American Studies

Overview

Our American studies program is one of the strongest in the country, and every year it is among the top majors at Connecticut College. We focus on two critical issues: race and ethnicity and the role of the United States in the world. The program is innovative, dynamic and interdisciplinary. After you complete the core requirements for the major, you have the opportunity to concentrate on comparative race and ethnicity; expressive arts and cultural studies; or politics, society and policy. You also participate in community service, fieldwork or an internship. Our graduates are shaping thinking about critical issues in government and non-governmental organizations, and in graduate studies and academia.

Personalized Learning

You shape your own experience through the courses you choose, as well as through your honors or independent study project. Student research topics have included the representation of adolescent sexuality on reality television and its impact on behavior, a critical look at dolls created for young girls in America, and a comparison of religious tolerance in France and the United States.

International Opportunities and Study Abroad

American studies majors have examined the role of American culture in the de-Nazification of Germany as well as the impact of Eastern European training methods on American sports. A course on immigration took students to the Texas/Mexico border, where they lived with local families. Our civil rights seminar has traveled to important locations of the African-American freedom movement.
Faculty

David Canton, Associate Professor of History; Interim Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion
B.A., Morehouse College; M.A., The Ohio State University; Ph.D., Temple University
Twentieth-century American social history; civil rights movement, urban history, hip-hop music and black culture in post-industrial America

David Kyuman Kim, Professor of Religious Studies
B.A., University of Rochester; M.Div. & Th.D., Harvard University
Philosophy of religion; religion and critical theory; religion and political theory; modern and contemporary religious thought; human agency; moral philosophy and ethics; religious theory; Asian-American studies

Julie Rivkin, Professor of English
B.A., Ph.D., Yale University
American literature; Gender studies and contemporary literature; Literary theory; Henry James

Catherine McNicol Stock
Barbara Zaccheo Kohn ’72
Professor of History; Director of the American Studies Program
B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Yale University
Rural radicalism and domestic terrorism; social, cultural and political history of the United States, 1877 to present, including the American West; rural America; the Great Depression and the New Deal

James Downs, Associate Professor of History
B.A., University of Pennsylvania; M.A., Ph.D., Columbia University
Nineteenth-century United States history; African-American studies; History of medicine and public health; history of medicine and public health

Jen Manion, Associate Professor of History; Director of LGBTQ Center
B.A., University of Pennsylvania; Ph.D., Rutgers University
Gender and sexuality; women and social movements; early America

Selected Courses

Introduction to American Studies; Theorizing Race and Ethnicity; Politics and Culture in The United States Since 1917; History of Sexuality; African-American History; Latin American Immigration and Migration; The Globalization of American Culture Since 1945

About Connecticut College

Connecticut College educates students to put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society. A leader in the liberal arts since 1911, the College is home to nationally ranked programs for internships, community action, arts and technology, environmental studies and international studies. Our beautiful 750-acre arboretum campus is located in the historic New England seaport community of New London, Conn.