



SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY  
CAREER SERVICES

# **INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: AMERICAN STUDIES**

MAJOR CAREER GUIDE

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## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

Follow this link to the Salem State University Interdisciplinary Studies home page. Here you will find program information, degree options, course listings, concentration descriptions, events information and much more:

<https://www.salemstate.edu/academics/college-arts-and-sciences/interdisciplinary-studies/american-studies-concentration>

There are also several minors available to further enhance the writing, research, and analysis skills that are a foundation of the major and concentrations. To find complete descriptions, navigate to the Interdisciplinary Studies homepage listed above or contact Professor Elizabeth Duclos-Orsello at: [educlosorcello@salemstate.edu](mailto:educlosorcello@salemstate.edu)

- *African-American Studies*
- *American Studies*
- *Asian Studies*
- *Eastern European and Russian Studies*
- *Information Tech in Arts and Sciences*
- *Latin American and Latino Studies*
- *Marine Studies*
- *Peace Studies*
- *Legal Studies*
- *Religious Studies*
- *Women's Studies*
- *Urban Studies*

## **WHAT CAN I DO WITH MY MAJOR?**

Are you an Interdisciplinary Studies major considering the American Studies concentration? Follow the link below to your concentration on the "What Can I Do With My Major?" resource on the Salem State University Career Services web site. By doing so, you can learn more about how to connect your concentration to your future career: <https://elearning.salemstate.edu/courses/939337/pages/what-can-you-do-with-your-major>

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

As in any profession, staying connected to professionals in your field is vital. Below are links to professional associations for professionals in this concentration. Stay up to date with industry trends, connect with fellow professionals and utilize resources for job searching

[International American Studies Association](#)

[Encyclopedia of American Studies](#)

## **INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING**

Informational interviewing is a method of gathering information about career options, industries and employers. It is an opportunity to learn about a particular job from someone already in the field. It is *not* a job interview, but it can help you learn about job opportunities and build your network for when the job search comes. This is an ideal chance to help you gain a more thorough understanding of a particular industry or job. It's also a great way to determine "is this what I want to do?" and to learn about different paths others have taken to get where they are.

## **JOB SHADOWING**

Another way to gain access and information to your industry of choice is by job shadowing. Job shadowing is an opportunity to follow a professional in your field for an agreed upon amount of time. Typically, job shadow experiences will last anywhere from one day to one week. Much like an informational interview, this is your opportunity to see firsthand a "day in the life" of a professional.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

Volunteering is another great way to learn about what to expect when working in your industry. Similar to a job shadow, you will be able to see a "day in the life" of a professional while also contributing some of your own skills or services. Volunteering can give you a chance to gain new expertise and help you narrow down your specific interests in the field. Follow the links below to help you identify current volunteer opportunities:

<http://volunteer.nsuw.org/>

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

The Value of Interdisciplinary Studies from a Student's Perspective

- <http://isd.hss.kennesaw.edu/alumni-friends/>

How to Stay Connected to the Interdisciplinary Studies Community at Salem State

- <https://www.facebook.com/amstudiesssu/>

Publication of the International American Studies Association

- <https://www.americanquarterly.org/>

## SAMPLE RESUME

# Michael Mericano

1776 Ben Franklin Avenue, Salem, MA 01970 | m\_mericano@salemstate.edu | 111-222-3333

## EDUCATION

**Salem State University**, Salem, MA

May 20XX

*Bachelor of Liberal Studies in Interdisciplinary Studies*

*Concentration: American Studies, Minor: Speech Communication*

Related Coursework: Social & Political Philosophy, Immigration & U.S. Politics, U.S. History & Constitutional Government, Arts in America, Civil Liberties & Civil Rights, Women, Art & Ideology

## ACADEMIC PROJECTS & RESEARCH

*Social & Political Philosophy of Hamilton, the Musical* (Independent Study)

*A Historical Analysis of Sustainability & the Economy* (Independent Study)

## RELATED EXPERIENCE

**Salem Public Schools**, Salem, MA

September 20XX–May 20XX

### ***Classroom Assistant***

- Mentored 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to develop and encourage leadership and social justice skills
- Organized and directed a theater program that allowed students to learn about maritime history and American culture by producing their own short play
- Developed a presentation and supporting activities about Salem's connection to the Caribbean

**Peabody Public Schools**, Afterschool Program for the Arts, Peabody, MA

May 20XX-January 20XX

### ***Volunteer Theater Instructor***

- Instructed 14-17 year olds about proper stage presence and techniques to memorize lines
- Directed and designed costumes for select scenes of 1776 (the Musical) for year-end performance
- Emphasized the importance of historical context and culture on dramatic performance

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

**MASSPIRG**, Boston, MA

June 20XX- January 20XX

### ***Volunteer***

- Coordinated and participated in phone-a-thons to support public education in the state
- Created and distributed over 200 informational leaflets daily to advertise the importance of multilingual educational resources and support staff in the Greater Boston area

**North Shore Community Development Coalition**, Salem, MA

September 20XX-May 20XX

### ***Volunteer***

- Developed a strategic plan that fostered collaboration between social change organizations in order to provide more resources to low-income residents
- Analyzed historical trends leading to the current economic climate and infrastructure development in the North Shore area
- Assisted area residents with completion of forms and documentation at a community tax clinic

## LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Student Government Association: Vice President, Civic Engagement & Sustainability Committee (20XX)

Prime Generation Club: Executive Board Member, Mentor (20XX-20XX)

## SKILLS

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Google docs

Language: Spanish, French

**SAMPLE COVER LETTER**

**Michael Mericano**

1776 Ben Franklin Avenue, Salem, MA 01970 | m\_mericano@salemstate.edu | 111-222-3333

June 3, 20XX

John Marshall  
Salem Maritime National Historic Site  
160 Derby Street,  
Salem, MA, 01970

Dear Mr. Marshall:

I am contacting you to apply for the Research and Collections Associate position referred to me by Professor Washington. As my resume indicates, I attained my Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree in 2015, which focused primarily on American Studies. This degree provided me with skills that will serve me well in this position, such as critical analysis, oral communication, and research. Given your emphasis on finding a candidate who is passionate about American history and musical theater, I think you will find that I am an excellent candidate.

Your posting specifically mentioned that the position requires experience with researching and writing about history and culture. In my coursework at Salem State, I habitually did so, as evidenced by my research projects: Social & Political Philosophy of Hamilton, the Musical and A Historical Analysis of Sustainability & the Economy. In my position in Salem Public Schools, I further utilized this experience to create presentations and educational materials to foster students' engagement with Salem's historic culture as it specifically relates to maritime history. This experience provided me with additional expertise about maritime history in the city that can help me with the other job tasks that were listed, such as maintaining historic collections and artifacts and communicating oral history to site visitors. I am also aware that the position will require me to develop a large quantity of materials both in print and online to promote donations to the site. As a volunteer at MASSPIRG, I became familiar with non-profit work and developing similar materials, so I am confident that I can meet and exceed this expectation.

In Salem Public Schools and in the Peabody Public School's Afterschool Program, I developed and directed historical theater programs for youth, which is a focus in your description based on the site's recently updated strategic plan. This aligns with my professional interests and personal values, as evidenced by my involvement with mentoring and educating youth in history and the arts. I can be relied upon to enhance the artistic vision of Salem Maritime National Historic Site while also contributing positively to the cultural enrichment and research aspects of the Research and Collections Associate position. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Mericano

## **SAMPLE COMPANIES**

AMERICAN RED CROSS  
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF GREATER SALEM  
CAMBRIDGE RESEARCH INSTITUTE  
COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK OF SALEM  
MASSACHUSETTS COLLABORATIVE LAW COUNCIL  
MASSACHUSETTS LEAGUE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS  
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER  
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH  
NORTH SHORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
NORTH SHORE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISION  
NORTH SHORE MEDICAL CENTER  
NORTH SHORE PLAYERS  
PEABODY ESSEX MUSEUM  
REBEL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY  
SALEM HARBOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
SALEM MARITIME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE  
SALEM PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SALEM THEATER COMPANY  
THE BOSTON GLOBE  
VETERAN'S HEALTH ADMINISTRATION