Picking a Capstone Project is an important step in completing a masters program. For some, picking their project is easy. Not so for me.

This fall I started thinking I would never find a project that excited me. And then the unexpected happened: Dr. Sabine Smith asked me if I’d be interested in joining a group of faculty and students working on a project involving the Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Georgia Salzburger Society Museum, both situated on land owned by the church in Ricon, Georgia. Sabine was excited about the opportunity and enlisted the aid of Drs. Jennifer Dickey and Catherine Lewis as well as Heather Oswald, KSU’s Archivist and Curator of Rare Books. They felt the best way to get the project started was to enlist students in an immersion weekend at the site. Dr. Edward Weintraut from Mercer College and Margarete Froelicher-Grundmann, Professor Emerita of Armstrong University, both Salzburger enthusiasts, also joined us.

On December 14 Drs. Dickey, Lewis, and Smith lead us on a memorable journey to Ricon and into the history of the Salzburgers who settled the area. We had the chance to meet with descendants of the original Salzburgers who still live in the area and worship at the Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church and representatives of the museum. Our goal was to offer suggestions to assist the church and museum in highlighting this unique site as well as finding ways to help preserve it.

My project is the development of illustrative panels to be placed near the church emphasizing points of interest including: the history of the Salzburgers; the main characters in their odyssey; the settlement itself; how the Salzburgers lived; a history of the Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church; and continuing Salzburger traditions. These panels will guide people through the site and educate them on the history of the Salzburger immigrants and their lives in Georgia. The Salzburger project is well underway. My particular project will take time and effort as funds are needed to produce the panels. I’m already looking into grant options! This is an exciting project and one I feel will help me as I move forward in a new career.
AMST 7400: Film Industry in American Culture: Many Voices, One Vision: Immigration and Transnationalism in American Cinema - David King, (8 week session) From its beginnings, the American cinema has evolved according to migration from within and from outside the United States. The movement west to Hollywood from New York in the 1920s is an obvious early example of this transformation; the booming movie industry in the South is a current testament to how the American movie industry always adapts to changing economic, social, and cultural trends. Yet the most interesting changes to the American film industry have most often come from the contributions of European immigrants. This course examines several different filmmakers—all of them immigrants—who in coming to America brought with them not only interesting technical and aesthetic perspectives, but also a profound belief in the American myth and a willingness to challenge, as well as idealize, that myth. The class will consider the crucial contributions of Sicilian, German, and Austrian filmmakers, such as Frank Capra, Ernst Lubitsch, and Billy Wilder who transformed the style of American film of the 1930s and 1940s. We will consider in depth the achievement of the British auteur Alfred Hitchcock and his contemporaries the German Douglas Sirk and the Greek Elia Kazan, all of whom presented an alternative and ironic view of the burgeoning consumer culture of the 1950s. We will also address the work of David Lean, and his collaboration with Sam Spiegel, as an example of the Anglo-American films of the 1960s. And, we will look closely at the work of Milos Forman, who fled Czechoslovakia for Hollywood to produce films that were as provocative as his anti-communist films made during the Czech New Wave. Throughout the course we will emphasize the unique vision all of these filmmakers shared: a belief in the power of the moving image to challenge and uphold values and ideals, promote change for the greater good, and provoke inquiry into the unique diversity of experiences that shaped American culture in the 20th century. Course may be repeated for credit provided the content differs entirely from the previous offering.

AMST 7440: Enterprise & Labor in American Culture - Randy Patton (3 seats)
This course will examine the history of enterprise and labor within their social and cultural contexts from an interdisciplinary perspective. The course will include an overview of the history of work and enterprise in the United States. Students will investigate business enterprise, work, production, and consumption as cultural phenomena. Topics may include: the emergence of the corporation; the labor movement and its cultural representations; enterprise and labor in film, television, literature, and popular culture; the work ethic as a cultural production; the history of corporate social responsibility; immigration and labor/enterprise; ethnic, racial, and gender diversity issues in American business and labor; exploration of labor and business concepts/issues through biography; the social/cultural impact of globalization; regional themes in labor and enterprise; American enterprise in the world. Course may be repeated for credit provided the content differs entirely from the previous offering.

AMST 7500: Practicum (Internship or Applied Research Project) Rebecca Hill, Prerequisite: AMST 7000 and AMST 7100
AMST 7900: Capstone Experience (1-6 hours Credit Hours) Rebecca Hill, Permission of the Director.

Summer Study Options:
- Intensive Spanish and Creative Writing in Oaxaca, Mexico with Dr. Linda Niemann
- Trip to Yellowstone with Dr. Beth Giddens, Feature Writing, Writing History or Practicum

Welcome New Students

Rob Hadaway - graduated from KSU as a Theatre and Performance Studies major. He spent many years traveling with the Ringling Brothers’ Circus as a professional clown, plus stints in Switzerland and Las Vegas. While studying in Theatre and Performance Studies, Rob discovered a love of ethnography, storytelling, folklore and performance of culture.

Heather Harris graduated with an English Degree from KSU with a minor in Gender and Women’s Studies. She plans to pursue teaching on a university level using an interdisciplinary approach to research.

Capers Huff graduated with a BA in English from KSU and plans to focus on politics, culture, and history in his research.

Brooke Ruiz - used her English degree from KSU to promote a local small business and to help them gain national prominence in their field. Brooke is looking forward to learning more about American culture and how it intersects with one of her passions, which is public relations.

Vanessa Schill started her college career at Georgia Southern University as a journalism major. She spent a few years working at The Statesboro Herald before coming to KSU to finalize a Communication degree. Vanessa has worked in the Student Media area, including a stint as Editor-in-Chief of the Share Magazine as well as a member of the production staff of The Sentinel. She has also served as the President of the KSU Society of Professional Journalists, and is the Art and Marketing Director for Harry Strange Radio Drama. She was inspired to attend MAST after taking undergrad AMST classes.

Tracy Wright graduated from KSU with a degree in Sociology in 2003. She has spent several years working in community service and nonprofit organizations, most recently as Grants Manager for MUST Ministries. She is looking forward to teaching at a university in the future and assisting others who struggled to get an education. Tracy has been married for 22 years and has four children. Her daughter is also a KSU Owl, who transferred to the university last semester.