

AMST 101mgw (10310) Race and Class in Los Angeles

Taught by
Professor
George Sanchez

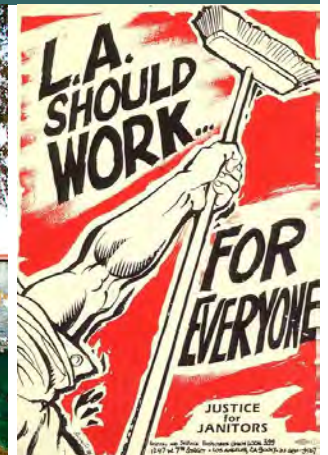
Tuesday/Thursday
9:30-10:50am
MHP 101

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- ASE, ASAF, ASCL
Social and Political
Issues
- GE VI (Social Issues)
- GE-C (Social Analysis)
- GE-G (Citizenship in a
Diverse World)

American Studies & Ethnicity
3620 S. Vermont Ave, KAP 462
Los Angeles, CA 90089-2534
Phone: 213-740-2426
aseinfo@dornsife.usc.edu

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This course examines the importance of race and class in relation to major political, economic, gender, social, cultural and economic issues in historical and contemporary Los Angeles. Throughout the course, theories will be introduced that are used in the academy to study the development of urban regions, the social construction of race, how power works, and the dynamics of inequality. We will use and question these theories to help us analyze particular topics in Los Angeles, including residential segregation, urban redevelopment, suburbanization, immigration and assimilation, cultural interaction, income inequality, and economic policies. We will examine these topics and how they are shaped and influenced by race, class, and gender. One of the key goals of this course is to equip students – through course readings, writing assignments, in-depth section discussions, and examinations – with a working knowledge of contrasting theories and methods that they will learn to critically and systematically examine a range of issues facing the United States.



AMST 135gmw (10320) Peoples and Cultures of the Americas

Taught by
Professor
Alicia Chavez

Tuesday/Thursday
11:00-12:20pm
SGM 101

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- Elective: ASE, ASCL, Majors
- GE II (Global Cultures and Traditions)
- GE-C (Social Analysis)
- GE-G (Citizenship in a Diverse World)

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This course examines the diverse peoples and cultures that comprise the Latino/a/x American imaginary. Although this course spans the Americas, it does not purport to offer an exhaustive treatment of all the cultural formations within its capacious terrain and borderlands. Rather, our texts—literature, art, film, music, articles—and discussions prompt us to consider the cultural constructs and sociopolitical intersections of race, gender, sexuality, and class in the hemisphere from the moment of contact between indigenous Americans and Europeans through the contemporary era. We will prioritize perspectives from Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino/a/x communities that narrate and contextualize key concepts and debates surrounding colonialism, genocide, slavery, revolution, dissidence, aesthetics, diaspora, transnationalism, and popular culture.



AMST 200mg (10347) Introduction to American Studies and Ethnicity

Taught by
Professor
Alicia Chavez

Tuesday/Thursday
3:30-4:50PM
WPH 207

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- Core Requirement:
ASE, ASCL, ASAS,
ASAF
- Core: ASE Minor, NAS
Minor
- GE-C (Social Analysis)

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This course provides an introduction to major themes, issues, theories, and methods in American studies and ethnic studies. We will explore the shifting historical meanings of U.S. governing ideals such as republicanism, freedom, citizenship, and national community, as well as the lived experience of oppositional ideologies like nativism, white supremacy, removal, elimination, and exclusion. We will examine constructions of race and ethnicity as central themes in American studies that undergird virtually every topic, and the ways in which they intersect with socioeconomic class, culture, gender, and sexuality. We will examine the historical and contemporary processes by which structures of inequality have been built and identities have been claimed and contested in the United States over time, including through the transnational networks that have worked to construct U.S. power, such as imperialism, war, migration, and globalization. How do constructions of race, class, gender, and sexuality shape views of culture, citizenship, and the nation-state? We will explore historical texts, fiction, memoir, film, media, short stories, and documentaries to examine these themes.

AMST 204g

(10359)

Introduction to Native Studies

Taught by
Professor Chris
Finley

Monday/Wednesday
4:00-5:20pm
DMC 210

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- ASE Social and Political Issues
- Core Requirement: NAS Minor
- Elective: ASE Minor
- GE-C (Social Analysis)



This course will cover both fiction and non-fiction texts of Indigenous writers, intellectuals, and artists from the past two-hundred years. Theories, methods, and representations of decolonization, relationships with the land, and Indigenous resistance are central to Indigenous freedom and sovereignty.

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AMST 205g

(10360)

Introduction to American Popular Culture

Taught by
Professor
Joshua Mitchell

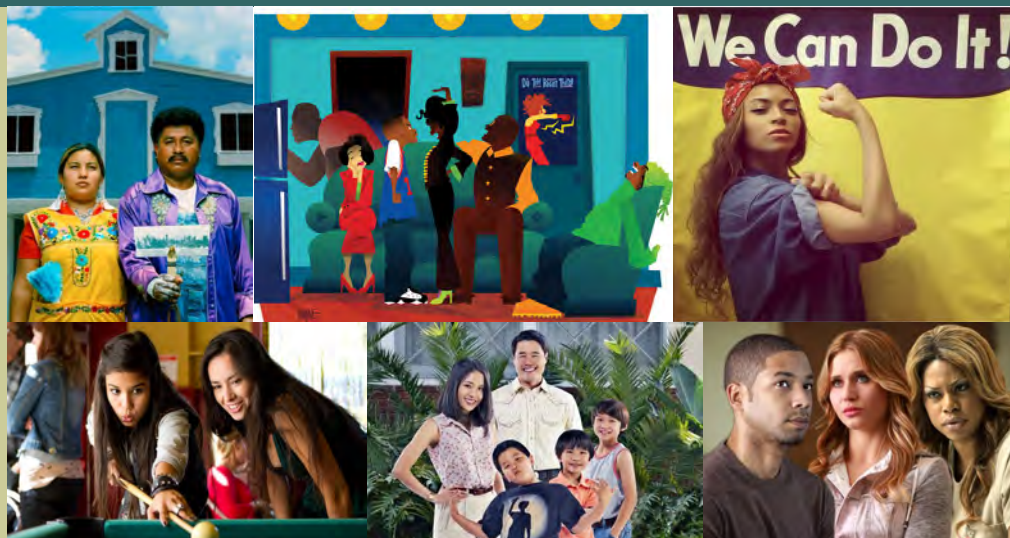
Monday/Wednesday
8:30—9:50 am
KDC 240

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Elective: ASCL, ASAS, ASAF Majors
- Core Requirement: APC Major, APC Minor
- Literature & Culture: ASE Major
- GE-B (Humanistic Inquiry)

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This course is a survey of popular culture, designed to introduce students to the broad range of popular cultural productions such as film, television shows, literature, music, social media, emerging technologies, and food. We will explore the roles of popular culture in our life, and think about what popular culture tells us about our contemporary moment, as well as its connections to the past and the future. Who determines what is popular, and why? What are the intersections of popular culture with race and ethnicity, as well as gender and sexuality? In what ways does popular culture engage with social issues? How does global media and digital technologies impact the ways that popular is produced, accessed, consumed, and circulated? These are some of the questions that we will discuss and think about together in relation to an array of popular culture examples from a global and transnational perspective.

AMST 211g

Sex in America

(10300R)

Taught by
Nayan Shah

Monday/Wednesday
2:00pm-3:20pm
THH 114

***Course fulfills this requirement:**

- GE C—Social Analysis

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This class will ask you to think deeply about the place of sex in American life since the nineteenth century. From narratives of interracial marriage, to coming out narratives, to history of contraception, sexual violence, and struggles against AIDS and research about the technologies used to change gender and enhance erotic response, the course materials will help us explore just how much we talk, think and write about sex -- about wanting it, not wanting it, having it, avoiding, punishing those who do have it, pathologizing those who don't and policing bodies that seem predatory or dangerous in the past and today. We explore the history of sex panics, the role of medicine and law in making sexual identity and sexual pathology. We will explore different visions of sexual liberation and freedom and their role in creating new identities, communities and cultures. And we will investigate how and why sex, religion, race and politics have become so intertwined in the United States and the impact on everyday lives.



AMST 220gmw (10371) The Making of Asian America

**Taught by
Toni Hays**

**Tuesday/Thursday
11:00 - 12:20 PM
DMC 155**

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

Diversity Requirement
ASAS & ASE Social
and Political Issues
Elective: ASE Minor
GE-C (Social Analysis)
GE-G (Citizenship in a
Diverse World)

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In this class, we will examine the now and then of Asian America and track the making and remaking of Asian America. We will ask simple questions: Who is Asian American?; What does it mean to be Asian in America?; When does Asian America begin? ;Where does Asian America end?; How do we connect Asian America's past and present to envision a new future?

In this course, we will analyze how market and libidinal economies merge and frame contemporary Asian American culture, ethnicity, and politics. We will pay special attention to why Asian American popular culture is a vector for understanding how U.S.-Asia geopolitics, economics, socialities impact the cultural expressions of diasporic "Asian" subjects. As we analyze various cultural phenomenon, we will bring race, gender, (dis)ability, citizenship, immigration status, sexuality, class relations (amongst other sets of relations) together in our analysis to understand the possibilities and limitations of Asian America's political future.

Our conversations will bring together contemporary popular culture with with critical texts on race, capitalism, and Critical Ethnic Studies. This archive will help us explore the changes Asian America is undergoing at the present and how these contemporary patterns are connected to the endurance of U.S. (settler) imperialism in Asia and th Pacific.

Texts include: *Never Have Ever*, *XO, Kitty*, Disney's *Big Hero 6*, *Yellow Rose*, Ali Wong's *Baby Cobra*, *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo*, and more.



AMST 230g

(10371)

Introduction to African American Studies

Taught by
Professor
Chrisshona Nieva

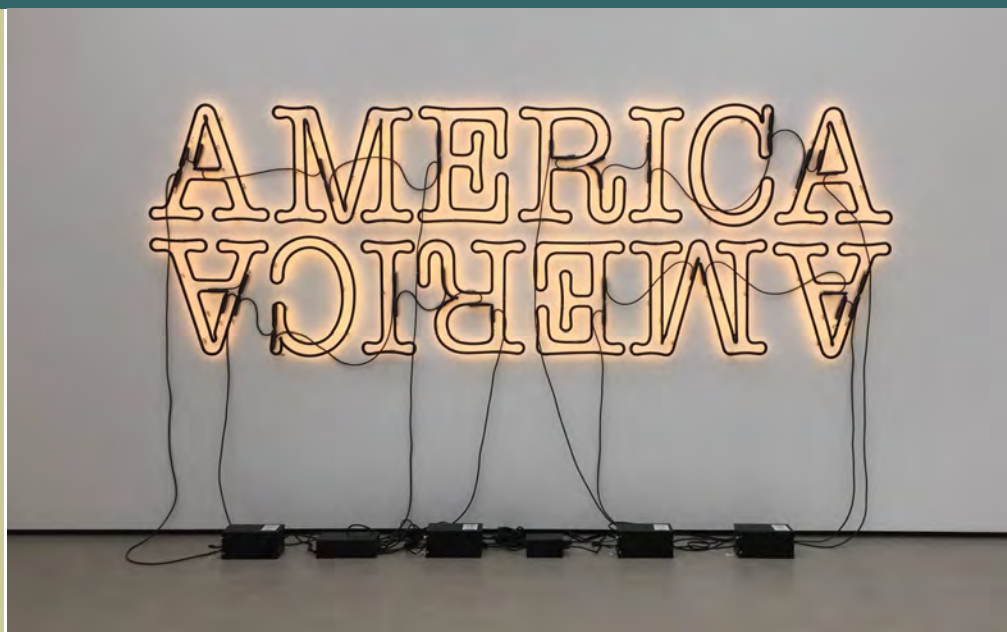
Tuesday/Thursday
12:30 - 1:50 PM
Room TBA

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Core requirement for ASAF major
- GE-C (Social Analysis)

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Glenn Ligon, "Double America," 2006. The Broad. Photo: Shock Art.

This course offers an introduction to African American Studies through both a historical and thematic lens. In the first half of the semester, we trace African American history from slavery through the civil rights movement, asking how the story of the United States looks different when told from the perspective of African Americans. We will read speeches, essays, fiction, and theory to understand how Black thinkers and activists defined freedom, belonging, faith, and resistance across time. The second half of the semester turns to major themes and debates, bringing historical voices into conversation with contemporary scholarship and struggles. Together, we will examine how the legacies of slavery, segregation, and incarceration continue to shape the present, while also highlighting Black traditions of creativity, joy, and imagination. Throughout the course, we ask how past debates echo in today's movements, and how contemporary scholars and activists build on earlier generations. Students will leave the class with a deeper understanding of African American history, key concepts in the field, and the ways Black thought continues to challenge and expand our ideas of democracy, justice, and freedom.

AMST 250gmw

(10372)

The African Diaspora



***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- ASAF & ASE History Requirement
- Elective: ASE Minor
- GE II (Global Cultures & Traditions)
- GE-C (Social Analysis)
- GE-G (Citizenship in a Diverse World)

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Professor Lydie Moudileno
Tues/Thurs 9:30—10:50 am THH 202

This course will introduce students to the distinctive histories, cultures and identities that share a connection to Africa as a place of origin. From ancient times to the 21st century, people have both travelled in, and migrated from Africa individually or collectively, from the Transatlantic slave trade to more contemporary forms of mobility. Progressing chronologically from the early modern period to our times, this course will examine a variety of cultural products which attest to the range and complexity of diasporic experiences around the world, while also interrogating the representation of “Africa” as a historical origin, as a home -both real and imagined-, and as an aesthetic construction shaped through various cultural lenses across generations. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which blackness as a category intersects not only with mobility but also with issues of space, language, citizenship, gender and sexuality, memory and politics (among many others). While focused on the Atlantic world, this course will also underscore the multidirectional scope of African mobility within the African continent and across the globe. Course material will include fiction, plays, narratives, essays, music and visual material.

AMST 274mgw

(10390)

Exploring Ethnicity through Film



Taught by
Professor
Joshua Mitchell

Tuesday/Thursday
8:00 - 9:20 am
DMC 100

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- ASAF, ASCL, & ASE Social and Political Issues
- GE-G (Citizenship in a Diverse World)
- Minor Requirements: ASE & APC

Explore the complexities of race and ethnicity in America through film

What is ethnicity? How is ethnicity shaped, or how does one “become” ethnic? What is at stake in claims and visual representations about ethnicity? What politics surround ethnic representations and performances? How is ethnicity actualized and/or performed? Can there be an “authentic” ethnicity? How are such complexities reflected and/or constructed in film? How did the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite and other movements call attention to the lack of diversity and recognition in the film industry?



AMST 301gp

(10408)

America, the Frontier, and the New West

Taught by
Chrisshonna Nieva

Monday/Wednesday
2:00-3:50 PM
THH 301

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- ASAF & ASE Social and Political Issues
- APC Critical Approaches
- Elective: ASCL, ASAS Majors, ASE Minor, JWAS Minor
- GE I (Western Cultures & Traditions)
- GE-B (Humanistic Inquiry)
- GE-H (Traditions & Historical Foundations)

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This course reexamines the history of the American West, moving beyond simple stories of frontier heroism and westward progress. We ask how the West looks different when studied through the experiences of Native peoples, African Americans, immigrants, and other communities whose voices were often marginalized in traditional accounts. Drawing on primary sources and recent scholarship, we will investigate how land, labor, migration, and cultural conflict shaped the region. Topics include racial and ethnic diversity, struggles over resources, violence and resistance, and the making and unmaking of Western myths. The class emphasizes both the promise and the tensions of the West as a place of opportunity, exclusion, and reinvention. By comparing competing narratives, students will sharpen their analytical skills and learn how interpretations of the West continue to influence American identity today.



AMST 325gw

(10423R)

The Middle East in Hollywood

Taught by
Professor
Evelyn Alsultany

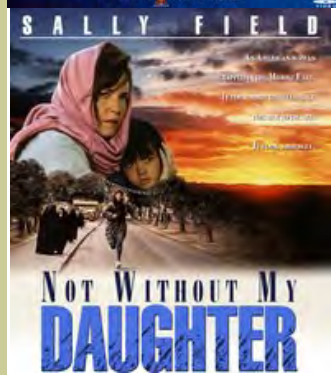
Tuesday/Thursday
11-12:20 pm
Room TBA

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- GE A—Arts
- GE G—Global Perspectives-Citizenship in a Diverse World

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This course explores the ways in which Arabs and the Middle East have been represented in Hollywood cinema from the 1920s to the present. Through an examination of Hollywood films over the last century, such as "The Sheik" (1921), "The Ten Commandments" (1956), and "Three Kings" (1999), a shift in stereotypes is traced from the rich Arab sheik with harems of women to the Arab terrorist. Through this process, the course examines the connection between representations and the historical-political moment in which they are created and disseminated, from European colonization of Arab nations and creation of the state of Israel to 9/11 and the "Muslim ban." This course is organized around watching one film or TV show per decade from the 1920s to the present to track how the images of Arabs and the Middle East have changed over time. How have international relations, political events, and foreign policies influence representation in Hollywood filmmaking? How do representations in film and media become part of American culture? Through examining these questions, we will develop an analysis of the changing landscape of race, gender, and American identity in film.



**CLUB
CULTURES**

This semester, AMST 330 focuses on Club Cultures from the 1970s (so-called “Disco”) to the present (“EDM”). We explore the ways in which “discotheque,” the “nightclub,” the “underground,” and other dance party scenes and formations serve as sites of rally and refuge in relation to social, political, and cultural matrices of power. We ask questions such as: How do club cultures relate to struggles over spaces of cultural expression, community gathering, and creating dwelling in the past and the present? How do community members value them and how do they represent them, document them, and otherwise engage with them in a range of art forms and practices—from music and dance to photography and art, like Archibald Motley’s “Nightlife” pictured below? What kinds of intimacy, affect, and power get generated or enacted in modern dance club cultures and how? Finally, what kinds of scholarship are scholars in American Studies producing in relation to these questions? Readings may include academic studies by scholars like Fiona Buckland, Luis Manuel Garcia-Mispireta, and Madison Moore.



AMST 350

(10424)

Junior Seminar in American Studies and Ethnicity

Taught by
Professor
David Román

Tuesday
3:30 - 6:20 pm
KAP 141

*Course fulfills
these requirements:

- Core Requirement:
ASAF, ASAS, ASE,
ASCL Majors and
ASE Minor

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AMST 350 is divided into three distinct units, each a stand alone study that allows us to focus intensely on three unrelated topics. The three topics are each worthy of their own course, but for our purposes they formulate the entirety of our seminar.

- The early AIDS years (1981-1995)
- Contemporary literature
- US popular culture

In the first section, we will study the early AIDS years, the social movement that emerged to confront the AIDS crisis, and the role of the arts in heightening AIDS awareness; in the second section we will read contemporary literature, popular novels written by US writers. In the final section of the class, we will consider the current landscape of US popular culture including film, television, and music. Each topic allows us to focus on different critical methodologies---historical, archival, close reading, ethnographic, and cultural critique. The course sets out to broaden our understanding of recent and contemporary American culture.

AMST 365

(10427)

Leadership in the Community— Internship

Taught by
Natalia Molina

Tuesday
12:00-1:50 PM
Room TBA

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Social and Political Issues for majors in ASE, AFAS, ASAS, ASCL
- Elective for minors in ASE and NAS.
- Gender and Ethnicity for major in APC

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Community leadership is fundamentally about empowerment, that is, empowering others to develop the skills, strategies and the confidence to solve their own problems. Study leadership within the context of a community-based organization through a hands-on internship experience. Explore theory and research on leadership, as well as principles of behavioral and social change, using specific examples from your own community leadership efforts.

- In the past, students have been placed with organizations such as ACORN, A Place Called Home, the Boys & Girls Club, the Korean Immigrant Workers Association (KIWA), Planned Parenthood, and the Salvation Army. Students are encouraged to choose their own internship with instructor approval. Those who are already doing an internship should approach the instructor to find out if it qualifies.
- USC Students at all levels (including Freshmen), and from all disciplines, are encouraged to enroll.
- Students who are already doing an internship can approach the Instructor about the possibility of getting course credit.

AMST 373m (10428) History of the Mexican American

Taught by
Professor
Alicia Chavez

Tuesday/Thursday
12:30 - 1:50 pm
SGM 226

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- ASE & ASCL History Requirement
- Elective: ASE Minor

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This course will examine how gender, class, and immigrant status have shaped Mexican American history and culture. We will use language, music, labor struggles, politics, and youth movements to explore how Mexican Americans have made sense of and shaped their experience. The class will include the following topics:

- How the southern border was invented
- The historical connection between migration and American capitalism
- Chicanx? Latinx? Mexican? (but never Hispanic?)
- Mexican American social movements
- Latinx youth cultures: from zoots suits to sonideros to punk and beyond



AMST 378m

(10430)

Introduction to Asian American History

Taught by
Toni Hays

Tuesdays
2:00-4:50 PM
DMC 205

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- Elective: ASE Minor
- ASE & ASAS History Requirement

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This class is designed to be a dynamic and rigorous introduction to the field of Asian American Studies. Asian American Studies was born out of the student-led movements for social justice and racial equality. This class builds on the legacy of these student-led movements and frames how race is a crucial lens for understanding societal dynamics in the United States and the expanse of its empire in Asia and the Pacific. Through the history of Asian diasporic communities in the United States, students will be challenged to examine how race has influenced their life and society overall. The main objectives of this course are 1) engage with a range of perspectives of Asian American history, community, and contemporary issues; and 2) to analyze important social structures in the U.S. and around the globe.



AMST 389m

(10431)

Carceral Geographies

Taught by
Joshua Mitchell

Monday/Wednesday
12:00-1:50 PM
WPH 104

OPEN TO NON-MAJORS.
Non-majors who have taken
any AMST courses can waive
their AMST 200 pre-requisite
requirement. Please contact
Dominique Moye (hallcarr@
usc.edu) to request this.

***Course fulfills
these requirements:**

- Diversity Requirement
- Social and Political
Issues: ASE, ASAF,
ASCL, & ASAS majors
- Elective: ASE Minor



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Why are there so many people incarcerated in the United States and why are young people across the US calling for an end to police violence, some even for the abolition of policing? Is mass incarceration an inevitable product of slavery and Jim Crow? Why has prison expansion and law and order been a rallying cry make America safe (again) precisely at moments when violent crime rates were going down? This course is designed to explore and explain the role of surveillance, criminalization, policing to historical and contemporary US and across the globe.

This course proceeds from the idea that carceral geographies such as prison towns, detention centers, police departments, welfare agencies, and surveillance apparatuses are spatial fixes for social, economic, and political crises. Students will have an opportunity to build their understanding of the historical and contemporary organization of people, places, ideas and infrastructure that makes up US carceral geographies. Student will also have a chance to familiarize themselves with the history of resistance to prisons and detention.



SOLITARY

THE INSIDE STORY
OF SUPERMAX ISOLATION
AND HOW WE CAN ABOLISH IT

TERRY ALLEN KUPERS

AMST 395m: African American Humor & Culture

Spring 2026 - Section 10434R

**Taught by
Professor
Lanita Jacobs**

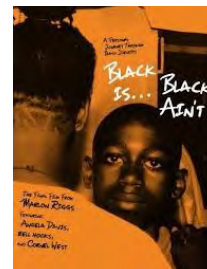
**M 2-4:50PM
KAP 147**

**Course fulfills these
requirements:**

- Diversity
- ASAF Social & Political Issues
- Elective: ASE, ASCL, ASAS Majors
- Elective: ASE Minor
- GE IV (Social Issues)
- GE-C (Social Analysis)

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Course Description: This iteration of AMST 395 examines a long tradition of African American humor in theatre (e.g., “blackface” minstrelsy), TV/radio (e.g., *Amos ‘N’ Andy*), literature/folklore, and Black standup comedy. We will explore how these diverse comedic forms offer insights into shifting notions of racial, gendered, class, etc. “authenticity,” language, and identity in and beyond Black America. Our investigation of interdisciplinary theories of humor in anthropology, folklore, humor studies, cultural studies and other disciplines will illuminate the themes, tropes, discourse styles, and performative genres that characterize African American humor. We will also explore the politics of representation that have colored the experiences of African American humorists and their “already knowin” and winking audiences in poignant ways throughout history. Close readings of Black standup comedy and comedians (whether lay, up-and-coming, and/or “celebrity”) will augment our analysis. At the end of the term, we will gain new insights into:

- Black audiences and humorists as co-producers in the making and interpretation of Black humor and culture
- Black/“urban” comedy clubs/shows as communal forums
- shared cultural assumptions, beliefs, and everyday practices that inform the enduring significance of “a” real Black or, that which is decidedly black decidedly black about Blackness

Towards this end, class participants are invited to co-create a mutually supportive learning environment – one rich in curiosity, collegiality, trust, critical thinking, and a dash of humor – wherein we can think, laugh, and grow together! Course participants are also expected to keep course materials within our learning environment.

AMST 493: Senior Honors Thesis in AMST

Spring 2026 - Section 10443D

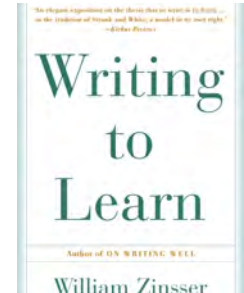
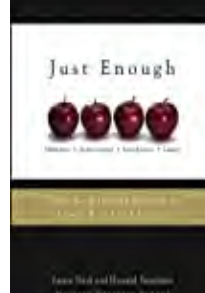
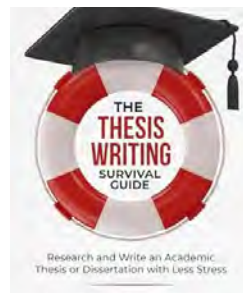
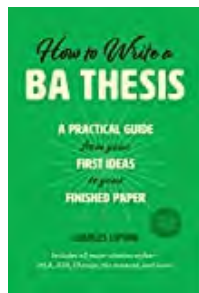
**Taught by
Professor
Lanita Jacobs**

**M 9-11:50AM
KAP 460**

D-clearance required; students can email request to instructor at jacobshu@usc.edu

Course fulfills these requirements:

- Elective: ASE, APC, ASCL, ASAS, ASAF Majors
- Other: CCLA, Other Selective Interdisciplinary Majors



Course Description: This capstone seminar will foster students' rigorous completion of one of three final projects (i.e., annotated bibliography, professional portfolio, senior "honors" thesis) via training in research methods, in-class writing practicums, and independent research [with a faculty advisor]. Towards this end, students who register via D-clearance will be invited to:

- deepen their knowledge of theoretical frameworks in American Studies & Ethnicity
- hone their ability to analyze social issues in society and critically read published research
- develop a research-informed project utilizing the appropriate methods carried out under faculty supervision
- present their research findings in AMST's annual **Undergraduate Research Colloquium** near the end of the term

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AMST 498

(10444)

Senior Seminar in American Studies and Ethnicity

**Taught By
Professor
Alicia Chavez**

**Wednesday
9:00-11:50 AM
WPH 200**

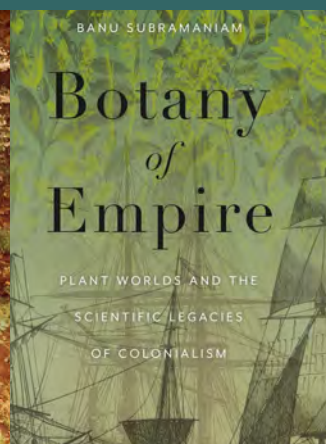
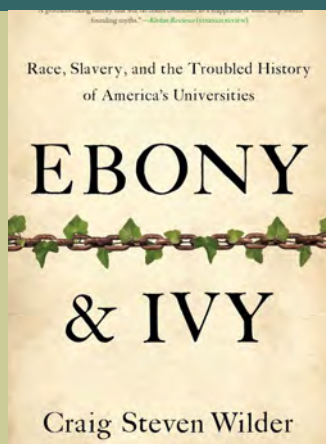
**This course is open
to non-majors.**

***Course also fulfills
core requirements for the
majors in:**

- American Studies and Ethnicity
- African American Studies
- Asian American Studies
- Chicano/Latino Studies
- American Popular Culture

American Studies & Ethnicity
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USC
Dornsife
*Department of American
Studies and Ethnicity*



This course integrates approaches from the arts, the humanities and the social sciences to address questions of power and difference in U.S. society. (De)colonial relationships to land and more-than-human life will be a central focus. Key

concepts include: settler colonialism, property, racial capitalism, and “land as pedagogy.” Students will gain a critical understanding of how power operates in and through everyday landscapes and sites including archives, herbaria, museums, gardens, and universities, and build from course concepts to create an “oppositional landscape history” of their own choosing. Through multiple registers, students will gain a complex understanding of the workings of knowledge and power in the U.S. and beyond.



For all ASE majors, AMST 200 is a pre-requisite to take this course. Non-majors interested in taking this course can request to have the pre-requisite requirement removed by emailing to aseinfo@usc.edu or calling to (213)740-2426.