

Graduate Certificate in Folklore and Ethnography

This 15-credit graduate certificate program offered at Penn State Harrisburg provides students with skills and practices used in projects and institutions of folklore and ethnography, which include field/folk schools and other educational settings, festivals and arts councils, historical and heritage societies, community and cultural organizations and centers, archives and record management programs, governmental agencies, cultural conservation/sustainability groups, and media production companies.



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Content reviewed and approved Fri Oct 6, 2023 9:33:58 am



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Harrisburg

School of Humanities



**Graduate Certificate in
Folklore and Ethnography**

Curriculum

In addition to counting towards the certificate, the following prescribed courses may be applied to earning a Master of Arts or Doctor of Philosophy in American Studies degree:

Students must complete both AMST 530 and 540.

- AMST 530 Topics in American Folklore (3)
 - AMST 540 Ethnography and Society (3)
- Students must choose to complete one of either AMST 531 or 541 (both are not required; though either may be taken as an elective, if not used to complete the prescribed courses requirement).
- AMST 531 Material Culture and Folklife (3)
 - AMST 541 Ethnography of Technology and Media in the United States (3)

Additionally, some elective courses earned for the certificate may also count towards the Master's or Doctorate. Be sure to review that program's requirements for complete details.

The American Studies program also offers a [Graduate Certificate in Heritage and Museum Practice](#).

This page is not a part of the official [Penn State University Bulletin](#).

Courses Overview

The Folklore and Ethnography certificate program prepares students to do culture-focused work of all kinds. The program offers two tracks which allows graduate students the flexibility to tailor coursework in different areas of specialization.

The ethnography track consists of three core courses. The first is "Ethnography and Society," a general seminar in the history and practice of ethnographic research. The second is "Ethnography of Technology and Media," a more specialized course that prepares students to do ethnography in media environments and using digital tools. The third is "Topics in Folklore," a variable seminar that introduces ethnographic subject matter around topics such as "storytelling," "aging," and "the family," among others. Along with these core courses, students can choose electives that focus on areas of public heritage, curation, or preservation that are relevant to ethnographic work, or further courses on ethnographic methods or topics.

The folklore and folklife track also consists of three core courses. These include, the "Topics in Folklore" seminar, the "Ethnography and Society" seminar, and a content seminar on "Material Culture and Folklife." This last core course studies tangible cultural products, ranging from food to quilts to custom cars, in the context of our everyday lives and practices. Along with these core courses, students can choose electives that focus on folk groups and genres, folk tales and literature, or beliefs and myths in American society.

Courses in the Folklore and Ethnography Graduate Certificate program are principally taught by experienced folklorists and ethnographers, whose research has appeared in leading national and international research journals, and in books published by respected scholarly presses. Practical courses may also be taught by area specialists drawn from educational, governmental, or public heritage institutions in the region.

For course descriptions and requirements, see the [University Bulletin](#)

Program Requirements for Admission

Applicants apply for admission to the program via the [Graduate School application for admission](#). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under [GCAC-300 Admissions Policies](#). International applicants may be required to satisfy an English proficiency requirement; see [GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students](#) for more information.

Applicants are expected to have 3.00 GPA or above in the last two years of undergraduate work in folklore, anthropology, sociology, American Studies, ethnic studies, history, communications, or other fields related to folklore and ethnography.

A student in the certificate program may also become a student in the [M.A.](#) and [Ph.D.](#) in American Studies, M.A. in Communications, or M.A. in Humanities, if the student meets criteria for admission to the Graduate School and to the graduate program; however, successful completion of the certificate neither implies nor guarantees admission to a graduate program at Penn State. Courses taken in the certificate program may be applied toward a graduate degree, subject to restrictions outlined in [GCAC-309 Transfer Credit](#). Certificate students who wish to have certificate courses applied towards a graduate degree must apply and be admitted to that degree program.

Certificate Requirements

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in Graduate Council policy GCAC-212 Postbaccalaureate Credit Certificate Programs. The Folklore and Ethnography certificate is awarded for successful completion of 9 credits of prescribed courses plus 6 credits of electives from an approved list of courses. Students must earn a grade of B or above in each course that counts toward the certificate program. Substitution of topical courses and seminars with variable content related to folklore and ethnography for elective credits is possible with approval in advance from the certificate coordinator