

Mission Statement

(Prepared by Alessandra Benedicty with feedback from Committee that advises the program, and approval from Chair.)

The mission of the Master of Arts in the Study of the Americas is to offer students a liberal arts degree, in step with the most cutting edge trends in interdisciplinary education. The program seeks to address new questions and concepts about the Americas as it focuses on topics such as: racial and ethnic identities, migration and immigration, popular culture, politics, gender relations, and human rights. Our explorations move beyond a focus on identity politics to examine the historical, political economic and socio-cultural formations of the Americas. As the name of the program suggests, our curriculum pays attention to both methodology and content, where 'study' emphasizes our faculty's expertise in conducting interdisciplinary research, and the 'Americas' points to our gesture to look comparatively at spaces across the hemisphere and to consider, interrogate, and reevaluate the impact that concepts such as nation, race, ethnicity and gender have had on regional and historical formations of family, community, governance, and civil society. The focus of the program is timely and joins an emerging field of study, that among its concerns, breaks apart notions about what the "Americas" are, how they are connected historically, politically, and culturally across national boundaries and transnational spaces. We call attention to how certain areas continue to be disenfranchised and examine the reasons for such marginalization.

One of the practical goals of our program is to nourish a collaborative space within which students may develop their intellectual engagement, applying diverse and myriad disciplinary approaches to investigate the intersection between education, policy, government, society, history, culture, and the arts. For students who already have careers, we offer a scholarly space in which they may engage their current professional responsibilities and interests using theoretical frameworks. For students who are preparing for a first career or career change, our program offers varying perspectives from which to explore potential paths.

A second concrete objective of our program is to provide students with a rigorous, well-defined curriculum that grounds students in an interdisciplinary perspective, but one that also allows them to explore more individual interests. Our 30-credit program allows students, with approval, to take up to three 3-credit courses at another division within The City College or at

another CUNY campus, or even benefit from the study abroad programs whose content areas complement that of the MA in the Study of the Americas.

One of the historical missions of The City College of New York has been to serve the educational needs of the working people of the city. The college's Division of Interdisciplinary Studies represents the heart of this mission, and our MA program enhances our ability to serve working students more fully and successfully. Our program is intended to accommodate the busy schedules of professional students. The majority of our courses are taught in the evenings. As with all of The City College's curricula, our program is extremely rigorous, preparing students to master both academic and professional environments. Although only in existence since 2010, graduates and students in the program have gone on to work in the diplomatic sector, been accepted to PhD programs, and have complemented their current careers in communications, education, health, law, human resources, or marketing.

To this end, our program is housed at the Division of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Center for Worker Education, which is located at 25 Broadway. Our facilities are state-of-the-art (Wi-Fi, smart classrooms, computer lab) and our infrastructure is extremely personalized: we have an in-house library and award-winning librarian, writing center and tutors, a student services coordinator with experience in career counseling, and a clinical psychologist. The Center for Worker Education also houses the Frances S. Patai Program on the Nazi Holocaust and Quest Community for Lifelong Learning. The Center regularly hosts lecture series organized around themes that bring in outside scholars to share their research, such as "The Public Intellectual," "Aesthetic and Cultural Expressions of African-Derived Religions," and "The Child."

Learning Outcomes

The goal of the History Department is to help students become literate about history and historical methods, as well as to help them develop some of the skills and broader cultural literacy they will need on leaving City College. To that end the History Department aims to foster its students' abilities in the following ways:

Students with an M.A. in the Study of the Americas will:

1. Identify, describe and apply various disciplinary methodologies from across the humanities and social sciences and will be able to analyze and utilize such practices.

2. Demonstrate an interdisciplinary grasp of topics ranging from politics and culture to economics and philosophy.
3. Identify and engage critically with the most contemporary theoretical frameworks and arguments as well as engage with earlier paradigms, approaches and debates (such as but not limited to: 'Marxism,' 'neoliberalism,' 'globalization,' 'imperialism,' 'techno-economics,' 'structuralism,' 'postmodernism,' 'feminism,' 'queer studies', 'postcolonial studies,' 'diaspora studies', 'migration studies', 'indigenous studies') that focus on formations of power as they relate to cultural, social, economic, and geopolitical landscapes in the Americas and in the Americas' relationships to other parts of the world.
4. Apply the above theoretical frameworks to case studies throughout the Americas, which engage private, public, non-governmental, non-profit, and grassroots approaches to economic development, civil society, and community building.
5. Produce extended graduate-level research assignments, including annotated bibliographies, book reviews, research proposals, and research papers, which involve at least two disciplinary approaches.
6. To effectively draw on an interdisciplinary knowledge base and skills set in order to meet the demands of the contemporary labor-market while being able to efficiently manage a project, including the ability to organize information critically, draw important connections, and write well and persuasively.
7. Understand and respect diverse identities with which individuals and communities choose to describe themselves.

Learning Outcome Grid

(Outcomes are numbered from 1 to 7 as listed above
Level of outcome is indicated by three levels: I=Introduced; P=Practiced; R=Reinforced)

Courses	Learning Outcomes						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
IAS 50000: Inventing the Americas	I		I		I/P		I
IAS 50100: Graduate Research Methodologies	I		I		I/P	I	I
IAS 50200: Society and Cultures in the Americas	R	R	R		R/P	I	R
IAS 50300: Geopolitics and Diplomacy across the Americas	I	R	R		R/P	I	R
IAS 60000: Literature of the British West Indies	I	R	R		R/P		R
IAS 60100: Race and Gender in the Americas	R	R	R		R/P		R
IAS 60200: Comparative Slavery of the Americas	I	R	R		R/P		R
IAS check number: Wild Animals of the Americas	R	R	R		R/P		R
IAS 60400: Religion of the Americas	R	R	R		R/P		R
IAS 60510: Markets, Power, and People	I	R	R	R	R/P	R	R
IAS 60600: Music of the Americas	I	R	R		R/P		R
IAS 70100: Capstone: Weimar in the Americas	R/P	R/P	R/P	R/P	R/P	R/P	R/P
IAS ??: Labor Strategies in the Americas	I	R	R		R/P		R
IAS ??: Gated Cities, Gated Communities, Gated Minds	I	R	R		R/P		R
IAS ??: Realisms and Magic in Literature, Poetry and Film in the Americas	I	R	R		R/P		R
IAS ??: Brazil in a Global Context	I	R	R		R/P		R
Cross-listed							
IAS ??: Spanish American-Short Story	R	R	R		R/P	I	R
IAS 60030: Hispanic Literature of the United States	R	R	R		R/P	I	R
IAS??: Spanish-American Colonial Literature, V6000	I	R	R		R/P		R