The diversity of American society and culture is greater than can be contained in any single perspective or university department, and serious academic attempts to understand America require a multi-disciplinary approach. The American Studies Program at IUPUI necessarily draws on a broad range of departments and course offerings as it invites students to invent their own ways of making sense of America. Some students may emphasize historical, sociological, or economic factors in exploring the American experience, while others may draw on philosophical, literary, or artistic resources to interpret some aspect of America. Because of the multi-disciplinary nature of American studies, it complements a variety of majors. It adds focus and contrast to a major in English, history, religious studies, political science, or philosophy by picking out the American strains and distinguishing them from other influences. The program provides additional context and depth to a major in journalism, sociology, economics, anthropology, communication studies, or geography by suggesting applications of skills and theories in an American setting. American studies can also enrich language studies through considerations of identity and community in a land of rich native cultures, adventurers, conquerors, immigrants, slaves, and freedom seekers from around the world.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES
The American Studies Program at IUPUI enjoys close relationships with two research centers that offer interested and motivated students special opportunities for examining American culture:

The Center for Ray Bradbury Studies includes correspondence, manuscripts, and a complete library of published works by this prolific author, playwright, essayist, and critic who has both studied and influenced American culture in the twentieth century and beyond.

The Max Kade German-American Center is dedicated to examining the experience of German immigrants in America and the German heritage of Indianapolis. Through lectures, publications, and fellowships, the center promotes inquiry into the German influence in American culture.

Distance can give a different perspective on one’s own culture, and the American Studies Program at IUPUI provides opportunities for students to see themselves in a new way with two overseas exchange programs: one with the nationally-recognized American studies department at University of Derby, UK, and another with the history department at Newcastle University, UK.

THE FUTURE
An American studies background can be helpful in business, journalism, government, the military, education, law, and any field sensitive to cultural context. Any endeavor that requires an ability to synthesize broad ideas and understand oneself in a dynamic historical context would benefit from the intellectual experience available in American studies.

American studies can benefit those applying to graduate school, law school, and other professional programs such as journalism because it indicates a willingness to seek connections across disciplinary lines and a curiosity about what many of us take for granted—our American society and culture. A minor in American studies offers undergraduates an opportunity to work closely with a professor and demonstrate the initiative required to develop a suitable course of study; both experiences can be key to success in professional or graduate school.

ONLINE INSTRUCTION
The American studies core courses and several electives are offered regularly online. It is now possible to obtain a minor in American studies completely online.

THE MINOR
The minor in American studies invites students to explore the American experience in a context broader than a single discipline. American studies synthesizes methods and theories from history, literature, anthropology, philosophy, and other fields to make sense of experiences in and of American cultures. The scope of American studies includes the Americas, North and South; the influences that have shaped American cultures; and American influences that have affected the world.

The required core courses of the minor are AMST-A 101 Introduction to American Studies, which gives an overview of the field; AMST-A 301 The Question of American Identity, which considers the formation and variety of identity in American cultures; and A302 The Question of American Community, which examines the confluence, conflict, and transformation of American social groups. Beyond these core courses, students are required to take two courses at the 300 or 400 level offered or cross-listed in the American Studies Program. This may include courses offered in various departments the School of Liberal Arts.

Prerequisite: HIST-H 105 or HIST-H 106, or evidence of historical knowledge of American cultures (the prerequisite does not count toward the required 15 credits for minor)

Requirements: 15 credits completed with grade of C or better and distributed in the following way:
• AMST-A 101: Introduction to American Studies (3 cr.)
• AMST-A 301: The Question of American Identity (3 cr.)
• AMST-A 302: The Question of American Community (3 cr.)
• Two additional courses at the 300 or 400 level offered by the American Studies Program or by other departments and cross listed by the American Studies Program (6 cr.)

To officially declare an American studies minor, visit the Miriam Z. Langsam Office of Student Affairs, Cavanaugh Hall 401.

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FACULTY

Director and Advisor
Martin Coleman, Philosophy
(Ph. D. Southern Illinois University, Carbondale)
American Philosophy

Professors
David Bodenhamer, History (Ph.D. Indiana University) Anglo-American legal and constitutional history, nineteenth-century United States, and urban studies

Jonathan Eller, English (Ph.D. Indiana University) American literature, textual studies with an emphasis on the work of Ray Bradbury, and the history of publishing

Philip K. Goff, Religious Studies
(Ph.D. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill) American Religious History

Sara Anne Hook, School of Informatics
(J.D. Indiana University School of Law – Indianapolis) Intellectual property law and informatics, legal informatics

John R. McKivigan, History (Ph.D. Ohio State University) Nineteenth-century U.S. history, American reform movements, and American ethnic history, American labor history

Peter J. Thuesen, Religious Studies
(Ph.D. Princeton University) United States religious history, the Bible in American culture, Christian thought since the Reformation, history of the book in colonial British America, race and religion in American history

Marianne S. Wokeck, History (Ph.D. Temple University) American history, colonial and Revolutionary history, history of the Atlantic world 1500-1800, immigration and ethnicity, and women’s history, scholarly editing

Associate Professors

Jason Kelly, History (Ph.D. University of California, Santa Barbara) Eighteenth-century British history, history of archaeology and anthropology, history of art, history of masculinity, historiography and theory

Thomas Marvin, English (Ph.D. University of Massachusetts) American literature, African-American literature, American Studies

Nancy Robertson, History (Ph.D. New York University) U.S. history; late nineteenth and twentieth centuries; American philanthropy; women; religion; U.S. race relations; women and banking; and history of U.S. citizenship

Susan Shepherd, English (Ph.D. Stanford University) Sociolinguistics; language and oppression, especially with regard to Black English, American Sign Language, pidgins and creoles, and issues of gender, language and culture; child language acquisition; the history of English

Visiting Professor in American Studies
Raymond J. Haberski, History (Ph.D. Ohio University) United States intellectual history, American film, American cultural criticism, war and civil religion

Lecturer

John Gosney, UITS (M.A. Butler University, English) Twentieth-century American literature, literature and criticism of rock music, alternate reality gaming, technology and pedagogy

Emeritus Faculty

Ralph D. Gray, History (Ph.D. University of Illinois) American history, early nineteenth century transportation history, Indiana history, and history of IUPUI

Nathan Houser, Philosophy (Ph.D. University of Waterloo (Canada)) American thought, pragmatism, thought of C. S. Peirce, formal semiotics, history of logic

Paul Nagy, Philosophy (Ph.D. Fordham University) Ethics, American philosophy, pragmatism, question of American identity, America in the 1960s and 1970s, John Dewey, Michael Polanyi, and pragmatism and American culture

Melvin L. Plotinsky, English (Ph.D. Harvard University) Shakespeare, Milton, twentieth-century British and American literature, American Jewish writers, creative writing, and literary criticism

Jan B. Shipp, History/Religious Studies (Ph.D. University of Colorado) History of American religion, religions in the making, religion in urban America, and Mormonism

William Toupance, English (Ph.D. University of Massachusetts) Textual theory and textual criticism, semiotics, fantasy and science fiction, children’s literature

Associate Faculty

Kellie Dawson, Santayana Edition (Ph. D. Cornell, English) Gender and sexuality, Native American literature, composition, scholarly editing

Kim Trager-Bohley, (Ph.D. Indiana University, Mass Communication and American Studies) Critical media studies, history of the book, media ethnography, feminist cultural studies, civic journalism, cultural globalization

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