

How this document is to be used and audience:

How document is to be used...

The reader of this document will notice that there aren't many specific prescriptions for *exactly* what an American Studies, or a team-taught class, should look like. This is a deliberate choice on our part because the nature of American Studies and team teaching is difficult to pin down to a script, as is the case with teaching, in general. Our goal is that the reader of this document will have a better picture of the American Studies experience, whether that reader is a teacher, adviser, student, or administrator. And particularly for teachers new to this course, we hope this document gives them an idea of what they can expect – particularly the process of working as an American Studies team – without simply telling them what to do. We also hope this document generates additional questions and meaningful pedagogical discussions. If this document can be a starting point for purposeful dialogue, then it will have met an important goal.

Lastly, we recommend that the school's motto be used as a means for providing clarity when guidance is needed. Whenever there's an issue relating to American Studies or team teaching that's difficult to resolve, we believe the stated purpose of this institution, *To commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity*, will offer direction.

Audience for this document...

There are many people who will find this document useful. The most obvious audience is American Studies teachers, particularly those new to the course. When reflecting on their start as an American Studies team, many past and current teachers have mentioned they felt a sense of the unknown in starting their partnership. Some teams have even mentioned they learned on the run as they taught the class for the first time. As we explain in the "thoughts on team teaching" section, this is normal and should be expected. On the other hand, having a better knowledge of the nature of this class – and team teaching – will help teachers ease into the transition as a team more effectively, particularly those teams that made up of *both* teachers new to American Studies. We believe this document will provide a better knowledge of this unique course for new teachers.

Advisers will also find this document useful. American Studies is a different experience for students; the class size, double-period structure of the course, and team-taught dynamic is something new for most students. During the course registration process advisers want advisees to make wise, informed decisions. Changing a student's schedule after the school year has started, particularly a double-period class, can be problematic. Helping students know what they're getting themselves into as they register for classes will likely reduce scheduling conflicts in the future. If an adviser wants to learn more about this course, the "Course Overview" section is helpful in explaining American Studies. We've also created a "Frequently Asked Questions" document for advisers that will help them decide whether or not American Studies is a good fit for an advisee.

Other teachers and administrators interested in team teaching will find this document useful. Our section titled "Thoughts on Team Teaching" is not specific to a

particular discipline, and offers a broad pedagogy applicable to any team-taught course. This document also speaks to our recent strategic plan emphasizing connections across disciplines.

Students and parents who want an even more detailed overview of American Studies and a team-taught course might also find parts of this document useful. The description of American Studies in the Course of Study provides a sufficient description and the adviser document will also help inform students and parents of the course, but in a rare case, students and parents might use this document for a closer look at American Studies.

Finally, educators from other institutions who are interested in integrated studies and team teaching may find this document useful.