



UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH

COURSE SPECIFICATION

BA (Hons) American Studies

Academic Standards, Quality and Partnerships
Department of Student and Academic Administration

July 2021

Copyright

The contents of this document are the copyright of the University of Portsmouth and all rights are reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, such as electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recorded or otherwise, without the prior consent of the University of Portsmouth.

COURSE SPECIFICATION

Course Title	<i>BA (Hons) American Studies</i>
Final Award	<i>BA (Hons) American Studies</i>
Exit Awards	CertHE; DipHE; Ordinary
Course Code / UCAS code (if applicable)	<i>C1585S, U1585PYC</i>
Mode of study	<i>Full time</i>
Mode of delivery	<i>Campus</i>
Normal length of course	<i>3 years, 4 years with placement (sandwich) year</i>
Cohort(s) to which this course specification applies	<i>September 2019 intake onwards</i>
Awarding Body	<i>University of Portsmouth</i>
Teaching Institution	<i>University of Portsmouth</i>
Faculty	<i>Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences</i>
School/Department/Subject Group	<i>School of Area Studies, History, Politics and Literature</i>
School/Department/Subject Group webpage	
Course webpage including entry criteria	<i>www.port.ac.uk/courses/history-politics-and-social-studies/ba-hons-american-studies/</i>
Professional and/or Statutory Regulatory Body accreditations	None
Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	<i>Levels 4, 5, 6</i>

This course specification provides a summary of the main features of the course, identifies the aims and learning outcomes of the course, the teaching, learning and assessment methods used by teaching staff, and the reference points used to inform the curriculum.

This information is therefore useful to potential students to help them choose the right course of study, to current students on the course and to staff teaching and administering the course.

Further detailed information on the individual modules within the course may be found in the relevant module descriptors and the Course Handbook provided to students on enrolment.

Please refer to the [Course and Module Catalogue](#) for further information on the course structure and modules.

Educational aims of the course

- *Develop knowledge of North and Latin America, its history, culture, environment and society*
- *Acquire understanding of the Americas in its wider geographical context, through comparison with other geographical areas (including the entire globe), and with reference to transnational links connecting the Americas to other parts of the world*
- *Develop awareness of relevant vocabulary and of contributory disciplines and theories*
- *Understand and use concepts from different disciplines and/or interdisciplinary approaches as a means of understanding the Americas*
- *Access and utilise a diverse range of relevant information and research resources*
- *To provide a framework for students to follow a flexible, coherent programme of study, allowing them to develop specialist interests and knowledge in their main subject and in a minor subject via a Pathway. This course offers subject Pathways in History and also in English Literature. A student who satisfies the Pathway requirements will qualify for the following named awards:*
 - *BA (Hons) American Studies with History*
 - *BA (Hons) American Studies with English*

Pathways provide flexibility in the course by offering an academically coherent combination of modules in another subject area for a student to undertake alongside their main degree subject. All students apply for the Single Honours degree and follow a common curricula of core modules at level 4. All participating Single Honours degrees include a 20 credit bridging modules for each Pathway. These modules cover essential material on the Single Honours, and also introduce students to the subject Pathways offered at Levels 5 and 6 through their interdisciplinary flavour. The Bridging modules enhance the experience of all students, regardless of whether they opt for a Pathway, by introducing them to related subject areas that complement the main degree subject.

A student chooses whether to continue on the Single Honours programme or join a Pathway when making their options choices for Level 5. In order to satisfy the requirements for the recommendation of the Pathway award a student must have been awarded 40 credits at level 5 and 40 credits in level 6 in subject Pathway units. A student who joins a Pathway at Level 5 but decides that they do not wish to remain on it, can return to the Single Honours Programme at Level 6, with the exception of those programmes subject to professional accreditation requirements.

Course Learning Outcomes and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies

The [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#) sets out a national framework of qualification levels, and the associated standards of achievement are found in their [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) document.

The Course Learning Outcomes for this course are outlined in the tables below.

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
A1	<i>Promote knowledge and understanding of the Americas, either through interdisciplinary approaches, including the dynamics of social change, its geographical environment and its place in a global context</i>	<i>Lectures, seminars, tutorials (group, individual),</i>	<i>Essays, presentations (group and individual),</i>
A2	<i>Reflect upon the multifaceted nature of the subject area, its complex relationship to, and the key methods and concepts of, other disciplines and interdisciplinary</i>	<i>feedback on formative</i>	<i>reports, political speeches, document</i>

	<i>formations and the relevant scholarship originating from both within and outside the Americas</i>	assessments, workshops.	analysis, cultural reviews, primary source analysis, literary/autobiography analysis, analysis of statistical data, digital source analysis, exams.
A3	Analyse the similarities and differences between the regions of the Americas and the rest of the world, thus fostering cross-cultural, transnational and international perspectives		
A4	<i>The ability to ask and answer cogent and focused questions about the past and to pursue those questions through structured enquiry, selecting and interrogating an appropriate range of materials, including primary and historiographical sources of evidence (H)</i>		
A5	<i>To appreciate and analyse literature and/or language from different periods and of regional and global varieties (EL)</i>		

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) skills, able to:

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
B1	<i>The ability to critically engage with the study of the Americas from a number of disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches, which include cultural studies, development studies, film and media studies, history, international relations, literature, philosophy, politics, and sociology</i>	Lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials	Essays, presentations (group and individual), reports, political speeches, document analysis, cultural reviews, primary source analysis, literary/autobiography analysis, analysis of statistical data, digital source analysis, exam.
B2	<i>The ability to use research techniques to identify, record, read and critically analyse and interrogate a range of primary and secondary written and/or oral and/or visual sources, as a medium for understanding another culture</i>		
B3	<i>The ability to compare and contrast the appropriateness of different interdisciplinary approaches in examining the Americas</i>		
B4	<i>The ability to understand how people have existed, acted and thought in the context of the past. History involves encountering and sensing the past's otherness and learning to understand unfamiliar structures, cultures and beliefs systems. These forms of understanding also shed important light on the influence which the past has on the present (H)</i>		
B5	<i>Appreciate the breadth of literatures in English and the regional and global varieties of the English language (EL)</i>		

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) skills, able to:

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
C1	<i>Read and use materials both incisively and with sensitivity to compare and contrast ideas and concepts</i>	Lectures, seminars,	Essays, presentations

	<i>found within different disciplinary and geographical contexts</i>	<i>workshops and tutorials</i>	<i>(group and individual), reports, political speeches, document analysis, cultural reviews, primary source analysis, literary/autobiography analysis, analysis of statistical data, digital source analysis, exam.</i>
C2	<i>Communicate ideas with clarity, coherence and persuasiveness</i>		
C3	<i>Analyse issues proficiently in the light of evidence and argument</i>		
C4	<i>Basic critical skills: a recognition that statements are not all of equal validity, that there are ways of testing them, and that historians operate by rules of evidence which, though themselves subject to critical evaluation, are also a component of intellectual integrity and maturity (H)</i>		
C5	<i>The history, structure, levels and discourse functions of the English Language and how culture, language, technology, and economics affect how, where and by whom texts are produced and received (EL)</i>		

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) skills, able to:

LO number	Learning outcome	Learning and Teaching methods	Assessment methods
D1	<i>Work with a significant amount of independence, demonstrated in self-direction, self-management and intellectual initiative both in learning and studying and in time management</i>	<i>Lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials</i>	<i>Essays, presentations (group and individual), reports, political speeches, document analysis, cultural reviews, primary source analysis, literary analysis, analysis of statistical data, digital source analysis, exams.</i>
D2	<i>Write and think under pressure and meet deadlines</i>		
D3	<i>Listen effectively and work creatively, flexibly and adaptively with others</i>		
D4	<i>History graduates may be expected to solve complex problems using critical thinking, their own initiative, and analysis and evaluation of diverse, partial or ambiguous data; to express themselves clearly through excellent oral and written communication skills; and to demonstrate a capacity to understand diverse human contexts, cultures and motivations. (H)</i>		
D5	<i>The ability to articulate their own and other people's ideas concisely, accurately and persuasively and to discover and synthesize complex information and diverse evidence (EL)</i>		

Academic Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth [Academic Regulations](#) will apply to this course.

Support for Student Learning

The University of Portsmouth provides a comprehensive range of support services for students throughout their course, details of which are available at the [MyPort](#) student portal.

In addition to these University support services this course also has a team of learning development tutors – who give students access to support in developing the academic skills needed to succeed in their degree. This includes matters of academic style, data handling, and research methods.

Current students can access further details about their learning development tutors, or book appointments, through Moodle. Support is also available through the university's Academic Skills Unit.

Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

The University of Portsmouth undertakes comprehensive monitoring, review and evaluation of courses within clearly assigned staff responsibilities. Student feedback is a key feature in these evaluations, as represented in our [Policy for Listening to and Responding to the Student Voice](#) where you can also find further information.

Reference Points

The course and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- [University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Specification](#)
- [University of Portsmouth Strategy](#)
- [University of Portsmouth Code of Practice for Work-based and Placement Learning](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency Qualification Characteristic Statements](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency Subject Benchmark Statement for *Area Studies \(2019\), History \(2019\), English Literature \(2019\)*](#)
- [Quality Assurance Agency Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)
- Vocational and professional experience, scholarship and research expertise of the University of Portsmouth's academic members of staff

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information provided in this Course Specification and will endeavour to deliver this course in keeping with this Course Specification. However, changes to the course may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, and the review and update of modules and courses.

Where this activity leads to significant changes to modules and courses there will be prior consultation with students and others, wherever possible, and the University of Portsmouth will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruption to students.

It is also possible that the University of Portsmouth may not be able to offer a module or course for reasons outside of its control, for example, due to the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University of Portsmouth will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible, and where appropriate, will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

Copyright

The contents of this Course Specification are the copyright of the University of Portsmouth and all rights are reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, such as electronic, mechanical, photocopied, recorded or otherwise, without the prior consent of the University of Portsmouth.

Document details

Author	<i>Lee Sartain</i>
Date of production and version number	<i>July 2018</i>
Date of update and version number	<i>July 2021 [Version3]</i>
Minimum student registration numbers	<i>N/A Course Running Out</i>

