
WHAT CAN I DO WITH A MAJOR IN ... AMERICAN STUDIES

OCCUPATIONAL OVERVIEW:

“American Studies is designed for the student interested in the interdisciplinary study of American culture. It encourages flexibility and innovation within a general structure of areas of interest, including but not limited to: Culture Studies (including folklore and material culture); Southwest Studies; Environment, Science and Technology; Popular Culture; Gender Studies; Race, Class and Ethnicity” (from the UNM Course Catalog).

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS:

A bachelor's degree is the minimum formal education required, and is excellent preparation for entering a variety of diverse occupations. “It gives students interested in government, community, or social work a sound background for professional training, and the major is especially appropriate for pre-law students. Other areas for graduate study may include American Studies, English, history, political science, sociology, business, urban planning, and historic preservation, depending upon the student’s career interests. Graduates oriented toward the communication arts - journalism, television, public relations, and advertising - find that an American Studies background provides the kind of knowledge about American society and issues required in those fields. American Studies is also a good background for students interested in business careers, particularly in a time when many professions and careers require flexibility and sensitivity to social, cultural and political issues and problems” (from UNM American Studies website).

EMPLOYERS/INDUSTRIES & SUGGESTED STRATEGY:

Please ask your Career Advisor (CDF) for identifying employers or additional resources for your occupation of choice.

Government: Public opinion pollster – Public information coordinator – Departmental historian – Researcher – Chief of review unit compiling lists of buildings for historic reasons – National parks service – Public program administrator for The National Endowment for the Humanities or Arts

Suggested Strategy: Get involved in campus organizations to develop leadership abilities and interpersonal skills. Develop statistical, analytical, and computer skills and investigate research methodologies for census positions. Gain related experience in your area of interest through internships, volunteer, or part-time employment. Research governmental application procedures. A graduate degree may be required for higher level positions.

Communications/Education: Public relations representative – Technical writer – Researcher – Columnist/journalist – Editor – Publicationist – Elementary or Secondary Educator -- Professor – Principal

Suggested Strategy: As an undergraduate obtain internship or volunteer positions to gain related experience. Supplement coursework with classes in Communication & Journalism and English. Gain experience with campus media outlets. / Obtain teaching credential necessary for desired teaching level.

Research/preservation: Exhibit preparation coordinator – Historical background analyst – Librarian – Biography creationist – Preservationist – Museum specialist – Curator – Conservator – Restorer – Research association

Suggested Strategy: Gain related experience via an internship, part-time, or volunteer position. Obtain a graduate degree in library science, museum studies, art history, or a related field, depending upon interest. Seek research experience as an undergraduate. Take supplemental coursework.

Human Services: Youth counselor – Social work specialist – Case worker – Volunteer services coordinator – Community planning specialist – Community organization worker – Employment counselor – Parole/probation officer – Development officer – Welfare investigator

Suggested Strategy: As an undergraduate obtain internship or volunteer positions to gain related experience. Gain experience in a social service setting. Obtain a graduate degree in a related field for counseling, social work, or healthcare practitioner positions. Take coursework in related fields (e.g., criminology courses for parole/probation officer).

Business/Nonprofit: Market research analyst – Personnel officer – Sales/marketing representative – Investment researcher – Underwriter – Insurance agent – Loan administrator – Manpower planner – Organizational planner – Management trainee – Campaign planner – Corporation historian/archivist – Consultant/research, writing – Consultant/cultural resource management – Banker – Stockbroker – Account coordinator – Customer supply analyst – Arts council director – Fundraising director – Grants specialist – Tour guide – Foundation administrator

Suggested Strategy: Gain relevant experience through internships, volunteer positions, or part-time work in your area of interest. Consider earning a second degree, minor, or pursuing additional coursework in a complementary field of study (e.g., business).

Focus on developing “transferable skills” such as computer competency, written/verbal communication, and project management. Seek leadership opportunities on campus. Some positions may require an advanced degree.

INFORMATIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL WEBSITES:

American Studies Association	http://www.theasa.net/
Britain Association for American Studies	http://www.baas.ac.uk/
American Studies Crossroads Project	http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/
American Historical Association	http://www.historians.org/
American Studies Majors DC Internships	http://www.dccinternships.org/
The FUND for American Studies	http://www.tfas.org/

OTHER INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES:

 <http://online.onetcenter.org>



<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>