

African Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The African Studies Program is devoted to the study of African cultures, both past and present, from a growing variety of perspectives and disciplines.

Africana Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Through an interdisciplinary offering of African-, African-American, and diaspora-centered courses and related extracurricular activities at the University, the Africana Studies program provides students with opportunities to understand and critically evaluate the historical, cultural, social, political and economic factors that have helped define and shape the African-American experience and other African diaspora experiences throughout the world.

Ancient History

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Ancient History major encourages a comparative approach to the study of premodern cultures

Anthropology

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Anthropology is the study of the human species as a whole. The Department of Anthropology integrates cultural anthropology (living peoples), archaeology (prehistoric and historical peoples), biological/physical anthropology (the interaction between culture and human biological variation) and linguistic anthropology (language variation and its relation to culture).

Architecture

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Architecture major is a program for students interested in developing basic skills, knowledge, and methods of inquiry in the discipline of architecture in the context of a studio-based liberal arts education. Although the major resides in the College of Arts and Sciences, the studio and theory courses are taught by faculty in the Department of Architecture and the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning in the School of Design.

Biochemistry

[about the major](#)

The biochemistry major at Penn places a strong emphasis on a foundation in chemistry and physical sciences. This forms the basis for understanding the specific molecular interactions in the living organism.

Biological Basis of Behavior

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Biological Basis of Behavior is an interdisciplinary major in which students explore the relationship between behavior (both human and animal) and its organic bases.

Biology

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Biology major introduces students to the many ways of studying and understanding the function and diversity of living organisms.

Biophysics

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Biophysics is a major designed for students who are planning a career in biological or medical research and who desire depth in the physical and mathematical aspects of the biosciences.

Chemistry

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Chemistry is concerned with the study of matter and the changes matter can undergo.

Cinema Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Cinema Studies is an interdisciplinary program designed to acquaint students with the history and interpretation of cinema and to allow them to combine knowledge of the field with the traditional aims of an undergraduate liberal arts education.

Classical Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Classical Studies encompasses the civilization of the ancient Greeks and Romans from prehistory to the Middle Ages, with emphasis on the literature, philosophy and history of the classical Greek and Roman periods.

Cognitive Science

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Cognitive Science is the empirical study of intelligent systems. Areas of specialization can include: Computational Neuroscience, Logic and Computation, Planning and Reasoning, Language Acquisition, Language Processing, and Learning and Development.

Communication

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The purpose of the Communication major is to offer students frameworks for understanding the interpersonal and media processes that lie at the center of contemporary society.

Comparative Literature

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Comparative Literature offers courses which introduce students to the vast wealth of different literatures.

Earth Science

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

At completion of the program (part of the Earth and Environmental Science Department), graduates know the basic physical and chemical processes that operate in and on the planet and understand how direct and indirect methods are used to examine and understand the structure, composition and dynamics of Earth. Graduates appreciate how humans and ecosystems interact with the dynamic Earth, and have an in-depth knowledge of the atmosphere and climate change, the rock cycle, natural hazards and the hydrologic and biogeochemical cycles.

The major introduces students to the core concepts of Earth Science and then allows students to focus in one of the three concentrations: Geology, Environmental Science and Paleobiology.

East Asian Area Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Center for East Asian Studies is an interdisciplinary unit composed of faculty members whose teaching and research focus primarily on China, Japan, Korea, and bordering areas.

East Asian Languages and Civilizations

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations offers majors in Chinese and Japanese and minors in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. In accordance with the name of our department, our programs emphasize the humanistic study of the languages and civilizations of East Asia.

Economics

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Economics studies the allocation of scarce resources. At the core of economics are theories of how individuals, firms and other organizations make choices and interact, taking into account constraints on their behaviors. A major in economics gives training in economic principles and in the application of economic modeling techniques to understanding a variety of economic and social phenomena. The study of economics provides a useful background for students planning to enter any profession.

Engineering Major

[School of Engineering](#) • [about the major](#)

Selected majors in the School of Engineering and Applied Science are available as second majors for students in the College of Arts and Sciences.

English

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Majors in English take a great variety of courses in English, American and other English-language literatures including courses that emphasize critical approaches, literary theory, cultural studies, anglophone postcolonial literature and culture, and film narrative.

Environmental Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Environmental Studies program (part of the Earth and Environmental Science Department) is designed to provide students with the skills to understand and address contemporary environmental issues. The major integrates studies in the natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, policy and management in order to study complex issues of the environment and humans' interaction with it. Core courses cover environmental and earth science, data analysis, economics and policy, and provide students with the skills and breadth of understanding they need for purposeful study in a [concentration](#).

Fine Arts

[undergraduate page](#) • [about the major](#)

The major in Fine Arts is based upon the premise that an education in liberal studies should include the challenge of learning to see, and that the education of the artist is dramatically improved by liberal studies. Areas of study include drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, photography, animation, film/video, graphic design and multi-media.

French

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

This major is designed to give students both an excellent grounding in the French language and a thorough knowledge of the history, culture, civilization and literature of metropolitan France and other regions of the world where the French language is primary.

Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies is an interdisciplinary major and minor within the Women's Studies program that offers opportunities to study the role of gender and sexuality in human societies. There are four concentrations within the major: Women's Studies, Sexuality Studies, Global Gender Studies, and Gender and Health.

German

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The major in German is designed to acquaint the student with the language, literature, and culture of German-speaking countries. A variety of courses complements broad surveys and overviews, i.e., courses structured around a theme, an individual author, a specific literary movement, or a genre.

Health and Societies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

This major is designed to provide students with the skills necessary to work successfully in the interdisciplinary, global world of modern health care and decision-making.

Hispanic Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The knowledge of Spanish and Hispanic culture gives students much more than the ability to communicate in the world's third-most spoken language. It prepares them to account for an entirely different national, continental and global reality with all its complexity.

History

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Department of History offers a variety of courses dealing with political, social, economic and intellectual life in Europe, America and the rest of the world, from the medieval period to the present.

History of Art

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Department of the History of Art invites all students to explore the connections between visual creativity and the history of human civilization. The History of Art is the study of form and meaning in the visual arts from their beginnings to the present.

International Relations

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

International Relations is a multi-disciplinary course of study on the ways in which governments, private groups and individuals relate to each other in the global political and economic systems.

Italian Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Italian Studies presents an opportunity to study the Italian language and related topics in literature, film, linguistics, culture and civilization.

Jewish Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Jewish Studies relates Jewish life and culture to the surrounding world, from the biblical period to modern Israel. The program also offers studies in Hebrew and Yiddish.

Latin American and Latino Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Penn's combined program in Latin American and Latino Studies undertakes to introduce students to scholarly research on Latin American and Latino cultures in all their diversity of expression-not only "high culture" but also folk and other forms, from pre-Columbian times to the present, from Tierra del Fuego to New York and beyond.

Linguistics

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Linguistics is the scientific study of human language as an aspect of cognition, society and history.

Logic, Information and Computation

[undergraduate program](#)

This program draws on faculty and courses in Computer and Information Science, Linguistics, Mathematics, and Philosophy to offer students a systematic and integrative approach to the study of pure and applied logic, including the applied mathematics of information and computation. The Program will provide students with a strong background to pursue computational aspects of the natural, biological, and social sciences, as well as prepare them for careers in information technology.

Mathematical Economics

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Economics studies the allocation of scarce resources. At the core of economics are theories of how individuals, firms and other organizations make choices and interact, taking into account constraints on their behaviors. The Mathematical Economics major introduces undergraduate students to rigorous theoretical-quantitative and empirical-quantitative approaches to the analysis of economic problems. It is intended for students with a strong intellectual interest in both mathematics and economics and, in particular, for students who may pursue a graduate degree in economics.

Mathematics

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Mathematics at Penn is a lively, wide-ranging discipline taught in a highly-ranked department by nationally and internationally known mathematicians. The traditional core areas of mathematics are well-represented, as well as newly developing areas. Penn is one of the world's leading centers in the application of logic to theoretical computer science.

Modern Middle Eastern Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

This new interdisciplinary major is designed to allow students to specialize in the Middle East as a region of the world and human experience by combining course work using both social scientific and humanistic approaches, underpinned by relevant language skills.

Music

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Music curriculum exposes students to both a broad range of musical traditions from the past and present, and to the variety of approaches and practices desirable to illuminate musical subjects. As well as equipping students with a range of tools for investigating music (historical approaches, philosophical inquiry, composition, theory, performance), the curriculum is also designed so as to develop the integration of those skills.

Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The department offers broad-based, culturally integrated general education courses on the civilizations of Mesopotamia/Iraq, Egypt, Israel, Syria, Arabia, Persia/Iran and Anatolia/Turkey. NELC also teaches Sumerian, Akkadian, Egyptian, Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Persian and Turkish.

Philosophy

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Philosophy seeks to illuminate fundamental aspects of the world, of our relation to, and knowledge of, the world, and of our own nature as rational, purposive and social beings.

Philosophy, Politics and Economics

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The PPE major involves faculty and courses from the Departments of Philosophy, Political Science and Economics and from the Law School. The program allows undergraduates to study the variety of analytical frameworks that have been developed to interpret and justify political and economic structures.

Physics and Astronomy

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Physics deals with the most fundamental aspects of nature. Its practitioners aim to discover the basic principles that govern the workings of the world, using mathematics and experimental investigation as their tools.

Political Science

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Political Science Department provides students with an opportunity to develop a systematic approach to the understanding of politics.

Psychology

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Psychology is a multi-faceted discipline that weaves together both social science and natural science approaches to the mind and behavior of organisms in general and of human beings in particular.

Religious Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Department of Religious Studies offers a broad variety of introductory courses in the major religious traditions and in theories of the study of religion.

Romance Languages Dual Major

[home page](#)

Students have the opportunity to combine two of the following: [French Studies](#), [Hispanic Studies](#) and [Italian Studies](#)

Russian

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures offers courses in Russian language, literature and culture, as well as courses in other Slavic languages.

Science, Technology and Society

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

Science, Technology and Society courses focus on the social and humanistic aspects of science and the professions: the growth of scientific institutions, the role of science in technology and clinical medicine, the influence of economic and political factors on research and the application of knowledge, and problems of science and technology management and public policy.

Sociology

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The study of sociology provides an understanding of how societies, communities and smaller groups are organized and maintained, and how individual behavior is related to group experiences.

South Asia Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

South Asia Studies offers an interdisciplinary approach to the life and institutions of people of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Nepal and other Himalayan border countries, and the South Asian diaspora.

Theatre Arts

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Theatre Arts Program is an interdisciplinary major focusing on all intellectual and creative aspects of theatre and performance studies.

Urban Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

The Urban Studies Program is an interdisciplinary major. Courses introduce students to a variety of perspectives on the origins, development and nature of cities.

Visual Studies

[home page](#) • [about the major](#)

We live in an increasingly visual culture. New technologies and philosophies of vision influence how we see ourselves and our world, and how we think about seeing itself. Students can engage these developments through a multidisciplinary course of study, connecting the theory, practice and culture of seeing. The major combines work in Art History, Fine Arts, Neuroscience, Philosophy, Psychology and Cinema Studies, among others.