American Ethnic Studies is the interdisciplinary and comparative exploration of historical and contemporary relations of power and issues of social justice in American societies. Our main fields of research and pedagogy focus on the United States but also extend into questions about global and transnational dimensions, concepts, and histories concerning race and ethnicity in America.

Students earn a BA degree in American Ethnic Studies by taking core courses on ethnic-specific as well as comparative, multi-ethnic subjects. At the same time, they develop an emphasis in one of the four concentrations that make up the major.

In addition to ethnic studies courses in the social sciences, humanities, and interdisciplinary studies, the curriculum of the department includes language instruction in Swahili and Tagalog.

Internship and practicum courses enable students to work in community agencies and organizations. This exposes them to concrete labor and social experiences, and also affords them the opportunity to perform outreach services and apply their learning in active participation in the community.

The faculty, staff, students, and curriculum of AES are perhaps the most culturally diverse at the UW. This special characteristic greatly promotes the educational benefits of diversity in the classroom, such as the ability to respect difference and to engage in dialogue about diverse subjects from multiple, critical points of view.

Over the last three decades, American Ethnic Studies graduates have gone on to develop professional careers in academia, business, law, medicine, education, public administration, politics, diplomacy, community services, athletics, and more.
Scholarship

Scholarship by American Ethnic Studies faculty include many articles, essays, book chapters, and book reviews, as well as books and anthologies on diverse subjects, including: J. Raymond Jones and Tammany; transforming the curriculum by making ethnic and women’s studies central to a liberal arts education; writing in multicultural settings; food and environmental justice; social stratification and inequality; gender, sexuality, and class; labor and immigration; political economy; American Ethnic Studies theory and methodology; women’s history in the Mexican military; Chicano labor history; technology, work, gender, and ecology on the U.S.-Mexico border; Chicano history and culture of Oregon; Chicano art and artists; U.S. Hispanic literature; African American literature and culture; Black intellectual traditions; gender and family in African American communities; Hawaii’s polyethnic literature; Japanese American imprisonment in WWII; Asian American literature; Asian American communities; Filipino Americans and the cultural politics of place; and Asian American and Pacific Islander American women.

Faculty

AES faculty include the current UW President, who is holder of an endowed professorship and is former dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, former UW Provost, and former executive vice provost. Other faculty include a former special assistant to the President, the director of the diversity minor, two former co-directors of the Teachers for a New Era Program, a former director of the UW Program on the Environment, and a former associate dean and director of the Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program in the Graduate School.

Major awards and national organization offices held include:

1. Choice Magazine Outstanding Book Award
1. Publishers Weekly Book of the Year Award
1. Book Sense Book of the Year Award
1. Pacific Northwest Book Award
1. Book of the Year Award, Colorado Historical Society
1. National Parenting Publication Gold Winner Award
1. Association for Asian American Studies Book Award
1. Sundance Film Festival Audience Award
1. Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship
1. Fulbright Lectureship
3. Woodrow Wilson Junior Faculty Development Fellowships
3. UW Distinguished Teaching Awards
1. UW Excellence in Teaching Award
1. UW Outstanding Public Service Award
1. UW James D. Clowes Award for the Advancement of Learning Communities
1. Community Service Award, Society for Applied Sociology
1. Japanese American Citizens League Nikkei of the Biennium Award
1. Tomás Rivera Lifetime Achievement Award
1. Washington State Governor’s Ethnic Heritage Award
1. Western Literature Association Distinguished Achievement Award
1. Lifetime Achievement Award, Association for Asian American Studies
3. Simpson Center Society of Scholars
1. Legacy Award – Black Student Union
1. “Ohtli” Award
1. President, American Studies Association
1. President, National Association for Ethnic Studies
1. President, Society for Community Research and Action
1. Presidents (3), Association for Asian American Studies
1. Chair, National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies
1. UW MAP President 2011-2014
1. UW MAP Distinguished Alumni Award
1. UW MAP, Distinguished Community Service Award

Areas of Scholarship

African American Studies
Anthropology
Asian American Studies
Chicano/Chicana Studies
Communication
Comparative American Ethnic Studies
Cultural Studies
Film Studies
Latin American Literature and Culture
Latino/Latina Studies
Multicultural American History
Multicultural American Literature and Arts
Political Science
Psychology
Sociology
Women Studies

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