The American Studies (Standard) graduate program has three learning objectives. As a result of successfully completing the requirements of the M.S. or M.A. degree in American Studies (Standard Specialization), students shall:

- Evaluate a range of American “texts” (e.g., works of literature, art, music, and film, historical, legal, political, and religious documents, and/or material and pop culture, etc.) and examine those texts within specific disciplinary frameworks.
- Express ideas and arguments in well-crafted, convincing forms (written, visual, and oral).
- Conduct effective research, locating and analyzing primary and secondary sources using appropriate methods dictated by the relevant discipline(s).