Appalachian Studies Certificate

Certificate Study at Shepherd University

The Appalachian Studies Certificate is a non-degree, 15-hour program composed of an introductory foundation course (APST 501, Appalachia in Time, Place, and People), a graduate capstone research experience (RESR 601, Independent Research Seminar), and 9 hours of electives from an interdisciplinary selection that can be tailored to meet individual education goals.

Appalachia and the Appalachian Studies Program at Shepherd University

Parts of twelve states lie within the region known as Appalachia, some 200,000 square miles which rest within the contour of the Appalachian Mountains, stretching from New York and Pennsylvania to Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. While there is surprising diversity among the people of Appalachia (German, Italian, African American, Native American, and others in addition to Scot-Irish), defying traditional Appalachian stereotypes, the 23 million people who live in Appalachia are dependent upon an economy that has traditionally been limited in diversity. The area is rich in natural resources that principally feed the economy: coal, timber, gas, manufacturing and tourism. The Appalachian Studies Program, which includes an undergraduate minor, the Appalachian Heritage Writer-in-Residence Project, the WV Fiction Competition, a fall Appalachian Heritage Festival, an annual Anthology of Appalachian Writers (ISSN 1946-3103), and an annual NEH Summer Seminar for Teachers, is committed to an understanding of the region, and its historical, environmental, social, and literary richness.

Certificate Curriculum—15 Hours

Appalachian Studies Graduate Certificate

The Graduate Certificate in Appalachian Studies allows students and professionals to focus on the region in which they live and work, in order to better understand and serve both the region and their own personal goals. The interdisciplinary nature of the certificate program encourages the study of a range of fields that offer the student comprehensive understanding as well as satisfying diverse interests. While the certificate program is not limited to these fields, it is particularly useful and appropriate for Historic Preservation, Literature and Language, Environmental Studies, History, Political Science, Leisure Studies, and Teaching. The certificate is ideal for enhancing one’s expertise through postgraduate study.
Curriculum for a Certificate in Appalachian Studies

Total hours required, 15 Hours:

Required courses, 6 Hours:

- APST 501 – Appalachia in Time, Place, and People (3 cr)
- RESR 601 – Independent Research Seminar (3 cr)

Elective courses, 9 Hours:

- APST 500 - Seminar in Appalachian Studies (1-3 cr)
- APST 530 - Celtic Roots (3 cr)
- APST 531 - Appalachian Travel Field Experience (1-3 cr)
- APST 543 - Appalachian Music (3 cr)
- APST 545 - Appalachian Folk Tales and Storytelling (3 cr)
- APST 556 – Appalachian Culture (3 cr)
- APST 558 – Appalachian Literature (3 cr)
- APST 576 - Appalachian Studies Practicum (1-3 cr)
- HIST 509 – West Virginia and the Appalachian Region (3 cr)
- HIST 500 – Historic Preservation (3 cr)
- HPPH 525 Oral History (3cr)
- MBA 505 Business in WV. (3 cr)
- RECR 570 Environmental Education (3 cr)

APST 501, Appalachia in Time, Place, and People (3) - Orients students to geographic, historic, political, recreational, social, and cultural issues of the region.

RESR 601, Independent Research Seminar (3) - Affords students an opportunity to complete an independent research or field project under the supervision of faculty mentors who are experts in the field and approved by the Graduate Council.

Electives (9 hours) Allow certificate students to pursue a range of individual interests that complement their careers or specialized interests:

APST 500 Seminar in Appalachian Studies (3) - A seminar style course that offers students the opportunity to study topics that would enhance the understanding of Appalachia, its people, or its cultural or artistic heritage. Repeatable up to 6 credits

APST 543 Appalachian Music (3) - Students will gain an understanding of the role of music within historical and contemporary communities of southern Appalachia—
particularly West Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Kentucky. The course will introduce students to the field of ethnomusicology by researching and exploring Appalachia’s diverse musical traditions and genres, how they contribute to identity formation, and their contribution to contemporary popular culture around the world. Cultural studies research methods will be employed in the course, and the following musical genres will be explored and researched: Native American music, balladry, sacred music, old-time, bluegrass, coal/work songs, civil rights and other protest music among others. Emphasis will be placed on historical and socio-cultural trends in the region, the roles of women and minorities, and the struggle for social and environmental justice.

APST 545 Appalachian Folk Tales and Storytelling (3) - Students will be exposed to the art of storytelling and folktale associated with the geographic area known as Appalachia. Special attention will be given to research and exploration of oral traditions within these genres and to the ethnic, historical, and socio-cultural reflections found in storytelling.

APST 556 Appalachian Culture (3) - This interdisciplinary introduction to Appalachian culture will expose students to a wide variety of creative expression from the geographic region that constitutes Appalachia, particularly West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Kentucky. Students will research and study cultural stereotypes about Appalachia, the unique historical and cultural forces at work in Appalachia, and the rich expression of creativity in the area, including oral and written literature, visual arts, and crafts, and signing and songwriting.

APST 558 Appalachian Literature (3) - A course designed to survey the rich and diverse literature associated with the geographical region known as Appalachia. Both traditional writers identified with the area, such as Rebecca Harding Davis, Jesse Stuart, and Ambrose Bierce, as well as contemporary writers such as Denise Giardina, Robert Morgan, Marilou Awiakta, Fred Chappell, and Henry Louis Gates, will be explored in the course.

APST 530 Celtic Roots (3) - A course designed to expose students to the Celtic heritage associated with Appalachia through literature and travel, specifically travel to Ireland, Scotland, and other places of Celtic heritage. Students will explore the prominence of place as applied to contemporary Appalachian, Irish, American, continental, and Scottish literature. Those works that will typically be featured in the course are contemporary Appalachian writers such as Ron Rash, Terry Kay, and Robert Morgan, along with those Celtic, Anglo, and Anglo-Irish writers who have influenced their work as Appalachian writers or whose work shows some Celtic connection.
APST 531 Appalachian Travel Field Experience (1-3) - The Appalachian Travel Field Experience is designed to pair with any APST course with a sizeable travel/field practicum component. The object of the travel is to enhance the content of the course by exploring the places that inspired Appalachian art, music, literature, or photography or that have some Celtic connection.

APST 576 Appalachian Studies Practicum (1-3) - The student serves as an assistant and/or researcher for the Appalachian Heritage Festival or a classroom apprentice, works on a special project or does Web design, serves on the Anthology of Appalachian Writers committee or as a student editor, serves on the AHWIR Committee, or completes some type of service or practical project that benefits the community, the region, the University, or the Appalachian Studies Program. May be repeated to a maximum of 6 credits.

HIST 500 Historic Preservation (3) - Course will familiarize the student with the historic preservation policies and procedures of local, state, and national governments and of the outstanding private efforts in the field. A study and research of the general principles and methods of interpretation of historic phenomena to the general public will be involved. Extensive out-of-classroom use will be made of the historical resources in the local area for interpretive practice and preservation examples.

HIST 509 West Virginia and the Appalachian Region (3) - Emphasis upon the development of western Virginia and the state of West Virginia. This course will examine the general geographical, political, and economic aspects of the southern Appalachian region. The impact upon the Mountain State of the patterns of settlement, the heritage, economy, and national events will be considered. The student will research and view the current problems of the area and contemporary Appalachian society

HPPH 525 Oral History (3) - This course provides an introduction to the theory and methodology of oral history interviewing and ethnography. Students will learn the process of working with informants, recordation of oral history, transcription of interviews, and research and analysis of documentary material.

MBA 505 Business in West Virginia (3) - An examination of the businesses that provided the economic staying power for the state of West Virginia over the history of its statehood. The course continues with an examination of the business environment transition from mining and manufacturing to the current service economy.

RECR 570 Environmental Education (3) – Examines and researches philosophy, techniques, and application of education in and for the outdoors. Topics include history and development of outdoor education, environmental education, including school, camping, conservation, and interpretation techniques.
**Admission**  Students wishing to pursue a Graduate Certificate in Appalachian Studies may enroll as a certificate-only student or may pursue the certificate while working toward any graduate degree, as certificate study will serve to add an extra dimension to one's understanding of the region and better serve students’ workforce and professional goals.

Students interested in the Appalachian Studies Certificate Program should apply for graduate studies admission to Shepherd University as a Certificate/Professional Development student, selecting on the application form Certificate in Appalachian Studies. Applicants must have a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution and a 2.5 minimum GPA in order to apply.