

University of Houston  
Department of English



## Graduate Certificate in Empire Studies

[www.uh.edu/class/english](http://www.uh.edu/class/english)  
[www.empirestudies.net](http://www.empirestudies.net)

### *What is the Empire Studies certificate?*

The Graduate Certificate in Empire Studies enables graduate students to focus their coursework with a distinctive, cohesive lens. “Empire Studies” is an interdisciplinary designation that variably integrates concepts and methodologies from postcolonial studies, critical race studies, gender studies, and related fields. The textual foundation for Empire Studies includes cultural, diplomatic, and journalistic texts as well as literature. The overall goal of Empire Studies is to bring the perspectives and practices of empire to bear upon the study of literature and culture; to theorize new models for the awareness and critique of empire; to use these models in teaching and classroom practice; and to promote the interdisciplinary exchange of research and writing about empire.

### *What are the requirements for the Empire Studies certificate?*

To receive a certificate, students must complete a total of twelve (12) hours of coursework, which amounts to a total of four courses. Six hours, or two of those courses, must be selected from among the Empire Studies core courses described below; these courses may be repeated when content changes. The remaining six hours may also be selected from among the core courses, or they may be other courses that involve an Empire Studies perspective or methodology, as determined by Empire Studies faculty.

The four courses required for the certificate count toward degree requirements for each graduate degree. In other words, students do not need to take Empire Studies courses beyond the degree requirements for their program, and earning an Empire Studies certificate will not require students to prolong their program time-to-completion. Please consult the “Courses” tab on the Empire Studies website ([empirestudies.net](http://empirestudies.net)) for additional information and sample syllabi. For more information on graduate program requirements in English at UH, please see broader degree requirements on the English Department homepage ([uh.edu/class/english](http://uh.edu/class/english)).

## *What are the advantages of an Empire Studies certificate?*

The Empire Studies certificate gives students a way to structure their graduate coursework with a current and coherent methodological lens. Many top research universities offer certificates or “tracks” in Empire Studies or related fields; earning an Empire Studies certificate at UH will give students an additional competitive edge in the job marketplace. In addition, the cohesion of Empire Studies coursework points students toward thesis or dissertation topics, often enabling them to begin formulating topics early rather than waiting until a later point in their programs. Finally, an Empire Studies certificate will sharpen students critical and ethical awareness of empire as it functions in current cultural settings and contexts, an awareness that is crucial to responsible global citizenship in today's world.

## *Empire Studies Core Courses*

ENGL 7369: Introduction to Postcolonial Studies / Cr. 3 (3-0) / Prerequisite: graduate standing in English, or approval of the Director of Graduate Studies in English

A study of critical approaches to the literature, history, and theory of postcolonial studies, tracing the contributions of such theorists as Gramsci, Fanon, Césaire, Memmi, Ngugi, Said, Spivak, Stuart Hall, Mary Louise Pratt, Ania Loomba, et al. This course presents students with basic foundations in the theory and literature of colonialism, focusing on colonial discourse and postcolonial theory and presenting literary texts focusing on postcolonial themes from both the metropolis and the former colonies. Topics may include Marxism's early contributions to and revisions of theories of colonialism, the intellectual discourse of “Third World” liberation movements, earlier definitions of the field such as “Commonwealth literature,” the contributions of specific theories and methods (such as poststructuralism and the new historicism), and the formative contributions of the first generation of postcolonial thinkers.

ENGL 7396: The British Empire / Cr. 3 (3-0) / Prerequisite: graduate standing in English, or approval of the Director of Graduate Studies in English.

This course exposes students to interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the British Empire, including discourses of empire in theoretical, historical, and literary texts. The course will touch upon a range of periods. It will usually be taught by faculty with a background in British Studies and will be expected to focus the empire studies lens more heavily on material from within the British Isles or empire as compared to English 7396 and most versions of 8386.

ENGL 8386: Topics in Postcolonial Studies / Cr. 3 (3-0) / Prerequisite: graduate standing in English, or approval of the Director of Graduate Studies in English.

Study of any topic within the field of postcolonial studies, including but not limited to surveys of postcolonial fiction, poetry, drama, film, or theory, colonial discourse analysis, globalization studies, third world intellectuals, and specific traditions within the postcolonial world. The course presents an opportunity for exploration of more advanced or particular topics, including ones driven by faculty research projects.