



DEPARTMENT OF
AMERICAN STUDIES

Spring 2026 Course Offerings

AMST 1110.001: Intro to Envir & Social Justice

Offered: Full Term, Online

Instructor: Joselin Castillo, josc Castillo@unm.edu

This class provides an introduction to the theories of the environment, theories of justice in the context of environmental policy and planning, and to histories of poor peoples' struggles around the unequal distribution of toxic waste. We will focus on the ways race, class, gender, sexuality, region, eco-colonialism and their intersections shape environmental and political struggles over natural resource use. Students will learn to examine the ways in which socially constructed representations of Nature shape our interactions with natural environments and shape our perceptions of environmental problems and solutions.

AMST 1110.004: Intro to Envir & Social Justice

Offered: Full Term, TR 12:30-1:45 p.m.

Instructor: Hennessey Star, hstar@unm.edu

This class provides an introduction to the theories of the environment, theories of justice in the context of environmental policy and planning, and to histories of poor peoples' struggles around the unequal distribution of toxic waste. We will focus on the ways race, class, gender, sexuality, region, eco-colonialism and their intersections shape environmental and political struggles over natural resource use. Students will learn to examine the ways in which socially constructed representations of Nature shape our interactions with natural environments and shape our perceptions of environmental problems and solutions.

AMST 1120.001: Intro to Gender, Sex & Empire

Offered: Second-Half Term, Online

Instructor: Daisy Atterbury, daisyatterbury@unm.edu

This course will historicize ways in which US imperialism has interacted with notions of gender and sexuality throughout the centuries, providing a genealogical analysis of gender and sexuality as those structures have been lived and understood in Western culture over the last couple of centuries. Together, we'll discuss theories of the intersectionality of identities and think about the relationships between sex, gender, sexuality, race, class, and nation. To interrogate the norms of whiteness, heterosexuality, middle-class, and U.S. nation state (particularly reigning discourses of citizenship, rights, and democracy) we'll look at postcolonial, racial, class, and LGBTQIA+ writing and analysis. This course will provide a strong foundation for the pursuit of studies in feminist, queer, critical race, and postcolonial theories.

AMST 1120.002: Intro to Gender, Sex & Empire**Offered: Full Term, MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m.****Instructor:** Melissa Bendt, mbbendt@unm.edu

The course is an introduction to connections between gender and sexuality and US imperialism. In it we will collaboratively work through topics such as relationships between sex, gender, race, class, nation, and empire. To do this we will read and discuss a variety of pieces probing intersectionality, postcolonialism, race, and LGBTQIA+ topics. This is an interdisciplinary class useful for exploring questions about feminist, queer, critical race, and postcolonial studies.

AMST 1140.001: Crit Race & Indigenous Studies**Offered: Full Term, MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m.****Instructor:** Ashik Istiak, aistiak@unm.edu

This course introduces students to the historical and contemporary politics of race and Indigenous self-determination in the context of what is currently the United States from the interdisciplinary perspective of American Studies. Beginning with the formative role of slavery and colonialism in the making of modern understandings of race and racial difference, this course focuses on race and colonialism as key organizing categories of U.S. social, cultural, economic, legal, and political life. Throughout the course, we will consider the interdependent, intersectional, and relational dynamics of social identities. We likewise examine how capitalism is a historically specific, racialized, and gendered social relation of inequality. Although our primary concern is the U.S. context, the course situates this context within the broader framework of global history and geopolitics in order to show how and why the U.S. cannot be studied and understood in isolation from the rest of the world. Course readings provide an analytic and historical basis for addressing questions of power, inequality, identity, collective struggle, and social movements.

AMST 1140.003: Crit Race & Indigenous Studies**Offered: Full Term, Online****Instructor:** Hannah DeBoer, hdeboer555@unm.edu

This course introduces students to the historical and contemporary politics of race and Indigenous self-determination in the context of what is currently the United States from the interdisciplinary perspective of American Studies. Beginning with the formative role of slavery and colonialism in the making of modern understandings of race and racial difference, this course focuses on race and colonialism as key organizing categories of U.S. social, legal, cultural, and political life. Throughout the course we will consider the interdependent, intersectional, and relational dynamics of social identities. We likewise examine how capitalism is a historically specific racialized and gendered social relation of inequality. Although our primary concern is the U.S. context, the course situates this context within the broader framework of global history and geopolitics in order to show how and why the U.S. cannot be studied and understood in isolation from the rest of the world. Course readings provide an analytic and historical basis for addressing questions of power, inequality, identity, collective struggle, and social movements.

AMST 1150.001: Intro Southwest Studies**Offered: Full Term, Online****Instructor:** Marya Jones, mejones@unm.edu

This course provides both an introduction to the complex history and culture of the southwestern United States and a demonstration of the possibilities of the interdisciplinary study of regional American culture. It is multicultural in content and multidisciplinary in methodology. It examines cross-cultural relationships among the peoples of the Southwest within the framework of their expressions and experiences in art, culture, religion, and social and political economy. More specifically, this course will consider: What is this place we call the Southwest? How is it defined- geographically, politically, and culturally? Who are the people that live there? How have their lives been transformed by social and historical forces into the cultures we see today? At the same time, how have these same groups retained their traditions, customs, and beliefs in response to change? This course will explore contemporary Southwestern cultures, their multiple voices and culture expressions, using an interdisciplinary approach that draws from geography, anthropology, history, literature, and the arts.

AMST 1150.002: Intro Southwest Studies

Offered: Second-Half Term, Online

Instructor: Francisco Galarte, galarte@unm.edu

This course provides both an introduction to the complex history and culture of the southwestern United States and a demonstration of the possibilities of the interdisciplinary study of regional American culture. It is multicultural in content and multidisciplinary in methodology. It examines cross-cultural relationships among the peoples of the Southwest within the framework of their expressions and experiences in art, culture, religion, and social and political economy. More specifically, this course will consider: What is this place we call the Southwest? How is it defined- geographically, politically, and culturally? Who are the people that live there? How have their lives been transformed by social and historical forces into the cultures we see today? At the same time, how have these same groups retained their traditions, customs, and beliefs in response to change? This course will explore contemporary Southwestern cultures, their multiple voices and culture expressions, using an interdisciplinary approach that draws from geography, anthropology, history, literature, and the arts.

AMST 1150.003: Intro Southwest Studies

Offered: Full Term, TR 2:00-3:15

Instructor: Joshua Heckman, heckmanj@unm.edu

This course introduces the complex histories, social issues, and cultural experiences of peoples of the southwestern United States. Course materials and discussions also demonstrate the possibilities of interdisciplinary study of regional American culture. It is multicultural in content and multidisciplinary in methodology. We will examine cross-cultural relationships among the peoples of the Southwest within the framework of their expressions and experiences in art, culture, religion, social and political economy.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of this course will:

- Be able to identify how historical social, economic, political, religious and ecological factors shape communities in the southwest borderlands region and those communities' relation to the United States, Mexico, and the world.
- Comprehend how people including but not limited to indigenous and immigrant communities in the Southwest use culture, art, and politics to conceptualize, reinforce, and contest the social and ecological factors that shape them and their communities.

- Be able to analyze and compare the historic and contemporary cultural expressions of the Southwest.
- Be able to apply knowledge of southwest studies through the conduct of interdisciplinary research methods.

AMST 310.001: T: Sci Fi Sexualities

Offered: Full Term, M 1:00-3:45

Instructor: Eva Hayward, ehayward@unm.edu

Science fiction is a genre of possibility, of potential. Where reality has been marshalled by authority and power, Science Fiction has questioned such investments in certainty. Few genres of film/video, literature, and other artmaking have challenged the conceits of identity and identification than Science Fiction. In this course, we will question the limits of sexuality—of the identity claims called homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, and trans and intersexual—through the genre of Science Fiction. We will ask how Science Fiction expands, disrupts, and reimagines sexual identity. How does this genre play havoc with identities and their politics? What makes Science Fiction libidinal and anarchically sexual?

AMST 310.002: T: College in Prison

Offered: Full Term, W 4:00-6:45 p.m.

Instructor: Alexander Pearl, apearl00@unm.edu

This course moves from the theory and practice of higher education in prisons, jails, and detention centers to a survey of contemporary college-in-prison programs across the United States. In building and applying a working knowledge of the history and geography of higher education, the penitentiary, and the entrenched carceral state, we will survey this uneven landscape of containment, crisis management, and radical study.

Deploying an experiential pedagogy rooted in community-based research and collaborative learning, the second half of this course will see the completion of individual and group projects that explore and engage the potential for renewed college-in-prison programs in New Mexico.

AMST 330.001: T: Transgender Studies

Offered: Full Term, MWF 10:00-10:50 a.m.

Instructor: Benjamin Abbott, babbott@unm.edu

This course examines the emerging field of Transgender Studies in the U.S, a field that centers transgender scholarship, trans-identified scholars, and trans people's experiences. The "trans" in transgender studies not only refers to a specific identity and political collective, it also reflects the potential transgressive movement across all sorts of boundaries within the field. Through the optic of trans-, this field offers innovative analyses of sex, gender, identity, and the body and their normative enforcements in theory, culture, science, and law. And more recently, the field has turned its attention towards analyzing operations of colonialism, empire, white supremacy, and other systems of oppression. Due to the current pandemic, this class will meet online once per week (zoom attendance is required), and we will make sure we take care of each other while we learn from transgender scholars and activists on how to survive and thrive during difficult times.

AMST 370.001: T: Native Am Hist Since 1850

Offered: Full Term, TR 12:30-1:45 p.m.

Instructor: Sierra Ramirez, sramirez88340@unm.edu

Description Forthcoming.

AMST 370.003: T: Indigenous Horror

Offered: Second-Half Term, MW 1:00-3:30 p.m.

Instructor: Jennifer Denetdale, jdenet@unm.edu

This course explores how Indigenous writers, poets, theorists and filmmakers take up horror as a genre. Drawing upon storytelling as method, horror is used to examine the conditions of Indigenous life. Since the content focuses on horror, gore, and violence, students may find the material unsettling and emotionally charged.

AMST 485.001: Senior Seminar

Offered: Full Term, TR 2:00-3:15 p.m.

Instructor: Silas Grant, soagrants@unm.edu

This is the capstone course for the American Studies major. Students will synthesize what they learned in American Studies courses and related classes while strengthening skills in research, analysis, and writing. The central part of the seminar focuses on developing, researching, and writing a 20-page original senior thesis on a topic that students care about.

AMST 520.002: T: Nucl Colonial & Resistance

Offered: Full Term, T 4:00-6:30 p.m.

Instructor: Daisy Atterbury, daisyatterbury@unm.edu

Graduate study of the nuclear industrial complex in the Southwestern US and global context, from parallels in 20th-Century nuclear testing in the US-MX borderlands and pre-independence Algeria, to 21st-Century conversations around nuclear energy and AI. Interdisciplinary topic that touches on science/technology studies, environmental justice, political economy of nature, environmental social movements, race and nature, ecofeminism, law and violence.

AMST 520.003: T: Feminist Technoscience

Offered: Full Term, R 4:00-6:30 p.m.

Instructor: Silas Grant, soagrants@unm.edu

This seminar examines genealogies, central themes, critiques, and emerging literatures in the interdisciplinary field of feminist science and technology studies (STS). The course is concerned with the roles of gender, sex, race, class, and colonialism in knowledge production across science, technology, and medicine. We will begin by engaging with key texts that have helped shape the field of feminist STS by challenging binaries such as nature/culture, epistemology/ontology, subjectivity/objectivity, and center/periphery. We will then spend the rest of the course exploring topics including toxicity, climate change, sexed and raced reproduction, militarism and surveillance, multi-species relations, and digital cultures. Throughout, we will ask if and how STS methodologies can support students in pursuing their own research questions, and will attend to the kinds of practices, forms of experimentation, and modes of relation that might make up a feminist and anti-colonial technoscience.

AMST 530.001: T: Feminist Queer&Trans Methods**Offered: Full Term, W 4:00-6:30 p.m.****Instructor:** Eva Hayward, ehayward@unm.edu

This course discusses feminist, queer and trans* approaches to methods (research strategies) and methodologies (approaches to knowledge production) across the humanities. We will explore what it means “to queer” writing and research, using transdisciplinary perspectives to identify debates and tensions in conceptualizing, conducting, analyzing, writing, and disseminating scholarship within and beyond the academy. Our inquiry will focus on how interlocking systems of power related to gender, race, sexuality and coloniality impact the production of knowledge, thinking about the potential efficacies (and limitations) of research in facilitating the disruption of normative social systems. This is an applied course that emphasizes skills-building and workshop facilitation, supporting graduate students in both the sustenance of present, ongoing writing projects and the development of early research programs incorporating queer and feminist methods. Readings draw on a range of thinkers, from José Esteban Muñoz to Maria Lugones, Amin Ghaziani, Amber Musser, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Heather Love and Billy-Ray Belcourt.