/>. See "Department Policies" in appendix for more information about the Digest.

Registration

The Graduate School on a semester-by-semester basis determines an individual's status as a graduate student. Individuals who are not registered in a given semester are not officially students for that registration period. Individuals must be considered official students in order to use the University's educational resources. Even if students are not actively taking classes, they must register fall and spring semester or the Graduate School will terminate their graduate student status. Students may register for GRAD 999 (zero credit, zero fees, and no grade) to meet this requirement. <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/registration/specialcategories/index.html#grad999>.

NOTE: American Studies Ph.D. students who have not passed the preliminary oral examination may register for GRAD 999 no more than two semesters total without the approval of their adviser and the DGS.

Class Schedules and Registration

Students can access the most current class schedule information and registration access via the OneStop Student Services page, using the course catalog search found there: <http://onestop.umn.edu/> In selecting specific courses, students should consult with their adviser and, if necessary, the DGS.

Course Options

Graduate students may register for 4xxx (American Studies limits this to one 4xxx course), 5xxx or 8xxx-level classes. Although American Studies students can generally choose from all University classes, students in consultation with their adviser and the DGS should be careful to select classes that fulfill Department requirements. See "Registration Restrictions".

Grading Options

Graduate students may choose between two grading options when they submit the course: A—F (with pluses and minuses) or S-N (satisfactory and non-satisfactory). It is highly recommended that all American Studies graduate students take their courses A-F except the practicum (AMST 8401) and dissertation (8801) seminars which can only be taken S-N. A student may change the grading option originally selected during the first two weeks of class by submitting a new course request. On both the M.A. and Ph.D. levels, at least two-thirds of the credits completed in the Graduate School and included on the Degree Plan must be taken under the A-F system.

Special Registration Categories and Registration Restrictions

A useful registration resource for Graduate Students specifying special registration categories that includes a chart comparing which eligibility requirements are met or not by each of the registration options can be found here:

https://onestop.umn.edu/special_for/SpecialRegistrationCategoriesforGraduateProfessionalStudents.html

Course Permission Numbers

Registration for those courses for which the instructor or the department wish to control enrollment require that the student obtain a course permission number in order to enroll. The American Studies instructor will provide the permission number or notify the main office to provide one. Students should check for course permission number requirements and obtain them prior to registering.

Graduate School 999

American Studies Ph.D. students who have not passed the preliminary oral examination may register for GRAD 999 no more than two semesters total without the approval of their adviser and the DGS. Please be aware that students should register for GRAD 999 only those terms (fall and spring) in which they do not have to be registered for any reason other than to meet the Graduate School's fall/spring registration requirement. GRAD 999 does not meet any other internal/external departmental or agency requirements. Do not register for GRAD 999 if you must be registered to hold an assistantship, maintain legal visa status, defer loans, receive financial aid, or for any reason other than to meet the Graduate School's registration requirement.

Holds

Students with a hold on their records will not be allowed to register until the hold requirement is satisfied or temporarily waived. Holds may be put on a record for monetary debt to the University Libraries or the Bursar's Office or by the Graduate School. Temporary waivers of programmatic holds may be requested of the DGS. When registering on line, you will be notified of any holds that may be on your record. Alternatively, you may Contact One Stop Student Services at 612-624-1111 or 1-800-400-8636 (toll-free from outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area) or 612-626-0701 (TTY for hearing-impaired students only); or email helpingu@umn.edu.

Thesis Credit Registration Policy

Students have the option of registering for thesis credits (AMST 8888) beginning in the semester before they complete their preliminary examinations. Students that choose to register for thesis credits in the semester prior to prelims require the approval of their adviser(s) and the DGS. A total of 24 thesis credits must be completed by the end semester following completion of the Preliminary Exam.

Registration as a Student Assistant

In order to work as Graduate Assistants at the University, students *must* be registered for every semester for which they hold the assistantship (pre-thesis credits, thesis credits and FTE credits count as registration, GRAD 999 does not). If students miss the deadline for registration, their assistantships will be terminated, which will also affect the Graduate Assistant Health Insurance Plan. Registration deadlines are usually the end of the second week of classes.

Registration for 4xxx Courses

One 4xxx course in American studies, English, history, American Indian studies, or another appropriate program may be included as one of the seminars to meet the course requirements in American studies. As long as a member of the graduate school faculty teaches the course, students can register for additional 4xxx-level courses by contracting to take the course as an AMST 8xxx-level directed study with appropriate additional coursework in American studies.

Doctoral Degree

General Requirements

American Studies degrees are characterized by interdisciplinary coursework and methodology(ies) that concentrate on a particular set of research questions within a delineated historical time frame. To complete a Ph.D. in American Studies at the University of Minnesota, the graduate student must:

- Complete all courses on the Ph.D. Graduate Degree Plan . A student could, with a full load, complete all coursework for the Ph.D. in two years.
- Fulfill the Foreign Language requirement.
- File a Ph.D. Graduate Degree Plan (approved by the Student’s Adviser(s), the DGS, and the Graduate School).
- Pass the Doctoral Preliminary Portfolio and Preliminary Oral Examination.
- Complete 24 thesis credits.
- Pass a final Dissertation Oral Examination (approved by student’s Final Oral Examining Committee)

Please be sure to review the Graduate School Doctoral Degree Completion Procedures at <http://www.grad.umn.edu/sites/grad.umn.edu/files/doctoral%20phd%20edd.pdf>

Ph.D. Program Requirements

The completion of a degree in American Studies requires the student to distribute courses between the broad area of American Studies and subfields (understood as a more specific focus of research and teaching) demonstrating programmatic coherence. (See “Filing the Ph.D. Degree Plan”) The student in consultation with his or her adviser develops the subfields. The purpose is to allow the student to develop mastery in particular areas of inquiry related to the interdisciplinary field of American Studies and relevant to future teaching and scholarship.

The subfields are formulated when developing the Degree Plan with the student’s adviser and preliminary oral committee. They are defined by:

- A theoretical foundation reflecting key issues and debates of scholars in the field;
- a coherent methodology which advances research on issues and questions significant to the field;
- an identifiable “content” or subject matter comprised of texts, contexts, historical issues, and social relations and actions relevant to the field.

Courses

Ph.D. students must complete a minimum of 33 credits and a maximum of 45 credits in coursework. All students must complete the following course distributions:

- Four core American Studies courses.

Taken in your 1st year:

- ◆ **AMST 8201** Introductory Seminar: Historical Foundations in American Studies
- ◆ **AMST 8202** Introductory Seminar: Theoretical Foundations and Current Practice in American Studies.

Taken in your 2nd year:

- ◆ **AMST 8401** Practicum in American Studies

Taken in your 3rd year:

- ◆ **AMST 8801** Dissertation Seminar

- A **minimum of** three seminars – one of which must require original research.
- One comparative culture course covering international or non-U.S. topics.
- Seven adviser-approved courses, at least one of which must focus on American cultural diversity. With adviser approval, any or all of the above listed seminars (except the required core courses) may count toward these seven courses.
- **Thesis Credits**

In addition to the minimum 33 course credits, all PhD students must complete 24 thesis credits. See “Thesis Credit Registration Policy”.

NOTE: It is highly recommended that all American Studies graduate students take their courses A-F except the practicum (8401) and dissertation (8801) seminars which can only be taken S-N.

Graduate School Course Requirements:

Among specific requirements from the Graduate School that each student should keep in mind when registering for courses are:

- All Graduate School students are required to register in the Graduate School every fall and spring term. Confer with your adviser and/or DGS to determine what you should register for each term. Those who do not register in the Graduate School are considered to have withdrawn; their Graduate School records are deactivated. Deactivated students may not register for courses, take examinations, submit Degree Plan or thesis proposal forms, file for graduation, or otherwise participate in the University community as Graduate School students. They must reapply for admission and may not be accepted.
- A minimum of 12 credits must be completed in the declared minor field or supporting program.
- Two-thirds of the courses taken for the Ph.D. program must be taken under the A-F grading system.
- A total of 24 Ph.D. thesis credits must be taken before the degree will be conferred. These may be taken beginning in the semester before the Preliminary Examination is taken.

Foreign/Indigenous/ASL Language Requirement

Each native English-speaking student must demonstrate a certified reading knowledge of one foreign/ indigenous/ASL language. You may demonstrate this proficiency through the American Studies department or through an appropriate language department on campus. Demonstration through American Studies will NOT be recorded on your transcript, but does meet graduation requirements. Demonstration at the appropriate language department will be recorded on your transcript.

AMERICAN STUDIES CERTIFICATION: You may demonstrate reading proficiency through the successful completion as evidenced by a passing grade of language coursework at the University of Minnesota or at another university or institution within the past 5 years. You can demonstrate this in the following ways:

- 1) By demonstrating successful completion of two years of coursework through official transcripts.
- 2) For less commonly taught and/or spoken languages (for example, Ojibwe and ASL), students may petition the DGS to make a case for one year of successful language coursework or for a demonstration of oral proficiency in lieu of coursework. **Oral proficiency must be certified by a language instructor.**
- 3) With the DGS's approval, students may also fulfill this requirement by successfully completing an intensive summer language course at another institution or university campus.

Upon demonstration of the successful completion of coursework, the DGS of American Studies will sign the Graduate Department Language Certification form, (<http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr193.pdf>). The student should then obtain advisor signature and submit the form to the Graduate School with a copy for the department.

LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT CERTIFICATION: Each language department has different requirements for demonstrating reading proficiency. The websites listed below will direct you to either the details regarding steps for certification through their department or the person in their department you should contact. For languages not listed below, please contact the department directly.

French & Italian

<http://frit.umn.edu/grad/proficiency.php>

German, Scandinavian & Dutch

<http://gsd.umn.edu/language/certificationGradDegrees.html>

Portuguese & Spanish

<http://spanport.cla.umn.edu/language/LanguageCertification.html>

After completing these requirements, the student may then obtain a **Language Department Certification of Language Proficiency** form, (<http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr192.pdf>) to be signed by an appropriate language department, indicating that the student has satisfied that department's proficiency criteria. The student should return the form to the Graduate School with a copy for the department

Filing the Ph.D. Degree Plan and Oral Exam Committee

There are three important and necessary steps all PhD students must take in advance of their Preliminary Examinations:

- (1) File a Degree Plan with the Department of American Studies,
 - (2) Assign members to Preliminary Oral Examination Committee,
 - (3) File a Program Statement with the Department of American Studies.
- (Any subsequent changes to the Degree Requirement are addressed below).

DEGREE PLAN (form OTR198)

The official Graduate Degree Plan must be filed by the end of the second year. Failure to file the Degree Plan form results in the loss of student-in-good-standing status. Courses listed on the form need not be completed at the time the form is submitted to the Graduate School. This form are available as appendices to the handbook and are also available on the web

<http://www.policy.umn.edu/prod/groups/president/@pub/@forms/@otr/documents/form/otr198.pdf>

This form is a list of all the courses that the student will take (or has taken) to fulfill the degree requirements. **Note:** All Ph.D. thesis credits should be included on this form by checking the appropriate box. It is not necessary to indicate the semesters you will be taking them. Up to eight master's thesis credits, from a completed master's degree at either the University of Minnesota or transferred from another graduate institution, may be used toward this requirement.

Current transcripts, including proposed transfer courses

Along with the Degree Plan, students must submit current University of Minnesota transcripts, as well as transcripts documenting any proposed transfer courses counting toward the doctoral degree. Transcripts do not need to be official copies. Graduate level courses taken at other accredited universities which students plan to include in their American Studies' Ph.D. program should be listed on the Graduate Degree Plan form. At the Ph.D. level, no more than 40% of courses counting toward the degree may be transferred from another institution. Students should consult the Graduate School Catalog <http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/index.html> for regulations pertaining to transfer courses. The Graduate School makes the final decision concerning approval of transfer courses.

Procedure for filing the Graduate Degree Plan form:

You must obtain the signature of your adviser(s) and the DGS. After obtaining these signatures, submit original forms and supporting transcripts with the Department of American Studies. The Department will submit your signed, completed form to the Graduate Student Services and Progress office.

Assignment of Preliminary Oral Examination Committee

To be completed by the end of the second year.

The online form to Assign/Update Preliminary Oral Examination Committee is found at <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/assignprelimcommittee/index.html>

Committee assignment requires that students list proposed members of their Examining Committee. In the second semester of the second year, students should work with their adviser and the DGS to select a minimum of four graduate faculty members (including the adviser) to serve on the preliminary examining committee. All committee members must have Graduate School Faculty status. Graduate faculty status can be checked on the Graduate School website. A minimum of three committee members must be on the American Studies graduate faculty (core or affiliate).

Please note that if the student has a declared minor in, for example, Feminist Studies or African-American and African Studies, a faculty member affiliated with that program must serve as a preliminary examination committee member.

Committee faculty should be familiar with the individual student's coursework and knowledgeable about the student's general areas of interest. You must confirm that each proposed committee member is willing to serve in this capacity before filing the form. It is not necessary that each member of the preliminary examination committee serve on the final oral (or dissertation) committee.

Note: The Graduate School requirement that students have "outside" committee members is NOT applicable to American Studies PhD students.

Exceptions:

****External Committee Member***

On occasion a student may want to include on his or her committee a faculty member who has expertise that cannot be found at the University of Minnesota. In such cases, the student must provide a document that contains the following information to the DGS.

*Student's name, major field, degree sought

- The specific rationale for the request
- The role the external faculty would play (eg: major field examiner)
- A copy of the proposed faculty members' CV

The DGS, in consultation with the student's committee, has the authority to approve requests for external nonvoting committee members. A request for an external voting committee member must be referred to a committee of the College of Liberal Arts. This information should be provided as soon as possible to the DGS as the approval process takes time.

PROGRAM STATEMENT (3-6 double-spaced pages)

To be filed with the Department of American Studies no later than the first day of classes of the first semester of the third year. Adviser's signature(s) is required on the first page of the statement and this certifies that the student's M.A. Examining Committee has reviewed and approved the Program Statement.

The purpose of the Program Statement is for students to identify and define two subfields and to develop a list of readings in advance of the Preliminary Portfolio Exam.

Students must identify two subfields within the field of American Studies that intersect with each other and provide the major scholarly context for their work. These subfields should reflect the areas in which they will teach, and the scholarly conversations they will engage with their research. These two subfields should be broader than the student's dissertation topic, and should be defined by distinct content areas, theories, and methods. In their prelim papers, students should explain the relationship of the subfields to the larger field of American Studies.

Examples of subfields may be found on the websites of major national scholarly organizations, such as the American Sociological Association, the Modern Language Association, and the Organization of American Historians. Students might also look at academic job listings to see how subfields are described. Examples of subfields include, but are not limited to:

- * American diplomatic history
- * Post-colonial literature
- * Labor history
- * Media studies
- * Critical Race Studies
- * 19th century American literature
- * Comparative race and ethnicities
- * Queer studies
- * Sex and gender studies
- * Popular culture studies

The Program Statement includes the following:

- * identify the two subfields that will organize the Preliminary Portfolio Exam (subfield guidelines can be found in "Internal American Studies materials needed to complete the Preliminary Portfolio Exams" section of the handbook);

- * explain the interdisciplinary character and key theories, methods, and/or significant texts in each subfield

- * lay out in a preliminary fashion the research question the student proposes to study and the historical, cultural, media, or popular culture phenomenon to which this question will be applied;

- * provide a rationale for coursework (For the purposes of the Degree Plan, a subfield is exemplified by a group of courses reflecting a coherent body of scholarship, a series of research questions, and/or a unifying theme.); and

- * identify the areas of prospective teaching and research to which the field is relevant preparation.

* Reading Lists, which include a bibliography of relevant readings for each of the two subfields. This bibliography should be produced in consultation with the adviser and committee members. Its purpose is to identify key texts for the development of subfield paper #1 and subfield paper #2 of the Preliminary Portfolio exam.

PROGRAM APPROVAL AND CHANGES

The Program Statement must be approved by the committee before it is filed in the Department of American Studies. (Adviser signature(s) is required on the first page of the statement). The Program Statement should be developed in consultation with all members of the examining committee, including the adviser. Consultation may take the form of individual meetings and communications between the student and committee members and/or a meeting of the entire committee.

Committee members will require two weeks to review and approve the Program Statement prior to submission date.

Changing the Degree Plan

Once approved, the Degree Plan can be changed by petition to the American Studies Department (the DGS) and the Graduate Student Services and Progress office. Changes to the degree plan may be necessary--for example, when courses designated on the official program are not offered or when newly offered courses are more appropriate to a student's program. If students, in consultation with their adviser and the DGS, decide to change the degree plan, they should submit a completed Degree Plan form to their adviser(s) and the DGS. Once the approval of these faculty members is obtained, the revised form is to be submitted to the American Studies Department. The Department will submit your signed, completed revised form to the Graduate Student Services and Progress office. All changes to the Degree Plan must be completed prior to submitting the Preliminary Examination.

Changes to the Preliminary Examining Committee

These changes may be made with the consent of the adviser and the DGS. The process of changing an adviser or committee membership is done via the Assign/Update Preliminary Oral Examination Committee online process: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/assignprelimcommittee/index.html>

Ph. D. Preliminary Portfolio

The written Preliminary Portfolio Exam is to be completed no later than the second semester of the third year. (If a student, with the permission of his/her adviser, cannot complete the written exam by that point then he/she will need to request special permission for an extension from the DGS).

Students should develop preliminary portfolio materials in consultation with their committee members.

Preliminary Portfolio Examination Description

The portfolio should demonstrate the breadth and depth of the student's work. It should draw on a wide number of readings which are represented in footnotes. Each student should consult with their advisers and relevant committee members as they prepare the portfolio. The portfolio examination will have three components, involving two subfields of expertise and a dissertation proposal:

Subfield Paper #1:

A paper of approximately 25 pages, including:

- * a broad-based definition and explanation of the student's first subfield,
- * how it engages, informs and contributes to the larger field of American Studies
- * an analysis of the major works in the field, and the major debates among scholars in the field.

Subfield Paper #2:

An annotated syllabus for an undergraduate introductory course in the student's second subfield, including:

* a paper of approximately 15 pages that addresses major themes and directions in the subfield, and how it engages, informs and contributes to the larger field of American Studies. The paper should include the relevant scholarly literature that provides the rationale for the topics covered and organization of the course.

- * a schedule of classes for the semester of approximately 5 pages, including:
 - a paragraph describing each unit or week in the course
 - topics and readings for each class session.

The purpose of subfield paper #2 is not to focus on pedagogical approach or specific assignments but to translate knowledge of the field to the design of a course.

Dissertation Project Statement:

A substantial dissertation proposal, approximately 15 pages, including a clear statement of the research project, the key questions that the research will answer, an extensive review of the relevant scholarly literature, the original contribution the student will make to the field and

subfields, and how they relate to each other, along with a detailed discussion of the sources and methods to be used.

Procedures for Taking the Preliminary Portfolio Examination

Schedule

There are two dates annually on which Written Preliminary Portfolio Exam materials are accepted by the department:

In fall semester: **November 1 at 12:00 noon**

In spring semester: **April 1 at 12:00 noon**

*If November 1 or April 1 falls on a weekend, the acceptance date is the following Monday

*One month prior to each semester's submission date, a call will go out in the Digest for students planning to submit their Portfolio Exam materials that semester to contact the DGS assistant regarding their intent and to confirm the members of their examination committee.

The Oral Preliminary Exam must be held **no later than the last day of the semester in which written portfolio materials are submitted.**

Written Preliminary Portfolio Examination

On the designated submission date of the preliminary written portfolio exam as listed above, the Subfield Paper #1, Subfield Paper #2 and Dissertation Project Statement are to be submitted to the DGS Assistant. The DGS assistant will then distribute the portfolio to the members of the student's Preliminary Examination Committee by the following day.

From the date that committee members receive the portfolio from the DGS assistant, they have 10 business days to return evaluations. Responses are returned to the DGS assistant. If all responses have not been received by the end of the 10th day, the DGS assistant will contact the reviewer. Students will not be asked to revise Portfolio materials at this point.

Students will receive feedback on Preliminary Portfolio materials during the Oral Examination where questions about the written exam will be raised for discussion. In order to better prepare for the oral examination, students may also consult (either in writing or verbally) with each committee member about the written Portfolio during the period between the filing of the Portfolio and the Oral Exam.

The student may receive the mark Pass, or Fail. On a four person committee, a passing exam is considered either a unanimous vote or a vote of 3-1. On a five member committee the student

passes with either a unanimous vote or 4-1. Once the examination is complete and the student has passed the examination, they will be notified by the DGS Assistant.

In the event of an evaluation of “Fail,” the student will be contacted by the adviser. A committee meeting will be convened with the members and the student. The student will be informed of the problems with the exam and the committee will discuss with the student any plans for retaking the exam. Students will have one opportunity to retake the written prelim no later than the next examination period. In the event that a student is unable to write a satisfactory portfolio after having the opportunity to revise, that student would fail the preliminary portfolio and not be advanced to candidacy. The student may complete a terminal M.A.

Oral Preliminary Examination

The oral preliminary examination will provide an opportunity for an in-depth discussion of the contents of the portfolio, and the occasion for the student’s committee to approve all of the components of the portfolio, or to specify what needs to be revised or expanded in order for the committee to pass the student on the prelim.

Scheduling the Oral Preliminary Exam:

Students are required to schedule their Preliminary Oral Examinations online through the Graduate School at least one week in advance. To do so, navigate to <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/prelimschedule/index.html>. The GSSP office will then notify you by email of any outstanding preliminary oral exam requirements and how to fulfill them as well as email confirmation once the Graduate School authorizes the preliminary oral examination. The oral examination will not be authorized until all requirements are met.

Once the oral examination is authorized, the Graduate School will mail the *Preliminary Oral Examination Report* form to the Chair of the student’s preliminary examining committee (adviser) along with instructions for the holding of the preliminary oral examination.

Students will be notified of the evaluation of the preliminary oral committee immediately following the oral exam. The oral preliminary examination is evaluated on the following scale: Pass, Pass with Reservations, Fail. Those students who earn a “Pass with Reservations” will be assigned some further requirement to be fulfilled before they can become Ph.D. candidates. Generally, such a requirement involves the writing of an additional paper, covering a specified topic. Those students who fail the preliminary oral examination may be allowed to retake the oral exam once at a later date. Specific arrangements will be made in consultation with the DGS, the adviser, and the preliminary oral examining committee.

Return the *Preliminary Oral Examination Report* form, signed by your committee members, to the GSSP office within one business day following your examination. Eligibility for thesis credit registration (xxxx-8888) is dependent upon the GSSP office’s receipt of this form verifying that the student has passed the examination (including pass with reservations).

Ph. D. Degree Candidacy

Once the student has passed the preliminary oral examination, he/she is admitted to formal candidacy for the Ph.D. In effect, this authorizes the student to write the dissertation. Each student is required to write a Ph.D. dissertation.

Assigning the Final Oral Exam Committee

Students are responsible for assigning their final oral exam committee by the end of the semester after they have passed the preliminary oral examination.

The assignment of the student's final oral exam committee is requested via the online request form found here: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/assigndocfinalcommittee/index.html>

Your proposed committee is then routed for approval by your primary adviser, the DGS and College.

The final oral examining committee consists of at least four graduate faculty members, at least three of whom must be members of the American Studies graduate faculty (core or associate). The members are not necessarily those who served on the preliminary examination committee, but students should select members on the basis of their knowledge of the proposed dissertation area. Students should consult with potential committee members before their names are submitted. If a student's Degree Plan shows a supporting program—that is, a minor—at least one member of the final oral examining committee must be affiliated with that Program.

Three members of the final oral examining committee must be designated “reviewers.” These graduate faculty members must approve and sign off on the thesis manuscript at least one week before the final oral examination may be held. The thesis adviser is always designated as a reviewer, along with two other members of the committee. If a supporting program (minor) is included in the student's program, one reviewer must represent that supporting program. All the members of the final oral examining committee are available to the student for advice and suggestions at any stage of the dissertation writing process. The student is strongly advised to consult regularly with the thesis committee members throughout the project. One member of the final oral examining committee is designated as Chair. The adviser may not be designated the chair of a Final Oral Examining Committee. Serving as chair of the committee does not preclude them from also serving as a reviewer.

Note: The Graduate School requirement that students have “outside” committee members is NOT applicable to American Studies PhD students.

Committee Changes and Time Limits

Changing the Final Oral Committee

Changes to the committee should be requested well in advance of the final oral examination date. The process of changing an adviser or committee membership is done via the electronic request form found on the Assign/Update Doctoral Final Oral Committee page:

<http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/assigndocfinalcommittee/index.html>

Your proposed committee updates are then routed for approval by your primary adviser, the DGS and College.

Time Limit and Extensions

American Studies Ph.D. candidates must complete all requirements and receive the degree within a maximum of seven years after entering the program. Students who have exceeded the departmental seven year time limit will have a registration hold placed on their accounts by the department. This hold will be lifted for the semester in which the student will complete all requirements, pending adviser confirmation that the student has completed the dissertation and is prepared to defend.

We do not anticipate granting an exception to the seven-year time to degree given the availability of the Graduate Student Leave of Absence however, the faculty will consider appeals in truly exceptional cases. A student should contact the Director of Graduate Studies when considering an appeal.

<http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADSTUDENTLEAVE.html>

Writing and Defending the Thesis

Unless otherwise negotiated with advisers, dissertations produced by students in the Department of American Studies should conform to the format recommended by the *University of Chicago Manual of Style*.

Graduate School Requirements

The Graduate School maintains dissertation registration and final oral scheduling policies. Students should be sure to consult the Graduate School Doctoral Degree Completion Requirements as they plan for the completion of their dissertations. Find a resource for Degree Completion Steps here: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/sites/grad.umn.edu/files/doctoral%20phd%20edd.pdf>

You should request a graduation packet that will explain the various steps and provide forms needed under the “Graduation Packet Request link found here:

<https://www.grad.umn.edu/current-students-graduate-student-services-progress/doctoral>

Upon request for the Graduation packet, the Graduate School will provide the student with Graduation Instructions, Thesis Reviewer's Report, Application for Degree, Commencement Attendance Approval Form, Microfilm Agreement and Survey of Earned Doctorates.

Preparing for the Final Examination

At the time the candidate submits the thesis to the thesis reviewers, copies of the thesis should also be provided to all other members of the final oral examining committee. Reviewers appreciate the courtesy of having one month to read the dissertation. The Graduate School requests that the Thesis Reviewer's Report with all reviewers' signatures be submitted one week prior to the final oral examination. The reviewers must be unanimous in certifying that the thesis is ready for defense before the student can take the final oral examination. All members of the committee must have at least two weeks to read the thesis.

The thesis abstract must be included with the thesis when it is distributed to the committee and must be signed by the adviser(s) before it is submitted to the Graduate School.

Upon approved completion of the dissertation, the final oral committee will administer a final oral defense of the work.

Scheduling the Final Oral Exam:

Students are required to schedule their Final Oral Examinations online as soon as a date is set, but no later than one week prior to the examination. To do so, navigate to <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/finalschedule/index.html>.

The GSSP office will notify the student by email regarding any outstanding final oral exam requirements, and how to fulfill those requirements. The student will also receive confirmation from the GSSP office upon authorization of the final oral examination. The oral examination will not be authorized until all requirements are met.

The examination shall be limited to the candidate's thesis subject and relevant areas and is usually scheduled for two hours. If time permits, the date of the examination will be publicly announced, and any member of the scholarly community may attend. At least ten weeks must intervene between the preliminary oral and the final oral examinations.

Evaluation of the Final Oral Examination

Upon completion of the examination, a formal vote of the committee is taken. To be recommended for the award of the Ph.D. degree, a candidate must receive a vote with **not more than one dissenting member** of the total examining committee. The form is then signed and the graduate student delivers it to the GSSP office.

Dissertation Preparation

Rules governing binding and submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School are set by the University; <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/ThesisSubmission/index.html> or contact the

Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) office for specific requirements. Review for current policy, procedure and deadlines regarding dissertation submission to the GSSP office. It is also customary, but not required, for students to donate one copy for the American Studies Library and another copy to the dissertation adviser.

Graduation

Degrees are granted at the end of each month. To qualify for graduation for a particular month, students must pay the degree application fee on or before the first day of that month and must complete the examination and all other requirements (including necessary forms and fees) by 4:00pm on the last business day of that same month. Submit the Graduate Application for Degree to One Stop by the first business day of anticipated month of graduation.

Students may graduate at one of the two graduate commencement ceremonies held each year in late spring and in late fall. Graduates are encouraged but not required to attend. To make sure their names appear in the program distributed at the commencement ceremony, students must submit the Commencement Attendance Approval Form and apply for graduation by the first working day of the month two months prior to the graduation ceremony.

Master's Degree

The Department of American Studies does not admit students directly into the M.A. program. Students enrolled in the Ph.D. program may also elect to complete an M.A. degree (Plan A—thesis or Plan B—3 written papers).

CHANGE OF STATUS: From American Studies Ph.D. to Terminal American Studies M.A.

As soon as possible apply to the Graduate School for a change of status from Ph.D. to M.A. You should file a paper application with the Graduate School. The Change of Status Application can be found here: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/admissions/cos/index.html>
Use major code 005630408 which reflects both the M.A. degree objective and the American Studies major.

Course Requirements

Students are required to maintain a minimum G.P.A. of 3.5 for the M.A. in American Studies. Degree Completion Steps can be found here:

Plan A: <https://www.grad.umn.edu/sites/grad.umn.edu/files/MastersA.pdf>

Plan B: <https://www.grad.umn.edu/sites/grad.umn.edu/files/MastersB.pdf>

M.A. Plan A	American Studies Core Courses 8201, 8202
	A 2-semester Seminar, or two 1-semester research seminars offered by American Studies or another department with DGS approval
	A comparative cultures course covering international or non-U.S. subjects
	Two adviser-approved courses in the field of concentration, including one focused on cultural pluralism within the U.S.
	10 M.A. thesis credits
M.A. Plan B	American Studies Core Courses – 8201, 8202
	A 2-semester Seminar, or two 1-semester research seminars offered by American Studies or another department with DGS approval
	A comparative cultures course covering international or non-U.S. subjects
	Five adviser-approved courses in the field of concentration, including one focused on cultural pluralism within the U.S.
	Three papers

Graduate School Course Requirements

There are specific course requirements from the Graduate School that each student should keep in mind when registering for courses:

- Each Master's student must register in the Graduate School for at least three semesters before the degree will be conferred.
- Two-thirds of the courses taken for the M.A. program must be taken under the A-F grading system.

Foreign/Indigenous/ASL Language Requirement

Each native English-speaking student must demonstrate a certified reading knowledge of one foreign/ indigenous/ASL language. See "Foreign/ Indigenous/ASL Language Requirement" information in the Ph.D. section of this handbook for methods of satisfying this requirement.

Time Requirement

All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within seven years. The seven-year period begins with the earliest work included on the official Degree Plan (see below), including any transfer work applied.

Filing the M.A. Degree Plan

The Graduate School requires filing an official Degree Plan. It is the occasion for the student to designate an adviser as well as lay out a plan for coursework. American Studies uses this occasion to ask students to describe their research interests and the coherence of proposed coursework. Degree Plans should be interdisciplinary and built around a subarea.

The official M.A. Degree Plan form should be filed at least one semester before the student takes the M.A. oral examination. Graduate School strongly recommends filing the Degree Plan as early as possible. When students are ready to file the M.A. Degree Plan, the following steps should be taken:

Assignment of the M.A. Committee

With the assistance of the adviser and the DGS, students should select a total of three American Studies graduate faculty members (including the adviser) to serve on their Master's oral examining committee. These faculty should be familiar with the individual student's coursework, Plan A thesis (or Plan B papers), and knowledgeable about the student's general areas of interest. Only one non-American Studies graduate faculty member may serve on a Master's oral committee. In

the case of a minor in a supporting program, one graduate faculty member affiliated with that program **must** serve as a committee member. If a student's adviser holds, for example, graduate faculty status in History as well as American studies, the adviser cannot serve as the History representative.

The online form to Assign/Update Master's Final Examination Committee is found at <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/assignmasterscommittee/index.html>

Program Statement

This 2-3 page statement should identify and describe the field of concentration which is the focus of Master's degree coursework. Because the function and content are similar, please refer to the "Program Statement" information in the PhD section of this handbook.

The adviser's signature(s) is required on the first page of the statement and this certifies that the student's M.A. Examining Committee has reviewed and approved the Program Statement.

Degree Plan Coursework (form OTR 198)

This form is a list of all the courses that the student will take (or has taken) to fulfill the degree requirements. **Note:** All 10 M. A. Plan A thesis credits should be included on this form. See the "Degree Plan" information in the PhD section of this handbook for more information. This form are available in the appendix to this handbook and is also available here:

<http://www.policy.umn.edu/prod/groups/president/@pub/@forms/@otr/documents/form/otr198.pdf>

Transcript and Transfer Courses

Along with the Degree Plan, students must submit current University of Minnesota transcripts, as well as transcripts documenting any proposed transfer courses counting toward the M.A. degree. These transcripts do not need to be official copies. Graduate level courses taken at other accredited universities, which students would like to include in their American Studies programs, should be listed on the M.A. Degree Plan form. The student's M.A. Committee will evaluate the appropriateness of including those courses in the official Degree Plan and decide whether to recommend approval to the Graduate School. On the M.A. level, a student may transfer no more than 40% of the courses required for the degree. Students should consult the Graduate School Catalog for regulations pertaining to transfer courses. The Catalog can be found here:

<http://www.catalogs.umn.edu/grad/gen/masters.html>

The Graduate School makes the final decision regarding all transfer courses.

Procedure for filing the Degree Plan

You must obtain the signature of your adviser(s) and the DGS. After obtaining these signatures, submit original forms and supporting transcripts with the Department of American Studies. The Department will submit your signed, completed form to the Graduate Student Services and Progress office.

M.A. Program Approval and Changes

The student's M.A. Examining Committee will evaluate the proposed Degree Plan to decide whether to recommend that it be forwarded to the Graduate School for approval or to recommend revision. It is not unusual for the Committee to ask for clarification of a student's proposed field of interest and the rationale behind them. It is unusual for the Committee to recommend changing a proposed oral exam committee, unless a faculty member who would be particularly appropriate has been omitted for no apparent reason. Once the Degree Plan has been approved by the student's M.A. Examining Committee, it will be signed by the DGS and returned to the student who will deliver it to the Graduate Student Services and Progress Office (160 Williamson Hall) for final approval.

Changing the Degree Plan

Once approved by the Graduate School, the Degree Plan can be changed by petition to the American Studies Program (the DGS) and the Graduate Student Services and Progress office. Changes to the Degree Plan may become necessary, particularly when courses designated on the Degree Plan are not offered or when newly offered courses are more appropriate to a student's program. If students, in consultation with their adviser and the DGS, decide to change the Degree Plan, they should submit a completed petition to their adviser and the DGS. Once the approval of these two faculty members is obtained, the form is sent to the Graduate School for final approval. All changes to the Degree Plan must be complete before the student takes the Master's oral examination. Petition forms can be found here: <http://policy.umn.edu/forms/otr/otr190.pdf>

Changing the M.A. Examining Committee

Changes to the committee should be requested well in advance of the final oral examination date. The process of changing an adviser or committee membership is done via the electronic request form found on the Assign/Update Masters Final Committee page: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/assignmasterscommittee/index.html>

Your proposed committee updates are then routed for approval by your primary adviser, the DGS and College.

Plan A (Thesis) or Plan B (Papers)

Students may select either of two plans to fulfill their Master's requirements.

Plan A Thesis

The Plan A thesis should be developed with the advice of the adviser during the preparation of the M.A. program. The thesis proposal must be submitted for approval as part of the official Degree Plan. Each student who chooses to do a Plan A thesis must register for a total of ten master's thesis credits.

Plan B Papers

Those students who choose to do a Plan B master's program must write and submit three approved Plan B projects. Ordinarily these projects are papers written in connection with courses (including directed readings or independent study) taken for the degree. A Plan B paper may or may not be an official part of the work for the course, but it must be written with the consent and approval of the instructor. Usually Plan B papers run between 20 and 40 pages. Papers must be submitted to the instructor for approval. If the instructor accepts the paper, he/she should write on the title page "Accepted as a Plan B Paper for the M.A. in American Studies," and sign and date it. After completion of the Final Oral examination, the signed papers should be submitted to the DGS Assistant and they will be kept in your permanent American Studies file. Other types of projects may be done with the approval of the faculty member with whom the student wishes to work and the DGS.

M. A. Oral Examination:

Each student will take an oral examination covering those topics addressed in the three Plan B papers or in the Plan A thesis. This examination will be administered by the student's Master's oral examining committee, comprised of the adviser (chair), and two other American Studies graduate faculty members. The exam generally lasts one hour.

Scheduling the Master's Oral Exam

The oral exam must be scheduled after the successful completion of *all* other M.A. requirements. Scheduling of the exam should be done by the student with the assistance of the adviser, and is subject to Graduate School time-lines. Students should be sure to consult the Graduate School when scheduling the M.A. oral examination.

Evaluation of Master's Oral Examination

Students will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation of the master's oral examining committee immediately following the oral exam. The oral is evaluated on the following scale: Pass, Pass with Reservations, or Fail. The Graduate School will award those students who earn "Pass" the degree. Those students who earn a "Pass with Reservations" will consult with the committee concerning additional requirements to be fulfilled before the degree will be conferred. Those students who fail the oral exam may re-take the exam one time at a later date. Specific arrangements will be made in consultation with the DGS, the adviser, and the oral examining committee.

Graduation

Students will be considered eligible for graduation after successfully completing the M.A. Oral Examination (Plan B – Papers) and submission of the M.A. Thesis (Plan A). Students may obtain a graduation packet as soon as the Graduate School approves the M.A. Degree Plan. Request a packet at https://onestop.umn.edu/degree_planning/graduation/graduate_checklist.html

AMERICAN STUDIES MINOR DEGREE

Minor Requirements for Ph.D. Students Majoring in Other Fields

For the doctoral minor, students must complete at least 12 credits of courses consistent with or complementary to their major, including four 5xxx or 8xxx courses in American studies, one of which must be AMST 8201, “Historical Foundations of American Studies” or AMST 8202, “Theoretical Foundations and Current Practice in American Studies.” The American Studies Director of Graduate Studies must approve the student’s Degree Plan.

Minor Requirements for M.A. Students Majoring in Other Fields

For a master’s minor, students are expected to choose courses consistent with or complementary to their major. Students should complete AMST 8201, “Historical Foundations of American Studies,” or AMST 8202, “Theoretical Foundations and Current Practice in American Studies,” and two more courses in American Studies. The American Studies Director of Graduate Studies must approve the student’s Degree Plan.

ORGANIZATION AND TERMS

Faculty

There are two ways to classify American Studies faculty at the University of Minnesota: by location of “appointment” and by “graduate faculty status.”

Appointment

The Department of American Studies consists of “core” faculty members whose tenure lines are in the Department of American Studies. The majority of faculty members, however, numbering more than seventy, are considered “American Studies Associate Faculty,” with their home (tenure line) departments located throughout the University and at outside institutions. Each of these colleagues has made a commitment to the interdisciplinary study of American culture. Officers of the Department are usually selected from the core and American Studies graduate faculty.

Graduate Faculty Status

In regard to advising graduate students, each University of Minnesota faculty member, regardless of tenure line home department, is designated as a “senior” or “member/advising” or “member” of the American Studies graduate faculty. Graduate faculty senior members usually are University of Minnesota tenured faculty having demonstrated a strong scholarly and teaching commitment to the field of American Studies. Senior members can serve as program advisers and thesis advisers to Ph.D. graduate students (see "Advisers" section). Member/advising graduate faculty members may serve as co-advisers in conjunction with senior members for Ph.D. programs or as the sole adviser for M.A. programs. Members of the graduate faculty may serve as committee members and dissertation reviewers. The Graduate School, on recommendation of the core faculty of the Department of American Studies, designates graduate faculty status. Faculty members who have senior advising status in their home departments are usually given senior advising status in the Department of American Studies Graduate faculty.

According to Graduate School limitations associate faculty from outside institutions are not necessarily given Graduate Faculty Status. However, these associates can serve on preliminary and final examination committees with permission of the Graduate School. Although not necessarily a difficult process this can take some time. If interested in having an associate from outside the University serve as a committee member, please consult the DGS as soon as possible.

Department Officers

American Studies has several department officers to help administer the graduate and undergraduate programs:

Chair

The Chair is appointed by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts (CLA), on the recommendation of the Department of American Studies core faculty, to serve a three-year term. The core faculty may recommend that a second term be served upon completion of the first term. The Chair oversees all aspects of the Department of American Studies.

Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)

The DGS oversees all programs and issues concerning graduate students and graduate level studies in the Department of American Studies. The DGS serves as committee chair of both the Graduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Admissions and Awards Committee.

Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUGS)

The DUGS oversees advising, curriculum, teaching, and other issues regarding the undergraduate program. The DUGS serves as committee chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Governing Bodies and Administrative Committees

Graduate Admissions Committee

The Admissions Committee consists of three members: the DGS, who serves as the committee chair, and two graduate faculty members (appointed by the Department Chair). The primary task of the Admissions Committee is to review all Department applications submitted by prospective graduate students and, on behalf of the faculty, make recommendations for admission to the Graduate School. This committee also reviews all applications for first-year Fellowships (Graduate School, DOVE MacArthur) and first-year assistantships.

Graduate Awards Committee

The Graduate Awards Committee consists of five members: the DGS, who serves as the committee chair, and four faculty members (appointed by the Department Chair) who rotate service throughout the year. The Awards Committee reviews all applications for internal and external funding, makes awards and submits nominations.

Student Rights

Graduate Student Organizations

American Studies Graduate Student Association (GSA)

All graduate students in the Department of American Studies are considered members of the Graduate Student Association. At its most active, this organization, optimally meets at least once per semester, raises policy issues about the program; forms discussion groups; and organizes forums on topics such as dissertation writing.

Council of Graduate Students (COGS)

The Council of Graduate Students represents all of the graduate students on U of M Twin Cities campus. Each Degree Plan may select a representative and an alternate. Students may also volunteer for University-wide committees. American Studies students are eligible and welcome to elect a representative to the Council of Graduate Students. COGS: <http://www.cogs.umn.edu/>

Grievances

Graduate students have the right to fundamental fairness regarding complaints. If students have complaints regarding American Studies faculty or administrative officers, they have several options. The first is to address the problem directly with the faculty member. If the problem is still unresolved, students should approach the Director of Graduate Studies and/or the Department Chair. If the problem remains unresolved, the Chair is authorized to form a grievance committee. (American Studies Constitution: Section 3: Department Committees). The GSA can also be an effective organization for mediating individual and collective complaints with American Studies faculty or administrators. External mediation may be sought by contact with the Student Conflict Resolution Center (SCRC). If the grievance cannot be resolved through informal or departmental means, the formal system of grievance procedure should be activated through the University Grievance Policy. SCRC: <http://www.sos.umn.edu/>

Financial Aid Resources

Fellowships

Graduate School Fellowships

Incoming graduate students are eligible for Graduate School fellowships, which consist of full tuition waivers, stipends to cover living expenses, and subsidized health care (which extends through the following summer). The American Studies Admissions Committee nominates a designated number of incoming students for these awards annually, shortly after admissions decisions have been made. The Graduate School makes the final awards.

Privately-Funded Fellowships

American Studies graduate students are often eligible for several University of Minnesota Privately-funded Fellowships, awarded yearly. American Studies students have won the Harold Leonard Memorial Fellowship in Film Study, the Thomas F. Wallace Fellowship, and the Torske Klubben Fellowship. Nominations for the Wallace and the Shevlin fellowships must be made by the Department of American Studies, and the Department deadline for such applications, typically mid-fall semester, is published well in advance. Generally, these fellowships provide tuition as well as living stipends for a year. The Torske Klubben provides partial funding for research in Norway. For more information and applications, see the Graduate School Fellowships website: <https://www.grad.umn.edu/funding-tuition/fellowshipsandgrants>

Dissertation Fellowships

Dissertation Fellowships provide full support for graduate students engaged in dissertation research and writing for one academic year. All Ph.D. candidates who have completed all requirements by the end of the semester in which they apply for the Dissertation Fellowship are eligible to apply. Application must be made to the American Studies Graduate Awards Committee, who nominates a small number of candidates allocated by the Graduate School. The Department deadline for applications is generally immediately following Winter break. Information can be found at: <http://www.grad.umn.edu/funding-tuition-fellowships-grants/ddf>

The purpose of the Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship (DDF) program is to give outstanding final-year Ph.D. candidates who are making timely progress toward the degree an opportunity to complete the dissertation within the coming academic year by devoting fulltime effort to the research and writing of the dissertation. The Graduate School announcement includes among its requirements that the year of student admission is no more than four years prior to the year of application for the fellowship, or two years prior if the student entered with an M.A. degree, e.g., a student applying for the dissertation fellowship for the year 2013 - 2014 in spring 2013, would have entered the Ph.D. program in fall 2009 or later with a bachelor's degree (or 2011 or later with a master's degree). The Graduate School allows exceptions which include research and family related issues. They do not accept the demands of employment as a valid reason.

Students not meeting this requirement should include a one-page statement of explanation when applying. The Graduate School also strongly recommends that the Thesis Proposal be filed.

Other Fellowships

Many other fellowship opportunities do not require nomination by the department. The web is invaluable for searching for fellowship and grant opportunities.

The ACLS site is an excellent resource listing numerous fellowship opportunities:

<http://www.acls.org/grants/Default.aspx?id=354>.

See also:

CLA Graduate Programs Office: <http://grants.cla.umn.edu/>

Graduate School Fellowship Office <http://www.grad.umn.edu/fellowships/index.html>

Grants

College of Liberal Arts Grants

The Graduate Research Partnership Program (GRPP) is designed to encourage and support research partnerships between faculty in the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) and students enrolled in graduate programs housed within the college. The program provides a summer research stipend to CLA graduate students to support their professional, scholarly, and creative development while collaborating with CLA faculty on scholarly research and creative activity. The program is intended to encourage students to be full partners with CLA faculty on projects of common interest that complement rather than duplicate the ongoing work of either partner.

<http://intranet.cla.umn.edu/grad/grpp.php>

CLA also provides funds for graduate student travel to present scholarly work at conferences, travel related to dissertation research, and other dissertation research related expenses. This support in partnership with the Department aims to help students to develop professional visibility, to strengthen their records of scholarly accomplishment, and to complete their dissertation research.

American Studies Assistantships

The American Studies Department has a number of Graduate Student Assistantships that are awarded each year to both incoming and continuing graduate students.

TA/Fellowship Funding

The American Studies Department awards assistantship and/or fellowship packages to incoming students depending upon available funding. The Admissions Committee awards these after admissions decisions have been made, typically the end of April. "Packages" of funding vary with available

resources and may include tuition waivers, fellowships, teaching assistantships, or combinations of different types of support. There is an annual call for TA applications.

Research Assistantships

Occasionally during the year, American Studies faculty members will secure monies for research assistants. Faculty will provide documentation for these positions; and they may include such duties as assisting a faculty member in research.

Teaching Assistantships

The processes and selection criteria by which teaching assistant resources are distributed in American Studies are intended to seek balance among the following rationales: curricular needs, programmatic obligations, equity, and merit. The goal of the Department is that every graduate student will, at some point before graduation, have the opportunity to teach his or her own American Studies course. In accordance with University policy, the Chair of the Department ultimately makes staffing decisions.

Other Employment

Other Assistantships

There are several kinds of assistantships available through the University. American Studies graduate students are often eligible and qualified to fulfill assistantship positions in other departments on campus. Such positions become available throughout the year and notices are often sent to the American Studies office. Such assistantship postings are forwarded to the graduate student list serve. However, because not all departments send us their listings, students who are seeking such positions are encouraged to contact the Graduate Assistant Employment Office: <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/gae/>. Appointment percentages, requirements, and salaries will vary from department to department on such positions.

Work-Study

This state and federally funded program encourages part-time employment for undergraduates and graduate students who need the earnings to help meet the costs of attending college. Work-Study (WS) provides a source of income and job experience to students, as well as a 70% reimbursement to University employers who create part-time employment for students. Students may also use their Work-Study funds through the Community Service Programs (CSP), and the America Reads Program. These programs offer positions both on and off campus working with approved non-profit organizations in areas such as health care, at-risk youth, childcare, literacy tutoring, math tutoring, and neighborhood and rural development. Reimbursement to employers for these programs ranges from 75% to 100%.

Graduate students are eligible to use Work Study Awards to fund graduate assistantships. You must maintain registration of at least three credits each semester in which an assistantship is held to receive a federal Work Study award. The Work Study application and award process is part of a financial aid package. If you applied for financial aid, you should have received a Financial Aid Award Notice (FAAN) indicating if you were awarded financial aid. You can view your Electronic Financial Aid Award Notice (eFAAN). You must reply to the eFAAN and accept the Work Study award to be eligible for Work Study employment. Answers to other questions about applying for Work Study can be found on the Financial Aid web site, http://www.onestop.umn.edu/onestop/Financial_Aid/workstudy.html .

Federal Loans and Grants

Graduate Students may be eligible for some Federal loans and grants, including the Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL). Application for these loans and grants must be made through the Office of Student Financial Aid. Visit OneStop Student Services Center or see the U of M financial resources online at <http://onestop.umn.edu/onestop/financialaid.html>.

Intellectual Resources

The intellectual “core” of the American Studies Department exists in communication between scholars, locally, nationally and internationally.

American Studies Colloquia

Discussions are scheduled periodically in the American Studies Commons (105 Scott Hall) or other campus locations. During some gatherings a local, national or international scholar is asked to present an aspect of his/her current work. An informal question/discussion period often follows these presentations. Other gatherings are often professional workshops for graduate students. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to attend and to participate in these events. Faculty and students in the program also meet informally around shared interests such as ethnography, international American studies, and popular culture.

Digital Museum

This museum contains digitized images from the private collections of faculty and instructors in the Department of American Studies. The collection is intended as a resource for educational purposes only. http://dcl.umn.edu/static_content_items/about

American Studies Research Resources

Tremaine McDowell Library

Housed in 103 Scott Hall, the Tremaine McDowell Library and Conference room contains reference works, periodicals and scholarly texts regarding many aspects of American Culture. Among these documents are the dissertations of some of the Ph.D. graduates from our Department as well as publications of some of the American Studies core and associate faculty.

American Studies has dedicated resources to compile a library that reflects the wide variety of literature, music, and films produced within the United States. This library is primarily to help students and faculty as they develop and teach classes. Collections of slide and cassettes covering American art, architecture and music are available also. Materials from the library may be checked out.

University of Minnesota Research Resources

University of Minnesota Libraries

Wilson Library, with holdings in the humanities and social sciences, and Elmer L. Andersen Library, with archives and special collections, are the primary libraries used by American Studies students. Also available on the Twin Cities campus are the collections in the Law Library, The St. Paul Central Library (which contains, among other materials, USDA documents), the Architecture Library, the Bio-Medical Library, the Government Publications Library, as other more specialized collections. <https://www.lib.umn.edu/>

Children's Literature Resource Center

Located in 113 Elmer L. Andersen Library, the CLRC houses four collections dealing with children's and popular literature. The Kerlan collection includes not only notable children's books from the 19th and 20th centuries, but also original artworks, manuscripts, correspondence between authors and editors, and foreign language books. The Hess Collection includes dime novels, popular literature, series books and comic books from the 19th and 20th centuries. The Paul Bunyan Collection includes works pertaining to this American legend, and the new Rodgers Collection includes the work of Edward S. Ellis, author of popular boy's novels. <http://special.lib.umn.edu/clrc/>.

Immigration History Research Center

Located in Room 311 Andersen Library, the Immigration History Research Center contains materials relating to 24 eastern and southern European immigrant groups. These materials are strongest in the period from 1880 through the 20th century. Manuscripts, newspapers and publications, individual monographs, and oral histories (particularly Finnish) are housed in the collection. The most abundant materials are those relating to Finnish, Italian, Ukrainian and Polish immigrants. Secondary materials on immigration are also available for on-site research. <http://www.ihrc.umn.edu/>.

Northwest Architectural Archives

The Northwest Architectural Archives located in Room 213 Andersen Library was begun in 1970. The archives collects the records of architects, engineers, contractors, landscape architects, and interior designers from a region which includes Minnesota, western Wisconsin, northern Iowa, and the eastern Dakotas. Every type of document generated by these individuals and firms is collected: drawings of all kinds, specifications, job files, and photographs are chiefly sought. The collections span nearly 130 years of work by many notable practitioners. <https://www.lib.umn.edu/scrbm/naa>

Literary Manuscripts Archives

The Literary Manuscripts Collections is the repository for the personal papers and manuscripts of authors and poets either born in Minnesota or who resided in the state for a significant length of time. Among the 64 collections is a broad array of source materials for studying the lives and careers of these writers: diaries, journals, correspondence, notes, outlines, drafts of written works, photographs, and copies of published editions may all be found in the collections. Included in the collection are the papers of John Berryman. Among the holdings, too, is an impressive assemblage of some 6200 posters from World War I and World War II, covering the wartime activities of several nations, including the United States. Complementing them is a collection of 10,000 photographs of scenes from the global conflict of 1939-1945.

<https://www.lib.umn.edu/scrbm/literary-manuscripts-collections>

Social Welfare History Archives

Housing the records of forty national associations and the personal papers of some sixty individual leaders and practitioners, the Social Welfare History Archives are a rich source of information on a broad range of activities related to social service and those groups who have been the target for social service activity. Among the subject areas of particular strength are the settlement house movement; the social work profession; sexuality-related areas such as birth control, sterilization, illegitimacy, prostitution, and venereal disease; child welfare and family relations; community planning; recreation; and the social aspects of health and health care. The Women's Movement Collection, housed here also, contains more than 250 periodicals ranging from professional journals to newsletters of local collectives. The Social Welfare History Archives are located in Room 320 Andersen Library. <http://special.lib.umn.edu/swha/>

Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum

Located on campus next to the Coffman Student Union and housed in a striking stainless steel and brick building designed by architect Frank Gehry, the Weisman Art Museum offers an educational and friendly museum experience. The museum's collection features early 20th century American artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe and Marsden Hartley, as well as a diverse selection of contemporary art. The holdings are particularly strong in works from the first three decades of the 20th century. Among these, the University Art Museum boasts the largest collection of Marsden Hartley works in the world. The Alfred Steiglitz circle and WPA work are also well represented. The museum's collection is also strong in traditional Korean furniture and American, European, and Asian ceramics, including a large collection of ancient Native American Mimbres pottery. The Museum also holds many works by Minnesota artists and artists connected to the University of Minnesota. Exhibition catalogues from museum showings from across the U.S. are housed in the Museum's library. Opportunities for interns are available. <http://www.weisman.umn.edu/>

Twin Cities Research Resources

Minnesota Historical Society

The resources of the Minnesota Historical Society, located at 345 West Kellogg Boulevard, St. Paul, include general reference, newspaper, photograph, audio-visual and map libraries. Also there are the State Archives which include the records of county and local governments, and various organizations and corporations, and collections from private families and individuals. The State Historic Preservation Office is located within the Historical Society building and maintains files on all Minnesota buildings nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as well as information from a county-by-county survey of the state's historic architecture.

<http://www.mnhs.org/index.htm>

Forms and Policies

APPENDIX A:

- Student Activities Report (SAR) form**
- Grad School Doctoral PhD Degree Completion Steps**
- Graduate School Petition form (OTR190)**

APPENDIX B: Filing the Ph.D. Degree/ Filing an M.A. Degree

- Graduate Degree Plan form (OTR198)**

APPENDIX C: Foreign/Indigenous/ASL Language Requirement

- Language Dept Certification of Foreign Language Proficiency form (OTR192)**
- Grad Program Certification of Foreign Language Proficiency form (OTR193)**

APPENDIX D: American Studies Department Policies