

BA American and Canadian Studies

This multidisciplinary degree explores the dynamic characteristics of North America and Canada. From analysing American film to studying the workings of Washington, from studying book illustrations to reading modern American fiction, from examining the War on Terror to considering slavery and its legacies, from studying film to reading modern literature - you will get the chance to explore and inter-relate history, literature, politics and culture.

Student satisfaction scores for American and Canadian Studies at Birmingham are very high with 93% of students reporting that they are satisfied with the quality of the course. American and Canadian Studies graduates from Birmingham benefit from a higher than average rate of employability for the subject, with 85% going into work or study within six months of graduation and 80% of those in employment in professional or managerial jobs. The wide range of posts they have secured includes roles in government, the media, law, human resources, teaching and research.

[Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Course fact file

UCAS code: T790

Duration: 3 years

Places Available: 18

Applications in 2013: 117

Typical Offer: AAB-ABB (**[More detailed entry requirements and the international qualifications accepted can be found in the course details \(? OpenSection=EntryRequirements\)](#)**)

Start date: September

Contact

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[American and Canadian Studies Centre \(research/activity/acs/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/acs/index.aspx)

[Follow us on Twitter \(http://twitter.com/acsatubham\)](http://twitter.com/acsatubham)

SATISFACTION*

Details

The American and Canadian Studies BA begins by giving students a foundation in the core disciplines of American history, American literature and Canadian Studies, as well as introducing crucial research skills through project-based learning. In subsequent years you'll continue to study these core disciplines, at the same time as developing your own individual programme of study by selecting from options in history, literature, film or visual studies.

Meet our graduates

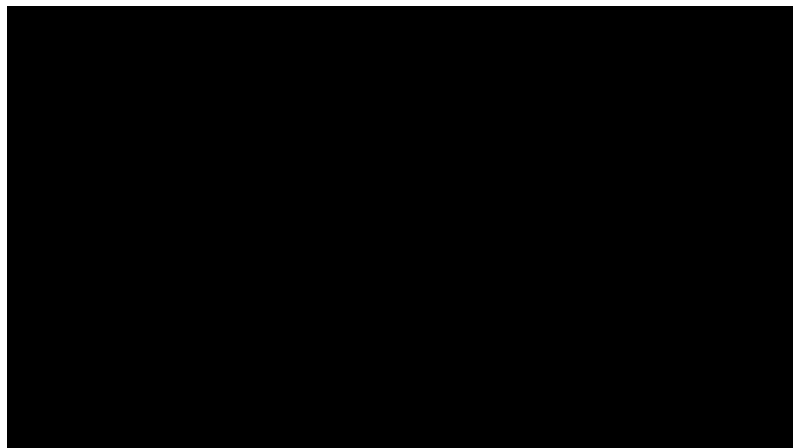
Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. [Get the latest Flash Player](#) [Get the latest version of QuickTime](#)

- [video transcript \(accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/acs/acs-graduates-2012.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/accessibility/transcripts/artsandlaw/acs/acs-graduates-2012.aspx)

Why study this course

- Ranked 2nd in the UK in the Guardian League Tables 2015 and 5th in The Complete University Guide 2015, and consistently scoring highly on student satisfaction in the National Student Survey, teaching emphasises discussion, group work and independent learning, and is led by enthusiastic, approachable lecturers. Our lecturers have **recommended websites, films and books** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/acs/undergraduate/acs-recommends.aspx>) for anyone considering choosing American and Canadian Studies here.
- American and Canadian Studies has a strong research profile (ranked joint second in the last national Research Assessment Exercise) and one of the most respected of its kind in the world. Study here and you will have the privilege of learning from academics who are at the forefront of interdisciplinary research into literature, culture, history, film, TV, politics and international relations. We also have a real commitment to bringing our research into the classroom. For example, Dr Danielle Fuller's **final year module** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/acs/american-canadian-modules-second-third.aspx>) Reading and Popular Culture explores ideas developed in her **Beyond the Book** (<http://www.beyondthebook.bham.ac.uk/>) research project, while Dr Steve Hewitt offers expert opinion for the BBC and other news organisations and continues his analysis of current events in his foreign policy teaching.
- Alongside traditional written assignments we offer a range of learning and assessment methods that develop our students' communication skills and enhance employability. These include the exciting opportunity to develop skills in media production using our state of the art editing suite to produce a documentary film dissertation in the final year.
- At Birmingham, you will benefit from an intellectually challenging and stimulating environment for your undergraduate studies, focused on ensuring you are a fully supported and active learner. Our unique degrees are designed to provide both academic excellence and vocational development; a balance that is highly sought after by employers in today's intellectual and creative industries. The courses are also very flexible, allowing you to specialise more and more as you progress, culminating in a final-year dissertation that allows you to carry out in-depth, individually supervised research into topics of your choice.

Open day talk 2014



Modules

First year

Your studies will revolve around foundation courses in American history and literature up to 1890, together with an introduction to Canadian studies. A group project 'skills' module provides you with key research and IT skills. You will also take one module from outside your main discipline (MOMD) which you choose from a wide variety from across the university. Popular choices include Film Studies, Psychology and Modern Languages.

Core modules

- Foundations of American history to 1890
- Foundations of American literature to 1890
- Introduction to Canadian studies
- Research skills in American and Canadian studies
- Module Outside the Main Discipline (MOMD)
- **[Detailed descriptions of first year modules](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/acs/american-canadian-modules-first.aspx)**

Second year

You will continue to study history and culture from 1890 to the present but you'll also develop your own interests - political, sociological, literary or multicultural - by selecting specialist options modules. You will also take an MOMD.

Core modules

- American History from 1890
- 20th-Century American Literature and Culture

Optional modules

Options in recent years have included:

- The Foundations of African-American Experience
- The African-American Experience from 1945
- North American Cinemas
- Filmmaking Practices
- American Crime Fiction
- The Twenties: North American Literature and Society
- Literature and Illustration
- America and the Middle East
- Canada and the US Compared
- **[Detailed descriptions of second year modules](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/acs/american-canadian-modules-second.aspx)**

Final year

Your final-year modules are drawn from a **wide range of options** which examine multiculturalism, cross-cultural themes, contemporary literature and film, American international history and politics.

Core modules

- Dissertation Or Audio-Visual Dissertation

Optional modules

Options in recent years have included:

- Beat Writing and its Aftermath
- The American renaissance: above, beneath and around
- Anti-Americanism: an examination
- Cold War Film
- Contemporary American fiction
- Death and the moving image
- US foreign policy since 1945
- US foreign policy and terrorism
- Reading and popular culture: contemporary book cultures in North America and UK
- New York, New York
- [Detailed descriptions of final year modules \(/undergraduate/courses/acs/american-canadian-modules-final.aspx\)](#)

Fees and funding

Standard fees (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/fees/standard>) apply

Learn more about [fees and funding \(/undergraduate/fees/loans.aspx\)](#)

Scholarships

Learn more about our [scholarships and awards \(/undergraduate/fees/funding/index.aspx\)](#)

Entry requirements

Number of A levels required: 3

Typical offer: AAB-ABB

Required subjects and grades: Preferably English Literature and/or History.

General Studies: not accepted

Additional information:

International Baccalaureate Diploma: 34-36 points

Other qualifications are considered – learn more about [entry requirements \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/requirements\)](#)

You can also choose to take a [four-year programme which includes a year abroad \(/undergraduate/courses/acs/american-canadian-abroad.aspx\)](#). The typical offer for our four-year programme is AAB-ABB.

International students:

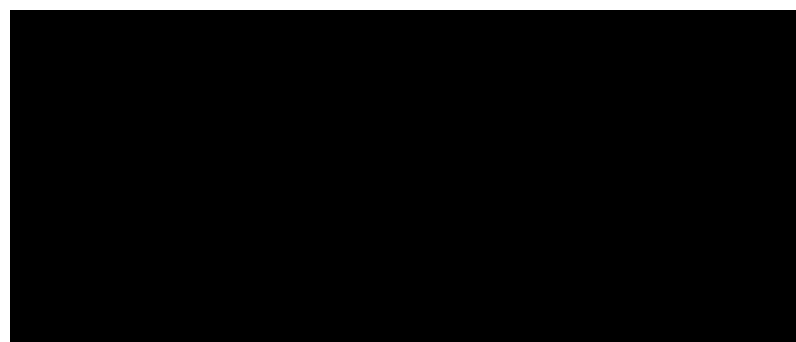
We welcome applications from international students and invite you to join our vibrant community of over 4500 international students who represent 150 different countries. We accept a range of qualifications, our [country pages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx\)](#) show you what qualifications we accept from your country.

Depending on your chosen course of study, you may also be interested in the Birmingham Foundation Academy, a specially structured programme for international students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. Further details can be found on the [foundation academy web pages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx\)](#).

How to apply

Apply through UCAS at www.ucas.com (<http://www.ucas.com/>)

Learn more about [applying \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/ug/courses/apply\)](#)



Joint Honours combinations

You can study American and Canadian Studies as part of a Joint Honours degree with the following subjects:

- [**American and Canadian Studies and English BA \(/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/american-and-canadian-and-english-lit.aspx\)**](#) (within which you can follow either the Literature or Language pathway)
- [**American and Canadian Studies and History BA \(/undergraduate/courses/jointhonours/american-and-canadian-and-history.aspx\)**](#)

Key Information Set (KIS)

Key Information Sets (KIS) are comparable sets of information about full- or part-time undergraduate courses and are designed to meet the information needs of prospective students.

All KIS information has been published on the Unistats website and can also be accessed via the small advert, or 'widget', below. On the [**Unistats website \(http://unistats.direct.gov.uk\)**](#) you are able to compare all the KIS data for each course with data for other courses.

The development of Key Information Sets (KIS) formed part of HEFCE's work to enhance the information that is available about higher education. They give you access to reliable and comparable information in order to help you make informed decisions about what and where to study.

The KIS contains information which prospective students have identified as useful, such as student satisfaction, graduate outcomes, learning and teaching activities, assessment methods, tuition fees and student finance, accommodation and professional accreditation.

Related links

[**Alumni profiles - American and Canadian Studies \(/research/activity/acs/undergraduate/acs-alumni-profiles.aspx\)**](#)

Related news and events

[**ACS student internships in Chicago \(/research/activity/acs/news/2011/chicago-internships.aspx\)**](#)

[**Nobody won in the US midterm elections \(/news/thebirminghambrief/items/2010/11/USmidterms.aspx\)**](#)

[**Should the UK take a leaf out of Canada's book? \(/news/thebirminghambrief/items/2011/05/26may-uk-america-canada.aspx\)**](#)

[**The Complete University Guide 2012 \(/research/activity/acs/news/2011/universityguide.aspx\)**](#)

[**Tribeca Film Festival 2012 \(/research/activity/acs/news/2012/willowbrook.aspx\)**](#)

Learning and teaching

As a Birmingham student you are part of an academic elite and will learn from world-leading experts. At Birmingham we advocate an enquiry based learning approach, from the outset you will be encouraged to become an independent and self-motivated learner, qualities that are highly sought after by employers. We want you to be challenged and will encourage you to think for yourself.

Your learning will take place in a range of different settings, from scheduled teaching in lectures and small group tutorials, to self-study and peer group learning (for example preparing and delivering presentations with your classmates).

Support

To begin with you may find this way of working challenging, but rest assured that we will enable you to make this transition. You will have access to a comprehensive support system that will assist and encourage you, including personal tutors and welfare tutors who can help with both academic and welfare issues, and a formal transition review during your first year to check on your progress and offer you help for any particular areas where you need support.

Our **Academic Skills Centre** also offers you support with your learning. The centre is a place where you can develop your mathematical, academic writing and general academic skills. It is the centre's aim to help you to become a more effective and independent learner through the use of a range of high-quality and appropriate learning support services. These range from drop-in sessions to workshops on a range of topics including note taking, reading, writing and presentation skills.

From the outset, you will be assigned your own **Personal Tutor** who will get to know you as you progress through your studies, providing academic and welfare advice, encouraging you and offering assistance in any areas you may feel you need extra support to make the most of your potential and your time here at Birmingham.

The **Academic Writing Advisory Service (AWAS)** will provide you with individual support from an academic writing advisor and postgraduate subject-specialist writing tutors. You will receive guidance on writing essays and dissertations at University-level which can be quite different from your previous experiences of writing. Support is given in a variety of ways, such as small-group workshops, online activities, feedback through email and tutorials.

Student experience

Supporting you throughout your transition to University, offering research opportunities and study skills support and helping you develop and prepare for your post-University careers - our [**Arts and Law Student Experience Team \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/student-experience/index.aspx\)**](#) strive to help you get the most out of your academic experience.

Assessment methods

Studying at degree-level is likely to be very different from your previous experience of learning and teaching. You will be expected to think, discuss and engage critically with the subject and find things out for yourself. We will enable you to make this transition to a new style of learning, and the way that you are assessed during your studies will help you develop the essential skills you need to make a success of your time at Birmingham.

You will be assessed in a variety of ways, and these may be different with each module that you take. You will be assessed through coursework which may take the form of essays, group and individual presentations and formal exams (depending on your chosen degree).

During your first year you will undergo a formal 'transition' review to see how you are getting on and if there are particular areas where you need support. This is in addition to the personal tutor who is based in your school or department and can help with any academic issues you encounter.

At the beginning of each module, you will be given information on how and when you will be assessed for that particular programme of study. You will receive feedback on each assessment within four weeks, so that you can learn from and build on what you have done. You will be given feedback on any exams that you take; if you should fail an exam we will ensure that particularly detailed feedback is made available to enable you to learn for the future.

Related staff

[Dr Steve Hewitt \(/staff/profiles/history/hewitt-steve.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/history/hewitt-steve.aspx)

[Dr Michele Aaron \(/staff/profiles/fcw/aaron-michele.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/fcw/aaron-michele.aspx)

Employability

As a student of American and Canadian Studies you will have an excellent opportunity to develop skills that are highly prized by employers, as well as benefiting from the diversity offered by this multidisciplinary degree. Our graduates understand complex information, write clearly and effectively, can build a case for a particular view, strategy or course of action, respect the views of others even if they disagree with them, and generally think for themselves. Your year abroad will be an asset to you when you apply for jobs. Talking about your experiences abroad will help you stand out in job interviews and help to demonstrate your confidence and maturity to employers.

Over 50% of job vacancies advertised for new and recent graduates do not specify a degree subject, so as a graduate of American and Canadian Studies you have a vast potential to enter a wide range of careers, including government, the media, law, accountancy, advertising, human resources and retail management, teaching, research and many other types of employment that offer graduate entry schemes. About 25% of our graduates choose postgraduate study to extend their knowledge of this and similar disciplines, or to prepare for careers such as law and teaching.

Our students start careers with employers including the BBC, Freud Communications, Maverick TV and the National Youth Theatre, in roles as diverse as Business Development Executive, Events Co-ordinator, Financial Analyst, Marketing Executive, Production Assistant, Research Assistant and Youth Mentor.

Whether you have a clear idea of where your future aspirations lie or want to consider the broad range of opportunities available once you have a Birmingham degree, our Careers Network can help you achieve your goal. This is a unique careers guidance service tailored to your academic subject area, offering a specialised team who can give you expert advice. This includes individual careers advice and events to give you insight into the professions and employers of interest to arts graduates. Our Creative careers series is always popular with our students, and features events with employers and professionals from areas such as advertising, PR and communications, careers in journalism and writing, and careers in the theatre.

We also hold events covering careers in teaching, event management, marketing and working with charities; our internship officer develops links with local arts organisations to create some amazing opportunities for students; and you can even apply for our Global Challenge to work overseas on an expenses paid placement during your summer vacation.

Extra-curricular activities

To enhance your career prospects even further, you will need to think about engaging in some extra-curricular activities while you're at university to broaden your skills and your network of contacts. This can include the many societies at the Guild of Students and also the many voluntary opportunities offered with local arts organisations. Our employer-endorsed award-winning **Personal Skills Award** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/careers/psa.aspx>) (PSA) recognises your extra-curricular activities, and provides an accredited employability programme designed to improve your career prospects.

Our College of Arts and Law **undergraduate research scholarship scheme** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/artslaw/studentexperience/urs/index.aspx>) enables interested students to work on a current academic research project being run by one of the College's academic researchers. Undergraduate research scholars gain work experience over the summer after their first or second year and have the chance to develop skills in both collaborative and independent research.

Cultural Internships

Our innovative **Cultural Internships** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/culture/volunteering/regionally.aspx>) offer graduates the opportunity for a six month paid internship at a leading cultural institution in the West Midlands. These internships are a unique opportunity to learn fundamental, transferable business and interpersonal skills, through experience of real work in an established cultural institution. Our current partners include Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham REP, Birmingham Royal Ballet, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust and the Library of Birmingham. We have plans to expand the scheme to include our own major cultural assets, such as Winterbourne House, the Lapworth Museum, and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts. This scheme will give you professional experience to set you apart in a competitive graduate market.

We also offer voluntary work which complements your studies by helping you gain practical experiences in occupational settings while contributing back to society. This can bring new skills that will be useful throughout your future and can make a positive impact on your learning whilst at university. Volunteering enables you to develop

skills such as communication, interpersonal skills, teamwork, self-confidence and self-discipline all of which can be transferred into your studies.

Your Birmingham degree is evidence of your ability to succeed in a demanding academic environment. Employers target Birmingham students for their drive, diversity, communication and problem-solving skills, their team-working abilities and cultural awareness, and our graduate employment statistics have continued to climb at a rate well above national trends. If you make the most of the wide range of services you will be able to develop your career from the moment you arrive.

94% Students agreed staff are good at explaining things



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Full time

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