

Area and Comparative Studies

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AMEREXP 200: The American Experience

This multidisciplinary course explores the American experience in its social, political, cultural, and historical dimensions. The course examines major American institutions, including the philosophy and history of the United States Constitution from its founding to present day interpretations; the struggle over individual and group rights; and America's presence in the world, taking an approach to the American experience that exposes it to many and varied interpretations. The course includes such topics as American musical, film, and literary traditions, contemporary social and economic issues, politics and political history, the immigrant experience, slavery and its aftermath, American isolationism/expansionism, and the question of what is "mainstream" and what is "marginal" to American life. As a result of taking this course, students will develop a critical understanding of the social, political, cultural, and historical dimensions of the diversity of US experiences; perspectives on US institutions and their role in local and global power relations; interpretive skills through close readings of texts across a variety of genres and media; written and oral communication skills.

Units: 3

PACBASIN 100: Introduction to the Pacific Basin

This course compares regions, cultures, societies, and economies within and across the Pacific Basin. The course surveys the geography and history of this region, an increasingly important arena in world affairs. From various perspectives, the course also examines contemporary issues, such as economic relations, migration, regional institutions, globalization, democratization, trans-nationalism, and the environment in the Pacific Basin. As a result of taking this course, students will develop an understanding of the historical transformations that characterize the region since the first encounters with Europeans; develop a critical awareness of social, political, economic and cultural issues within the region over time; develop skills of oral and/or written expression; gain experience of interdisciplinary perspectives; gain critical skills for interpreting visual and/or other representations of peoples and cultures across the region.

Units: 3