

Evaluation report Spring 2022

American Studies

Study Programme: American Studies

Level: BA/BA minor/MA

Study Board: English and American Studies

Evaluation strategy for the education: Midterm and final

What specific courses does this summary include:

BA level: American Literature after 1900, American Politics, American Business and the Rise of Capitalism, Themes in American Literature and Culture, Case studies in American History, The Global War on Terror

MA level: Coming Apart: Politics, Partisanship, and Polarization from Reagan to Trump, Communicating American Studies, Perspectives in American Studies

Positive examples for inspiration:

The evaluations are overall positive. Students in particular point out that a clear and focused initial discussion on the goals and terms of the course was helpful (Anne Mørk's courses all ranked high, in particular the study guides she prepares for the course as such). The students also liked the classes in which the format of the teaching varies. In one BA class of 10 ECTS points, The Global War on Terror, some students were horrified to realise they had to read three entire novels. Although clearly causing some discomfort, it is positive that students realise at this early stage that one may in fact be required to read several books on a university course, even if some students find it "disrespectful" to be put to such high standards.

Conditions that call for further follow-up:

Exactly what (and when) "replacement papers" cover in the portfolio-based exam courses (of which there are many) seem unclear to both lecturers and students. Furthermore, various lecturers do not follow the same guidelines. This is not only confusing to the student, but potentially undermine their belief in a fair and consistent means of grading. Also, not all lecturers have managed to provide feedback to the student feedback. Finally, while the strength of American Studies lies in its transdisciplinary approach and in that many courses are co-taught by literary scholars and historians, some students struggle to tie the material taught on co-taught classes.

Future initiatives based on the evaluations: Better cohesion in co-taught classes plus more clear guidelines on replacement papers.

Initiatives since the last evaluation: None