

HUMANISTIC STUDIES

Department Description

We often divide the liberal arts into different disciplines (for example, history, literature, philosophy) in order to make teaching and studying them easier. In truth, they interconnect, which means that it is impossible to obtain a thorough knowledge of one without at least some knowledge of the others.

Founded in 1956, the interdisciplinary program in Humanistic Studies presents the liberal arts as a unified, interrelated body of knowledge. It explores the various elements that have molded and expressed culture by interweaving the study of history, literature, philosophy, theology, and art so that the student perceives the shape of culture as a whole.

The program consistently stresses Christianity's dynamic role in forming Western thought, society, and art. To broaden the student's cultural perspective, the program also recognizes the vital contributions of global and non-Christian societies. Works by and about women receive special notice as well.

To develop skills in critical and creative thinking, reading, writing, and speaking, students meet in small classes that stress reading and discussion. They write often and in a variety of styles. Over the years, our graduates have successfully used their education as a preparation for a broad range of careers, including law, education, business, data analysis, communications, the creative arts, and health care.

Study Abroad

Saint Mary's has a long history of providing quality international programs as an essential part of our educational mission—forming women leaders who will make a difference in the world. As this world becomes increasingly interdependent, the College offers an expanding range of semester, year, semester break, and summer study and service programs in a wide variety of countries, and encourages students to take advantage of them. Learn more about the various Study Abroad opportunities (<https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/academic-life/international-programs/>).

Double Majors/ Minors

Many students combine a major in Humanistic Studies with a major or minor in another discipline such as economics, English, political science, history, philosophy, psychology or religious studies. With careful planning, students have double-majored in the fine arts, science, or business.

Programs

- Humanistic Studies, Bachelor of Arts - HUST (<https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/humanistic-studies/humanistic-studies-bachelor-arts/>)
- Humanistic Studies, Minor - HUST (<https://catalog.saintmarys.edu/undergraduate/programs/humanistic-studies/humanistic-studies-minor/>)

Department Chair

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Faculty

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Humanistic Studies Student Learning Outcomes for the Major

- The student can identify the plot, characters, and major themes of selected landmarks in European literature since Greco-Roman antiquity and compare these works to one another.
- The student can identify the major themes in European intellectual, political, artistic, and religious history since Greco-Roman antiquity, based on primary and secondary sources.
- The student can employ aspects of critical thinking, namely, asking searching questions of course materials, evaluating the relevance of individual facts and texts to larger themes, distinguishing between analysis and summary, and showing originality and insight in her interpretations.
- The student can solve intellectual problems posed by the subject matter in the major by designing and implementing research projects that investigate those problems.
- The student can speak with clarity, organization, and supporting evidence, and listen with attentiveness and sympathy.
- The student can write with precision and style in a variety of academic genres and can organize her thoughts around a central thesis supported by evidence.
- The student can synthesize examples, facts, issues, or theories from literature, history, and art into a coherent whole.

Humanistic Studies Student Learning Outcomes for the Minor

- The student can identify the plot, characters, and major themes of selected landmarks in at least one epoch of European literature since Greco-Roman antiquity.
- The student can identify the major themes in at least one epoch of European intellectual, political, artistic, and religious history since Greco-Roman antiquity, based on primary and secondary sources.
- The student can employ aspects of critical thinking, namely, asking searching questions of course materials, evaluating the relevance of individual facts and texts to larger themes, distinguishing between analysis and summary, and showing originality and insight in her interpretations.
- The student can speak with clarity, organization, and supporting evidence, and listen with attentiveness and sympathy.
- The student can write with precision and style in a variety of academic genres and can organize her thoughts around a central thesis supported by evidence.
- The student can synthesize examples, facts, issues, or theories from literature, history, and art into a coherent whole.

Humanistic Studies Courses

HUST 103 *Lives and Times* (3)

This introductory course explores the interaction of people from the past with their cultural milieu through a study of works that have cultural or historical importance.

HUST 190 *Special Topics* (1-4)

HUST 197 Myth, Legend, and History (1-3)

This course studies the ways people talk about the past, specifically (in)famous women, through myths, legends, and history by focusing on subjects such as Eve, Mary, the Amazons, Cleopatra, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Joan of Arc, and Columbus, among others.

HUST 203 East Meets West (3)

An introduction to the cultures of Korea, China and Japan through literature, history, and film.

HUST 205 History of Famous Women (3)

This course looks at the lives of women such as Joan of Arc, Elizabeth I, and Abigail Adams, and places them in the tradition of exceptional women. It examines that tradition as a form of both women's history and feminist argument, from Roman antiquity to the present.

HUST 212 High Society (3)

A social and cultural history of European aristocracy and monarchy from medieval times to the present.

HUST 220 Humanities at Work: Using Your Humanities Training in the 21st Century (3)

This class will help you connect the dots between your love of books and your curiosity (anxiety?) about life after college, between analyzing a text and analyzing a data set. It will equip you with answers to big questions like what do we mean when we say the "humanities" and what can you do with a humanities degree?

HUST 250 Worlds of Islam (3)

The proposed course, "Worlds of Islam," encourages students to question their assumptions about Islam and its global impact. In order to contest and modify those assumptions, students would encounter writings from the many cultures influenced by Islam as well as writings of western origin which reacted to the expansion of Islam. This reaction could take many forms, from distrust and suspicion, to polemic and debate, to sacralized violence, attempts at conversion, treaties, and borrowing or collaboration. Topics will include the diversity and richness of Islamic cultures (in the Mediterranean, Central Asia, the Indian Ocean, and Africa) and the contributions of these cultures to literature, artwork, and scientific knowledge around the world, both in the past and the present.

HUST 290 Topics in Humanities (3)

Topics in Humanistic Studies not covered in regular department offerings. May be repeated with a different topic.

HUST 292 Reclaiming the Classics for a Diverse and Global World (3)

This course looks at the main elements of Greek and Roman culture in a global context through a variety of works: historical, philosophical, and literary. Special attention is paid to the role of women in Greek and Roman society.

HUST 321 Cultural History I: Ancient and Medieval Culture (3)

A social, political, intellectual, and artistic history, from Greco-Roman antiquity to the High Middle Ages, focused on Europe in a global context with special attention paid to the role of Christianity. Topics include the "golden age" of Athens, the cultural influence of the Roman Empire, the rise of Christianity and Islam, monasticism, the medieval world view, the rise of royal government, the twelfth-century cultural revolution, and Gothic architecture. Corequisite: HUST 323.

HUST 322 Cultural History II: Medieval and Renaissance Culture (3)

A social, political, intellectual, and artistic history, from the Late Middle Ages to the Italian Renaissance, focused on Europe in a global context with special attention paid to the role of Christianity. Topics include the Black Death and its impact, the power of Italian city-states, Renaissance humanism, the cult of the individual, Europe's global interaction, and the evolution of Renaissance art. Corequisite: HUST 324.

HUST 323 Colloquium I: Ancient and Medieval Literature (3)

Major literary works from Greco-Roman antiquity to the High Middle Ages. Readings may include Homer's *Odyssey*, Sophocles's *Antigone*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, Augustine's *Confessions*, the Life of Muhammad, *The Song of Roland*, and *The Romance of Tristan*. Corequisite: HUST 321.

HUST 324 Colloquium II: Medieval and Renaissance Literature (3)

Major literary works from the Late Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Readings may include *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Petrarch's *My Secret*, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Boccaccio's *Decameron*, and Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. Corequisite: HUST 322.

HUST 390 Special Topics (1-3)

Topics in Humanistic Studies not covered in regular department offerings. May be repeated with a different topic.

HUST 461 Cultural History III: Early-Modern Culture (3)

A political, intellectual, and artistic history, from the Northern Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon, focused on Europe with special attention paid to the role of Christianity. Topics include the Reformation, English constitutional history, baroque culture, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. Corequisite: HUST 463.

HUST 462 Cultural History IV: Modern Culture (3)

A political, intellectual, and artistic history, from the nineteenth century to the present, focused on Europe with special attention paid to the role of Christianity. Topics include ideology in the age of industry, the modernist movement, the world wars, the Cold War, and the post-modern outlook. Corequisite: HUST 464.

HUST 463 Colloquium III: Early-Modern Literature (3)

Major literary works, from the Northern Renaissance to the Age of Napoleon. Readings may include More's *Utopia*, Montaigne's *Essays*, Shakespeare's *Othello*, Voltaire's *Candide*, Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*, and Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Corequisite: HUST 461.

HUST 464 Colloquium IV: Modern Literature (3)

Major literary works, from the nineteenth century to the present. Readings may include Romantic poetry, Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, Camus's *The Plague*, and Allende's *The House of the Spirits*. Corequisite: HUST 462.

HUST 490 Special Topics (1-3)

Topics in Humanistic Studies not covered in regular department offerings. May be repeated with a different topic.

HUST 497 Independent Study (1-3)

Independent study for outstanding students. May be repeated.

HUST 499 Internship (1-3)

Practical experience in a field related to Humanistic Studies. Graded S/U. May be repeated.

Four-Year Plans in Humanistic Studies

Humanistic Studies Major Requirements (24 credit hours)

Humanistic Studies examines literature, people, events, art, and ideas from antiquity to the present. Students complete eight discussion-based classes over the course of four semesters in which ‘great books’ seminars are paired with cultural history courses (see “upper-level tandems”). The major is **easy to combine with just about any other major** on campus and **adapts well to study abroad** plans since students can begin the major in either their sophomore or junior year. Students interested in the major **typically enjoy reading, writing, and discussing**, want a major that combines ‘everything’, and are interested in how different academic fields fit together to form the ‘big picture.’

Humanistic Studies Minor Requirements (15 credit hours)

The minor consists of 5 courses (excluding HUST 497, 499), including 6 credits from one of the four tandems (co-requisites): HUST 321/323, HUST 322/324, HUST 461/463, HUST 462/464. The remaining 12 credits can be introductory electives or upper-level tandems.

Humanistic Studies First Year Courses

HUST 103: Lives and Times (CTS)

Instructor: Prof. Laura Williamson Ambrose

What’s your place in the world? How will you tell your story? This lively discussion-based class will introduce you to the power of storytelling in our own lives and in the lives of those from the past. You will be introduced to a range of fascinating individuals, both real and imagined, as their stories appear in memoir, film, fiction, and art. We will ask: Why does place have such a powerful effect on who we are in the world? Why is the question “where are you from” often impossible to answer? In what way do ethnicity, race, and gender make you who you are? How do we learn from the stories of the past, and, more importantly, how do we tell stories of the future? Students will have an opportunity to write in analytic, digital, and creative formats.

This course also satisfies L01 Literature, L02 Women’s Voices, L02 Critical Thinking Seminar, and L03 Social Responsibility A.

HUST 103: Lives and Times

Instructor: Prof. Philip Hicks

This course features lively classroom discussion and introduces you to a wide range of fascinating people throughout history, whether powerful or downtrodden, famous or obscure, free spirited or straight laced. To see what makes these people tick, we will read a variety of works taking us to the core of their beings: novels, autobiographies, and memoirs. We try to answer the sorts of questions that we all have to ask ourselves: What makes a good life? What do I owe my parents? What place does spirituality have in my life? How do I balance the need to be my own person with the need to belong to the group?

This course also satisfies L01 Literature, L02 Women’s Voices, and L03 Social Responsibility A.

HUST 197: Myth, Legend, and History (W & CTS)

Instructor: Prof. Jessalynn Bird

Truth or fiction? This course explores different ways of seeing (in)famous women from Eve to Cleopatra, Mary to Joan of Arc. Through class discussions, interdisciplinary readings (fiction and nonfiction, literature

and history), art, lectures, and film, we will study what myths and legends –both ancient and modern–tell us about the past and about ourselves.

This course also satisfies L01 Historical Perspectives, L02 Critical Thinking Seminar, L02 Women’s Voices, L03 Global Learning A, L03 Social Responsibility A and provides students the opportunity to earn the W.

HUST 212: High Society

Instructor: Prof. Philip Hicks

Study 1,000 years of English history as high society lived it. This course presents a history of aristocracy and monarchy, from King Arthur to Princess Diana (Harry’s mum). Topics include aristocratic women, chivalry, the Tudors, and the modern royal family. This is a discussion-based course with lectures, role-plays, and videos.

This course also satisfies L01 Historical Perspectives, L03 Global Learning, and L03 Social Responsibility.

These plans are for purposes of illustration only; a student’s actual course schedule would depend on her choices of classes in the Sophia Program and the availability of courses in any given semester. In both scenarios, a student might elect to apply for a **HUST summer study abroad scholarship** between her 3rd and 4th year (which may cover 20-85% of the total cost).

Sample Four-Year Plans in Humanistic Studies

HUST Major (and Rome Program) Plan (p. 3)

HUST / HISTORY double-major Plan (p. 4)

Sample 1: HUST major (and Rome program)

Course	Title	Credits
First Year		
First Semester		
HUST 103	Lives and Times	0
	or HUST 197 (W) Myth, Legend, and History (W & CTS)	
	or HUST 212 High Society	
Sophia		
Sophia		
Sophia		
Sophia		
Credits		0
Second Semester		
HUST 103	Lives and Times	0
	or HUST 203 East Meets West	
	or HUST 205 History of Famous Women	
Sophia		
Sophia		
Sophia		
Sophia		
Credits		0
Second Year		
First Semester		
Fall: Rome		
Sophia		

Sophia
Sophia
Sophia
Elective

Credits 0

Second Semester

Spring: Rome

Sophia
Sophia
Sophia
Elective
Elective

Credits 0

Third Year

First Semester

HUST 321 or HUST 461	Cultural History I: Ancient and Medieval Culture or Cultural History III: Early-Modern Culture	3
HUST 323 or HUST 463	Colloquium I: Ancient and Medieval Literature or Colloquium III: Early-Modern Literature	3
Sophia		
Sophia		
Elective		

Credits 6

Second Semester

HUST 322 or HUST 462	Cultural History II: Medieval and Renaissance Culture or Cultural History IV: Modern Culture	3
HUST 324 or HUST 464	Colloquium II: Medieval and Renaissance Literature or Colloquium IV: Modern Literature	3
Elective		
Elective		
Elective		

Credits 6

Fourth Year

First Semester

HUST 461 or HUST 321	Cultural History III: Early-Modern Culture or Cultural History I: Ancient and Medieval Culture	3
HUST 463 or HUST 323	Colloquium III: Early-Modern Literature or Colloquium I: Ancient and Medieval Literature	3
Elective		
Elective		
Elective		

Credits 6

Second Semester

HUST 462 or HUST 322	Cultural History IV: Modern Culture or Cultural History II: Medieval and Renaissance Culture	3
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HUST 464 or HUST 324	Colloquium IV: Modern Literature or Colloquium II: Medieval and Renaissance Literature	3
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Elective
Elective
Elective

Credits 6

Total Credits 24

Sample 2: HUST / HISTORY double-major

Note: Upper-level cultural history courses in HUST fulfill the History major's Europe requirements.

Course	Title	Credits
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First Year

First Semester

HUST 103 Lives and Times or HUST 197 Myth, Legend, and History or HUST 212 High Society		
HIST 103W World History I		
Sophia		
Sophia		
Sophia		

Credits 0

Second Semester

HUST 103 Lives and Times or HUST 205 History of Famous Women or HUST 203 East Meets West		
HIST 104 World History II		
Sophia		
Sophia		
Sophia		

Credits 0

Second Year

First Semester

Sophia
Sophia
Sophia
Elective
Elective

Credits 0

Second Semester

Sophia
Sophia
Sophia
Elective
Elective

Credits 0

Third Year**First Semester**

HUST 321 or HUST 461	Cultural History I: Ancient and Medieval Culture or Cultural History III: Early-Modern Culture	3
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HUST 323 or HUST 463	Colloquium I: Ancient and Medieval Literature or Colloquium III: Early-Modern Literature	3
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HIST 201	United States History to 1865	
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HIST 312	Recent America: 1960 to the Present	
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Sophia		
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Credits	6
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Second Semester

HUST 322 or HUST 462	Cultural History II: Medieval and Renaissance Culture or Cultural History IV: Modern Culture	3
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HUST 324 or HUST 464	Colloquium II: Medieval and Renaissance Literature or Colloquium IV: Modern Literature	3
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HIST 202	United States History Since 1865	
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Sophia		
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Elective		
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Credits	6
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Fourth Year**First Semester**

HUST 461 or HUST 321	Cultural History III: Early-Modern Culture or Cultural History I: Ancient and Medieval Culture	3
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HUST 463 or HUST 323	Colloquium III: Early-Modern Literature or Colloquium I: Ancient and Medieval Literature	3
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HIST course		
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Elective		
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Elective		
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Credits	6
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Second Semester

HUST 462 or HUST 322	Cultural History IV: Modern Culture or Cultural History II: Medieval and Renaissance Culture	3
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HUST 464 or HUST 324	Colloquium IV: Modern Literature or Colloquium II: Medieval and Renaissance Literature	3
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HIST 384	Africa Since 1800	
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Elective		
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Elective		
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Credits	6
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Total Credits	24
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