

**ITEM 142-2002-R0109      Master of Arts and PhD in American Studies; Montana State University-Bozeman**

**THAT:**                                The Board of Regents of Higher Education authorizes Montana State University Bozeman to establish Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy Degree Programs at Montana State University-Bozeman.

**EXPLANATION:**                    Montana State University-Bozeman requests permission to establish Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degree programs in American Studies. The graduate program in American Studies will be built on the following foundations: 1) the presence of a distinguished cohort of full-time and associated faculty with research and teaching expertise in the disciplines that provide the backbone for American Studies, namely, Anthropology, Architectural History, Art History, English, History, Museum Studies, Media and Theater Arts, Native American Studies, Political Science, and Sociology; 2) a unique Rocky Mountain setting that provides pioneering research opportunities for graduate students at such sites as the Museum of the Rockies, Renne Library's Department of Special Collections, the Yellowstone National Park archives (a satellite of the National Archives) located in Mammoth, Wyoming, the Montana State Historical Society archives in Helena, and the Cody Institute for Western American Studies at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming; 3) the interdisciplinary resources and faculty strengths of MSU. What will make this program truly world-class is that we will be offering joint graduate degrees with two of Europe's most prestigious American Studies programs at the universities of Amsterdam and Utrecht.

This program has been specifically designed to meet the needs of students who are interested in completing a high-quality graduate level program in American Studies, and who currently go to other institutions because MSU does not offer this degree. The program will prepare students for careers in academic research and teaching, business, journalism, cultural resource management, museums, or government service, especially in the U.S. Department of State (primarily its information and cultural services), the Foreign Service and agencies like the National Park Service. In short, graduate level training in American Studies positions students for multiple career options where depth and breadth of knowledge about American culture is essential. This program will draw top international students in the arts and humanities to MSU, allowing our students to develop international connections that are increasingly necessary for living out the future of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.