

# Master of Liberal Arts

The **Master of Liberal Arts** (MLA) program fosters intellectual breadth through courses that address a broad range of cultural issues from different academic perspectives. Students may explore questions of identity through art, literature and religion. They may analyze the politics of race in fiction, historical documents, the visual arts and music. They may debate ethical choices presented by fiction writers, jurists, philosophers and scientists from antiquity through the present. MLA seminars examine literary, artistic and cinematic masterpieces; historic moments of discovery and change; traditions of thought; cultural differences; and civic responsibilities.

MLA students sharpen their thinking about contemporary values and choices through courses that ask them to reflect on the individual's relation to society, technology and the spread of ideas, challenges to freedom, inspiration, and creativity.

Students pursue course work and independent research with Washington University scholars from a number of academic disciplines, including architecture, art, film, history, literature, music, philosophy, religion and science.

The MLA program emphasizes critical thinking and inquiry, close reading, intensive writing and problem solving, all of which are hallmarks of a liberal arts education and essential skills for a range of professional contexts.

Contact: Pat Matthews  
Email: patmatthews@wustl.edu  
Website: <http://caps.wustl.edu/programs/graduate/masters-liberal-arts>

## Degree Requirements Master of Liberal Arts

### Required Courses: 30 units

Students complete 30 units total, including at least 15 units of core MLA interdisciplinary seminars, one writing intensive course, one research methods course, and a final research project that typically earns 3 credits.

### Core MLA Seminars

The MLA program consists of seminars that introduce students to the methods and questions of different disciplines. Planned and taught by full-time Washington University faculty, these seminars cover a wide variety of topics and issues. Most core seminars are held one evening a week during the fall and spring semesters and twice a week during the summer term.

Among the seminars, some will be noted as "writing intensive" and "research methods." These courses are intended to hone graduate-level writing and research techniques, preparing students for their final research projects.

Some students take all required courses in the seminars that are designed specifically for the MLA program; others augment a particular interest by taking related courses drawn from different departments with MLA department approval.

### Final Project

A 3-credit final research project, developed under the supervision of a Washington University faculty member, is required for the Master of Liberal Arts degree. This project presents an opportunity for the student to independently and extensively explore an area of personal interest; it must be completed at the conclusion of a student's course work. Under special circumstances and with permission, some students complete a final project that comprises two semesters of research and writing for 6 units of credit.

## Courses

Visit online course listings to view semester offerings for U98 MLA (<https://courses.wustl.edu/CourseInfo.aspx?sch=U&dept=U98>).

### U98 MLA 354 Abnormal Psychology: The Major Mental Disorders

This is an introductory course in psychopathology or the scientific study of mental health disorders. The course will include definitions, theories, and classification of psychopathological behavior. Content will focus on symptoms, classification, prevalence, etiology, and treatment of mental health disorders, including mood, anxiety, eating, schizophrenia spectrum, substance use, and personality disorders. Prerequisite: Psych 100B. Same as L33 Psych 354. Credit 3 units. Arch: SSC Art: SSC BU: BA

### U98 MLA 4440 The American Novel on the Road

This course studies representations of mobility, travel, and transportation in the American novel over the course of the 20th century and into the 21st. Our readings may include such texts as "As I Lay Dying" (1930) by William Faulkner, "On the Road" (1957) by Jack Kerouac, "Play It as It Lays" (1970) by Joan Didion, "Parable of the Sower" (1993) by Octavia Butler, "Tropic of Orange" (1997) by Karen Tei Yamashita, "The Road" (2006) by Cormac McCarthy, "Nevada" (2013) by Imogen Binnie, "The Underground Railroad" (2016) by Colson Whitehead, "Sing, Unburied, Sing" (2017) by Jesmyn Ward, and "Lost Children Archive" (2019) by Valeria Luiselli. We will explore how realist, modernist, and postmodernist novels depict the changing shape of the American landscape and its culture through representations of transportation. Our analysis of novels will be supplemented with the study of historical documents, such as selections from Green Books (1936-1956; guidebooks for African-American travelers), as well as other historical and cultural events, from the Federal Highway Act of 1956 to the concept of the family vacation and road trip to early imaginings of the World Wide Web as an information superhighway. We will study how novels depict characters who are mobile as well as those who lack mobility -- who are stranded or fixed in one place or time -- and the way the texts reflect on the government's intervention in developing and maintaining infrastructures like the interstate system, within the context of conflicts such as the World Wars, the Cold War, and globalization. Through discussions, close readings, work with primary source documents, and attention to American culture's shifting aesthetic sensibilities, this course provides students with an understanding of how the American novel evolved over the 20th century in response to an ever-increasing reliance upon roadways. This course fulfills the Writing Intensive requirement for both the Master of Liberal Arts and the Master of Arts in American Culture Studies programs. Same as U89 AMCS 4440

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, GWRT

---

**U98 MLA 445 Seminar: Reality Theater**

Rotating upper-level seminar. Senior seminar normally offered each semester and meant to satisfy the 400-level requirement for the drama major.

Same as L15 Drama 445

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

---

**U98 MLA 4471 Archeology of the St. Louis Region**

This course introduces students to archaeology of the St. Louis region and explores the cultures of its early inhabitants, from 12,000 years ago through the 19th century. We study a number of very important archaeological sites in the region, including Mastodon State Park, where artifacts of human manufacture were found in direct association with extinct mastodons dating to about 12,000 years ago, and Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site (a World Heritage Site) in Illinois, dating to the Mississippian period AD 1050-1350. We also examine methods and theories used by archaeologists to understand archaeological remains.

Same as U69 Anthro 3471

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 450 Topics in AMCS: The Future of Culture: Cultural Sustainability & Why We Have to Let it Linger**

Topic varies by semester.

Same as U89 AMCS 450

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, ACS

---

**U98 MLA 472 Social Theory and Anthropology**

A seminar on social theory and its ethnographic implications. Course combines major works of modern social theory, including Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, with current work by contemporary anthropologists, such as Clifford Geertz, Eric Wolf, Marshall Sahlins, and Fredrik Barth, and ethnographers from related disciplines, such as Pierre Bourdieu and Paul Willis. Prerequisite: previous anthropology course work or permission of instructor.

Same as L48 Anthro 472

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: SSC, SC, SD Arch: SSC Art: SSC EN: S

---

**U98 MLA 490A St. Louis Blues: The Musical History of a City**

From bustling Mississippian city to frontier port town to the eclectic, innovative, storied metropolis of today, St. Louis never seems to stand still. In this course, we will explore the history of St. Louis through the musics that have been made, sustained, and remembered here. In the words of ethnomusicologist John Blacking, music is nothing less than "soundly organized humanity." Our musical investigation will lead us to consider how St. Louis-area residents have constructed geography, place, ownership, and identity. We will progress through several chronological-topical units that engage with race/ethnicity, class, regional identity, and cultural memory. Celebrities and musical icons such as Chuck Berry and Tina Turner will share our attention with grassroots and community music-makers such as the musicians of Little Bosnia and the protesters who sounded off during the Ferguson demonstrations. This course satisfies the humanities or arts distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program. This course also can count toward the undergraduate major or minor.

Same as U89 AMCS 490A

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH

---

**U98 MLA 4941 Milton**

Major poems and prose works in relation to literary and intellectual currents of the 17th century.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

---

**U98 MLA 4999 Racial Identity and American Popular Music**

This course investigates the history of racial identity and American popular music from the mid-18th century to the present day. What can popular music -- a vehicle of entertainment and commercialism, culture and disposability -- tell us about how Americans have experienced and constructed race? How did Blackness and whiteness sonically rub shoulders, even during the heights of segregation? How did Frank Sinatra journey from being a son of Italian immigrants to being an icon of white, American masculinity? Why did Miley Cyrus' twerking cause an uproar? Participants will be trained in listening closely to musical artifacts, and they will be given opportunities to contextualize their own listening history. Our analysis will incorporate methods from the fields of musicology, history, and cultural studies. Student assignments will include reading, listening, writing, and discussion. This course counts toward the American Culture Studies major for day students, and it fulfills the Humanities or Arts distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program. It also fulfills the Writing Intensive requirement for both the Master of Liberal Arts and the Master of Arts in American Culture Studies programs.

Same as U89 AMCS 4999

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH, GWRT, OLI

---

**U98 MLA 500 Independent Study**

An independent research project under the supervision of a member of the faculty of the MLA program. Approved proposal must be presented at the time of registration. Open only to students admitted to the MLA program. For more information, contact the assistant dean for Graduate Programs at 314-935-6700.

Credit variable, maximum 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5002 Sounding Tudor Music**

We will enter 16th-century English soundscapes, from the soaring brilliance surrounding Henry VIII (Taverner), to the determinedly earthbound tones of Edward VI's Chapel Royal, to the judicious mix of music, religion, and politics marking the beat of Elizabeth I's court (Tallis and Byrd). Exploring the wedding of notes to words, the class will study Byrd, who keeps an Englishman's head; Morley and Weelkes, who yield to Italian fashions; and Dowland, who charts a musical path that mingles British identity with a well-traveled sense of innovative international styles. We will look to (and try out) royal dance in order to experience, both rhythmically and politically, the cadences of court life. All "musically untutored" are welcome.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5012 Family and Community Ties**

This course examines documentary and imaginary accounts of family and community, to consider how individuals shape their support systems in a changing society. We will explore how ideas about family and community differ according to economic, racial, ethnic, educational, and personal experience. Materials include memoirs such as Jesmyn Ward, *The Men We Reaped*, and Alexandra Styron, *All the Finest Girls*; testimonials from the StoryCorps project, *Ties That Bind*; fictive journalism in Paula Hawkins, *The Girl on the Train* and in Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*; Lauren Acampora's stories, *The Wonder Garden*; the novels, Matt Johnson, *Loving Day*, selections from Jonathan Franzen, *The Corrections*, and Carolyn Chute, *Treat Us Like Dogs and We Will Become Wolves*.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 502 Directed Research**

An independent research project under the supervision of a member of the faculty of the MLA program. Approved proposal must be presented at the time of registration. Required for the Master of Liberal Arts. Open only to students admitted to the MLA program. For more information, contact University College at 314-935-6700.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 503 Master's Thesis**

An independent research project under the supervision of a member of the faculty of the MLA program. Approved proposal must be presented at the time of registrarion. Open only to students admitted to the MLA program. For more information, contact University College at 314-935-6700. Prerequisite: U98 502. Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5031 Food Cultural Studies: Theories, Methods, and Public Writing**

Over the past few years, the study of food and gastronomy from the perspective of cultural studies and the humanities has been on the rise. This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of food cultural studies and its theories, methods and practices. The course also uses the topics of food studies to train students into different forms of public writing, including reviews, longform magazine essays, blogs and others. The course will discuss the ways in which different disciplines focus on the study of food (including history, anthropology, philosophy and others), basic elements of global food history (e.g., the medieval spice trade, the Columbian Exchange, the role of colonialism and empire), case studies around different cuisines (including but not limited to Mexican, Italian, and Chinese), and the work of some of the major food writers of our time (e.g., Samin Nosrat, Michael Pollan). Credit 3 units. UColl: GRES, GWRT

---

**U98 MLA 5041 Contemporary Latin American Female Writers**

This course examines the newest and most cutting-edge novels and short-story collections of women writers in Latin America. We will develop a set of tools for literary analysis in order to examine these works from the point of view of style and literary expression, and we will also examine how these young authors engage with the issues facing women in the region today, including politically and sexually motivated violence, collective memory, gender and race, and citizenship. We will also address what it means to be a Latin American woman author in the 21st century, and we will look at related issues, including structural barriers in the industry, institutional erasure, sexism and the literary canon. Evaluation will be based on writing assignments and on a multimedia portfolio on a writer of students' choice, which they will present to the instructor and the class at the end of the semester. This course fulfills the research methods requirement for both the Master of Liberal Arts and the Master of Arts in American Culture Studies programs. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH, GRES

---

**U98 MLA 505 Darwin, Marx, and Wagner**

This seminar studies three works completed in 1859 that profoundly influenced all western thought to the present day: Karl Marx's *Treatise on Political Economy*, Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* Natural Selection, and Richard Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*. We will explore how these three works share remarkable and intriguing parallels: an inherent belief in evolution; materialism permeated with romanticism; faith in progress; and a similar ("dialectical") approach to understanding the dynamics of change and the application of change in all aspects of the natural and social world. These three works will enable the class to consider aspects of 19th-century intellectual, economic, and social sociopolitical history. No special knowledge of biology, political science, or music is required. Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5060 Current Affairs and Critical Issues in American Culture**

What's in your newsfeed? Media outlets drive critical conversations and public discourse, and in this course students have the chance to keep up and weigh in. We read the news and examine current affairs as they unfold week by week, critically analyzing and exploring modes of understanding, historicizing, and contextualizing contemporary issues in American society. The course introduces students to theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this engagement and asks questions such as: How are these issues related to the past? How have Americans experienced this issue before? And how is the contemporary context different? We'll follow trends in pop culture, technology, politics, and society. Students learn to layer current issues with historical documents; the commentary of public intellectuals and cultural critics; and political, economic, and social policies. The course stresses research analysis, group process, critical thinking, multidisciplinary inquiry, and professional writing and speaking skills. Same as U89 AMCS 4060. Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, GRES, GWRT

---

**U98 MLA 5072 Humanizing Technology**

In order to explore the ways that technology had changed the way we read and write, this course examines the myriad ways that technology and the humanities interact in shaping culture and identity in contemporary society. We will study the interactions between the internet and literature, examining the ways that short stories by Jorge Luis Borges and novels like *Snow Crash* by Neal Stephenson have first shaped the ways that we use and think about the internet. We will investigate new approaches to writing inspired by digital technology with the Bolivian novelist Edmundo Paz Soldán's novel *Turing's Delirium*. The class will consider the development of a technological posthuman identity in society, literature, and films through an analysis of Philip K. Dick's novel *Ubik*, the film *The Matrix*, along with the work of cultural theorists Donna Haraway ("A Cyborg Manifesto") and Katherine Hayles (*How We Became Posthuman*). To examine the development of digital humanities as a discipline, students will read selections from Jerome McGann, *Radiant Textualities* and Schreibman, Siemens, and Unsworth, *A Companion to Digital Humanities*. Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5114 Seminar: The Middle Ages: Languages and Histories of Desire**

Same as L14 E Lit 511  
Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5117 Popular Culture in Latin America**

This course examines popular culture in Latin America both as it thrives today and as it has developed historically since the 1800s, when countries achieved their independence. We will study different forms of cultural practice, analyzing how they become "popular" and how they involve connections between artistic expression, politics, economics, ethnicity, and race. The course will consider differences between "high culture" and popular culture; folklore traditions; the impact of modernization and the dream of "being modern"; the role of the media; and the growth of globalized popular culture. Our cultural geography will survey the gauchos (cowboys) of Argentina and Uruguay; national dances such as salsa and reggaeton in the Caribbean; forms of cultural resistance to military rule in Chile; and the pervasive economic, political, and emotional power of soccer (fútbol). Students will examine the best-selling novel "The Gaucho Juan Moreira," the engaging political essay "The Open Veins of Latin America," stories of urban life, and contemporary texts that explore the rise of populism (elites vs. others), dictatorship and social revolution,

and the immigrant experience. We will also consider examples of music; films including "The Secret in Their Eyes" and "Paper in the Wind"; and a pair of riveting television series (telenovelas) from Mexico and Argentina.  
Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5120 Breath on the Mirror: Ancient Maya Religion**

Contemporary scholars of Maya religion are gradually coming to appreciate the grand myth cycles, cosmogonic visions, and understandings of the Maya divine beings, due in large part to the increasingly productive decipherment of ancient texts and imagery. This course surveys what we know and how we document our current interpretations of ancient Maya religion. Topics include the Maya's famous calendar systems mathematics, astronomy, including Maya archaeoastronomy and time keeping. We will analyze the complexity and dynamism of Maya understandings of the supernatural. The class will examine enduring ideas and stories at the core of the Maya religion, as told in the *Popol Vuh*, the Quiche' *Book of Counsel*. We will also study recent field research and discoveries, exploring links between classic Maya religion and the religion of the great highland Mexican society of Teotihuacan in the Valley of Mexico. The professor will share information about his ongoing field research project in northwestern Peten at the site of El Peru-Waka. The class will learn what scholars have unearthed, literally, about El Peru-Waka, the capital of a kingdom and seat of a royal dynasty established in the Preclassic period that endured more than 500 years and boasted more than 26 successors to the throne.  
Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5150 Hollywood on Hollywood**

Same as U89 AMCS 5151  
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF

---

**U98 MLA 5200 Visions and Re-Visions: 19th-Century Arts and Society**

In this multidisciplinary course we will examine how 19th-century literature, painting, and music reflected, as well as affected, contemporary Western life, both in Europe and the United States. We will consider how different writers and artists attempt first to represent and then to modify, either directly or indirectly, several important sociopolitical and economic situations of their time, such as the institution of marriage; increased urbanization and industrialization; and the spread of nationalism. Included among the literary works to be studied are Romantic, Transcendentalist, and utopian texts by Balzac (*Père Goriot*), Sand (*The Country Wail*), Thoreau (*Walden*), Hugo (*Last Day of a Condemned Man*), Baudelaire ("The Painter of Modern Life"), and Robert Owen (*A New View of Society*). In the field of art history we will analyze the social impact of paintings from the Realist and Barbizon schools. In the areas of theater and opera we will study works by Ibsen (*A Doll's House*), Maeterlinck (*Pelleas and Melisande*), and Wagner ("Opera and Drama" and examples of his Ring Cycle).  
Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5203 America: Through a Glass Darkly**

This course studies depictions of America by non-Americans. We will examine the social, political, and economic aspects of their accounts and their influence on America's beliefs, policies, and international reputation. The class will consider fundamental values as well as ethnic and gender-based differences. Comparing historical periods from both western and eastern perspectives, students will read texts written during the past three centuries from England, France, Germany, Cuba, and China. For the colonial/Revolutionary War period, we will study Charlevoix, *History & Description of New France* and Crèvecoeur, "Letters from an American Farmer." Readings from the 19th century include Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*; Frances Trollope, *Views*

*of Society and Manners in America*; Dickens, *American Notes*; Francis Lieber, *The Stranger in America*; and newspaper articles by José Martí. Our discussions of the 20th century will focus on Kafka, *Amerika*; Francis Hsu, *Americans and Chinese*; Beauvoir, *America: Day to Day*; and Baudrillard, *America*.  
Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5204 Patterns of Thought**

Exploring how patterns shape our understanding, this seminar will focus on recurring motifs in literature and art. Our study of patterns will refer to thematic elements as well as to repeated figures, structures, and designs. We will examine the function of mirrors in paintings by van Eyck, Velazquez, and works of the Italian Renaissance, as well as the "mirror function" of paintings within paintings in works by Dutch Golden Age painters Vermeer and his contemporaries. We will also study the importance of mirroring in short stories by Borges and novels about novel writing ("metafiction"), including Krauss, *History of Love*; Auster, *The City of Glass*; and Knausgard's autobiographical novel *My Struggle*. The class will analyze the distinctive narrative structures of Lafayette, *The Princesse de Clèves* and Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, novels in which art figures prominently. We will contrast these works with Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, where art is eclipsed by consumerism, and Nolan's film *Memento*, which plays with chronological sequencing. We will further consider the patterns of urban landscapes evident in Abelardo Morell's camera obscura images of world capitals and Andreas Gursky's crowds and large-scale images, contrasting these contemporary works of photography with breaks in associative patterns in the surrealist paintings of Magritte.  
Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5217 Paint it Black: Understanding American Film Noir**

A product of highly diverse influences and traditions, film noir is known for its stylized visual aesthetic, crackling dialogue, moral ambivalence, and existential paranoia. Its style and language continue to inform filmmakers in Hollywood and worldwide. This seminar positions the aesthetic shapes and traumatic narratives of film noir within the context of American culture and film history during the war and post-war years. As importantly, it explores film noir as a test case in order to probe notions of film history, genre, and authorship, of cultural and intermedial transfer and the popular. Required screenings will take place during the second half of each week's class. Films will likely include many of the following: *The Maltese Falcon*, *Phantom Lady*, *Double Indemnity*, *Laura*, *Gun Crazy*, *Somewhere in the Night*, *The Glass Key*, *The Blue Gardenia*, and *Chinatown*. Prerequisite: Consult Course Listings.  
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF

---

**U98 MLA 524 The American Dream: Myth and Reality**

This course will examine the origins and history of "The American Dream." What do we mean when we use this term? How does it resonate and influence our politics, advertising, and especially the arts? We will discuss the experience of immigration and assimilation (how foreigners with different cultural backgrounds enter American society). Beginning with the implications of America's image as a "brave new world" in European thought and philosophy (including Shakespeare's "The Tempest"), and the prescient view of our culture by de Tocqueville and others, we will examine how the dream of success and wealth has been depicted and employed in theater, fiction, cinema, and the visual arts. Texts include Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby," Williams's "The Glass Menagerie," Miller's "Death of a Salesman," West's "Day of the Locust," Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun," Albee's "The Zoo Story and The American Dream," John Guare's "The House of Blue Leaves," Lynn Nottage's "Sweat," and so on. We will consider modern painters whose work offers an implicit commentary on the dream, such as Edward

Hopper and Andy Warhol, and study cinematic innovators from Charlie Chaplin to Orson Welles ("Citizen Kane") and Francis Ford Coppola ("The Godfather"), who have used the idea of "The American Dream" as significant elements in their work.

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH, OLI

---

### U98 MLA 5275 Diplomacy

Students in this course will delve into the world of US diplomacy and the role it plays in international affairs. They'll be introduced to the diplomatic profession through readings, simulations and frequent interaction with professionals in and around the US government.

Through multi-party negotiations, case studies, press briefings and cable writing, students will emulate the work of those building relationships to address complex issues and advance American interests in a dynamic world.

Same as U85 IA 5275

Credit 3 units.

---

### U98 MLA 5290 Exploring Medieval Literature

This course will read widely in medieval literature, from Britain and Western Europe. We will investigate how authors depict battle (*Beowulf*, *The Song of Roland*), love (troubadour poetry and romance), travel, and quest (Mandeville's *Travels*, *The Book of Margery Kempe*). In addition, we shall study work by some of the most important writers in the emerging vernacular literatures of medieval Europe: Marie de France, Jean de Meun (*The Romance of the Rose*), Dante, Boccaccio, Machaut, Chaucer, and the anonymous poet of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Texts will be studied in translation, sometimes in full and sometimes in extract, and will be placed in their historical and cultural contexts.

Credit 3 units.

---

### U98 MLA 5300 Modernism

This course will explore modernism's search for new ways to narrate experience in a radically changed world. Traveling across time and space, from East to West, and into modern cities and uncharted locations, we will explore how writers and filmmakers in the 20th and 21st centuries experiment with innovative forms of artistic expression in response to the growing influence of foreign cultures; technological changes and developments in science; the globalization of world markets; and issues of identity, gender, race, and ethnicity. The class will analyze modernism as a rejection of social and political norms, a crisis of identities, and the fragmentation of life. Works to include Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*; James Joyce, *Dubliners*; Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*; Amos Tutuola, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*; Italo Calvino, *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler*; Jorge Luis Borges, *Fictions*; Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of This World*; Salman Rushdie, *East, West: Stories*; and Don DeLillo, *The Body Artist*, as well as films by Christopher Nolan (*Memento*); Akira Kurosawa (*Rashomon*), and Michelangelo Antonioni (*Blow-Up*).

Credit 3 units.

---

### U98 MLA 5301 Against the Grain: Transgression and Controversy in Modern Art

This course will examine the public controversies that surround the development of modern art over the last 150 years, to probe the question of the social and political functions of transgressive art. After reviewing key theories of the avant-garde, we analyze both the persona of the modern artist (Gauguin, Picasso, Pollock) and the place of women artists in the revolutions of modernism (Cassatt, Höch, Kahlo). A key issue to address is how modernism tests limits by asking what is (and is not) art (Duchamp and Brancusi). Some of the most controversial exhibitions in this time frame, from the Salon des Refusés in 1863 to *Mirroring Evil* in 2002, highlight the challenges raised by modern artists' treatment of the body. Debates waged over public art in St. Louis, and recent controversies over public funding of contemporary art, will close the course. No prior knowledge of art history required.

Credit 3 units.

---

### U98 MLA 5310 Mind-Brain and the Arts

This course considers ways that recent research in cognitive science might shed light on four traditional topics in the philosophy of the arts. Each topic will focus on a certain type of art (although not exclusively) and on one or more mental faculties: How do pictures represent? How do we understand stories and what roles do they play in the life of the mind? What do we like in the arts and why, according to psychological theories based on brain research? What is style in the arts and can there be a scientific explanation of its history? A parallel concern is with how distinctive features of the arts might shed special light on the nature of the mind. Readings will include essays by prominent art historians, philosophers, psychologists, and scientists.

Credit 3 units.

---

### U98 MLA 5353 Cultural Geography: Mapping Paris

This course explores how, over centuries and across national borders, Paris remains central to our sense of Western culture. Our focus on Paris will extend from the 16th century through the present via pairings that join the French capital with other European cities. We will study King Francis I's expansion of the Louvre in Paris in conjunction with the proliferation of castles in the Loire Valley, the court's patronage of Italian artists, and the arrival of Leonardo da Vinci in Amboise. The class will examine the 17th-century court of Versailles as it casts a shadow over Paris, and we will compare the art of the French monarchy during this period with that of Vermeer and his contemporaries in Delft and Amsterdam. We will analyze views of Paris and London the 18th century that show new architectural features and home decor and we will contrast paintings of Boucher, Fragonard, and Watteau in France with those of Hogarth and Gainsborough in England. The class will consider desire in the 19th century as it radiates both through Paris in Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Vienna in Freud's *Dora*. We will consider contemporary portraits of Paris and New York in Barbery's *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* and Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*. The animated film *The Triplets of Belleville* will offer a contemporary take of these cities. Open to all MLA and DLA students, including those who have taken Paris and New York.

Credit 3 units.

---

### U98 MLA 5416 Urbis & Civitas: Florence Beyond the Tourist's Gaze

This course explores the urban history of Florence, Italy, from its origins as a small Roman town at the edge of an Etruscan settlement to its contemporary position as the industrial, commercial, and cultural center of a sprawling metropolitan area along the Arno river valley. We will study Florence's long history as it comprises periods of rapid development, symbolic and intellectual pre-eminence, and political influence, on the one hand, and economic stagnation, internal conflicts, depopulation, and subjection to external control, on the other. Our focus on both the *urbis* (the built environment, the physical realm) and the *civitas* (the social constituency, the civic sphere) will reveal Florence to be a complex artifact that is constantly shaped and reshaped by human action and social imagination. In order to look beyond the tourist image of Florence that we have inherited from the late 19th century, we will examine what defines our experiences and conceptions of a city. This investigation will include comparisons of Florence with other urban centers and discussion about the meanings of urban memory, culture, and citizenship. Readings will address the study of the urban history of Florence as well as urbanization, urbanism, and the public sphere, including works such as *An Outline of Urban History* by Silvano Fei, Grazia Gobbi Sica, and Paolo Sica; *A Brief History of Florence* by Franco Cardini; and *Florence: Architecture, City, and Landscape* edited by Marco Bardeschi.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5420 History of American Architecture**

This course examines the ideological, political, economic and social determinants that have shaped the look of American architecture. Throughout readings that will include a survey text in addition to topical works covering the social history of housing, the vernacular architecture of Las Vegas and the rise (and fall, and rise) of Frank Lloyd Wright, students will learn the definitive characteristics of American architecture. A central point of study will be examining contradictory tendencies in the American practice of architecture: the embrace of exceptionalism through modern forms and styles representing a new national identity, occurring alongside the emulation of classical and European precedents to legitimate a new nation's buildings. The readings will illuminate how the characteristics of American architecture reveal the social, economic and political structures of its production. Ultimately, students will be able to read an American building to discern evidence of national identity, individual political agency, the evolution of gender roles, the assertion of disciplinary and economic power, and the evolution of the American artistic sensibility. This course will count toward major in American Culture Studies for day students. This course fulfills the Humanities distribution requirement for the AMCS MA program. It also counts toward the MD and some concentration area requirements for the AMCS major and minor. Same as U89 AMCS 420

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH

---

**U98 MLA 5430 Imagining Germany in the Long 19th Century**

Between the start of the French Revolution (1789) and the outbreak of the First World War (1914), Germany was transformed from a patchwork of over 300 sovereign territories into a unified nation-state with immense political and economic power. This course examines the crucial role played by literature and the arts in creating a sense of a German national community during this period. Our materials will include national anthems, fairy tales, painting, public monumental art, opera, essays, propaganda, and popular culture, and we will investigate these materials with an eye toward the different and sometimes opposing visions of the nation and national character to which they give expression. Within this broader context, we will address the perceived contribution of men, women, and the family to the project of nation building; the role of language, of national heroes and legends, and of geography in creating a sense of unity; and the ways in which national identity is defined in opposition to a perceived Other (in this case, France). We will also consider Zionism as an offshoot of the European nationalisms and a response to anti-Semitism in Germany. Works studied include fairy tales by the Brothers Grimm; essays and poems by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Heinrich von Kleist, and Berthold Auerbach; *Germany, A Winter's Tale* by Heinrich Heine; *The Patriot* by Heinrich Mann; and *The Jewish State* by Theodor Herzl.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5450 Global Cinema: A Love Story**

Focusing on the ubiquity of love stories in cinema, this seminar will explore connections between romance, anxieties, and aspirations in contemporary society. Studying celebrated films from the United States (*When Harry Met Sally*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*), Latin America (*Love in the Time of Hysteria*), Europe (*Amelie*, *Café au Lait*), South Asia (*The Lunchbox*), and East Asia (*2046*, *Happy Together*), among others, we will consider how love functions as a symptom of what ails society. The class will examine not only personal relationships but also social structures, economic systems, and political conflicts. Topics will cover issues of class, gender, and race; the construction of economic identities; and the formal structures and aesthetics of film. Students will be required to watch two films per week as well as to complete selected short readings.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5454 Medicine and Morality in Global Perspective**

What does it mean to be sick? What does it mean to be a patient, or a healer? Is it possible to imagine a universal morality in which our understanding of medical ethics is shared among peoples worldwide? What are some of the ethical dilemmas associated with genetic testing, organ transplants, and global disparities in health? Framed by these questions, our class will examine how culture shapes our concepts of disease and our expectations for treatment. Similarly, we will consider how social class, race, and ethnicity influence both health and access to health care worldwide. Our readings will focus on medical history and the evolution of diagnosis and treatment of disease; health disparities; the varying relations of patients and healers in different cultures; African health crises; public health controversies; folk illness in Latin America; medical technologies and ethical conflicts; and other issues of medical anthropology pertaining to the prevention and treatment of illness and the healing process around the globe. We will also discuss three documentaries: *Frontline: Sickness Around the World*; *Donka: X-Ray of an African Hospital* (Doctors Without Borders); and *Dan Rather Reports: Kidney Pirates* (with anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes).

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5478 American Folklore in Context**

For the last several election cycles, candidates and supporters from across the political spectrum have invoked "the real American." But what does it mean to be authentically American? A simple answer might be that they are "us." A more complex one requires that we dive into American folklore. The scholarly field of Folklore may be defined loosely as exploring what we say, what we do, and what we believe. Following this schema, this course will probe the question of what it means to be "American folk" by examining how folklore informs and shapes the world around us and our everyday lives. More particularly, we ask how race and ethnicity, class and gender are encoded and contested through folk expression. Beginning with the question "who are the folk," we will look at classic and contemporary texts in folklore studies to explore how our food, our stories, our daily rituals, and our music, to name a few, interweave to create a complex, multilayered, and uniquely American folk. Readings pair specific genres with different theoretical approaches and include our jokes, urban legends, folktales, foodways, music, and material culture. Crucially, we seek to trouble popular notions of folklore as "antiquities" to question how the lens of Folklore studies may reveal how American culture not only consists of folklore but is constructed by it as folk forms are deployed in contemporary contexts, from Slenderman to Snopes to modern slave auctions. The course will entail several small collection projects to give students an understanding of the work a folklorist does in the field and how folklore is coproduced within a community, and a longer research project. This course satisfies the Humanities requirement for the master's program in American Culture Studies.

Same as U89 AMCS 478A

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH

---

**U98 MLA 5490 James Baldwin: Life, Letters & Legacy**

In his 1972 essay, *No Name in the Street*, James Baldwin recounts that he could never in good conscience just write, because he had never been just a writer. Indeed, Baldwin saw himself as a "public witness to the situation of black people," compelled to speak truth to power in whatever form he deemed necessary. Baldwin as: black, gay, man, American, author, activist, and so much more has served as an essential figure in theorizing the intersection of these presumably rigid concepts. In this respect, this course will center on Baldwin the thinker as much as Baldwin the author. We will examine his classic novels and essays as well as his work across many less-examined domains—theatre, sermon, dialogue, film, and short story. Moreover, while committing ourselves to close reading methods, we will situate Baldwin's works within

sociohistorical context and consider how he shaped, and was shaped by, events beginning with the Civil Rights Era through our precarious contemporary moment in which he remains, often tragically, a timely voice.

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH, GRES, GWRT

---

#### **U98 MLA 5497 Shakespeare and His Contemporaries**

Though we often read Shakespeare in isolation, he developed his art in the vibrant theatrical culture of late 16th- and early 17th-century London, whose audiences discovered his distinctive qualities in comparison with other playwrights. In this course, we will read plays both by Shakespeare and by some of his most interesting contemporaries — including Kydd, Marlowe, Jonson, Webster, Beaumont, and Fletcher — and consider why some plays are "of an age" and others "for all time." This course will count toward the major in English literature for day students.

Same as U65 ELit 497

Credit 3 units. UColl: ENE

---

#### **U98 MLA 5500 An Island with a View: Reimagining Cuba through Literature, Art, and Film**

In the wake of such momentous events as president Obama's visit to Cuba and Fidel Castro's death, for many Americans the island has advanced from the category of a "forbidden fruit" to a full-fledged reality. Now is a good time to ask not only "What is next for Cuba?" but also "What can we learn from its history and its present?" This course explores the multilayered Cuban realities—both on the island and in the diaspora—and the intertwined history of the United States and Cuba (Missile Crisis, Bay of Pigs, Guantánamo). Using a combination of literary texts (Carpentier, Cabrera Infante, Ponte, Bobes, Obejas, Morejón, Padura), films (Strawberry and Chocolate, Guantanamera, The Promise, and The New Art of Making Ruins), artwork (Mendieta, Bruguera, Garaicoa), political speeches, and unique documentary materials compiled by the instructor during her many research trips to Cuba, we will look at the island's "post-socialist" reality through the lens of its colonial and postcolonial past. Topics include ethnic and gender identities; the "myths" of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro; African-Cuban religions; popular music; political oppression and dissent; and migration and exile. We will also examine critical aspects of contemporary life in Cuba such as foreign tourism, food rationing, the dual-currency economy, the restoration of colonial Havana, education, and healthcare.

Credit 3 units. UColl: CD

---

#### **U98 MLA 5501 Combating Cruelty**

This seminar focuses on large-scale acts of violence such as war, torture, and genocide as they are expressed through "ordinary" acts of cruelty that degrade, isolate, exploit, and terrorize individuals. The class will analyze individual instances of envy, greed, anger, and brutality in novels depicting the early modern through the present, including Dunant, *Birth of Venus*; Racine, *Phèdre*; Laclós, *Dangerous Liaisons*; Zola, *Thérèse Raquin*; Faulkner, *Sound and the Fury*; Schlink, *The Reader*; Coetzee, *Disgrace*; and Barnes, *Sense of an Ending*, as well as examples of contemporary cinema by Kassovitz (*Hate*) and Haneke (*The White Ribbon*). Our goal is to consider the causes and effect of violence in order to appreciate aesthetic and ethical responses that combat the destructive effects of cruelty. Students enrolled in the DLA program should register for U98 581.

Credit 3 units.

---

#### **U98 MLA 554 Paris and New York**

Cultural icons, Paris and New York represent brilliant successes in art, theater, film, and urban design. We will study how the French and Americans define themselves through their premiere cities, notably in the works of leading writers, artists, and architects. The themes of innovation and tradition, order and disorder, integration and isolation

as represented by Emile Zola, Marcel Proust, Baron G.-E. Haussmann, Edouard Vuillard, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Alfred Stieglitz, Henry James, Jackson Pollock, Adam Gopnik, Woody Allen, and others will guide our examination of the powerful hold Paris and New York have on our imagination. We will study history as reflected in public spaces (monuments, museums, and the streets themselves), exploring how each city functions as a locus of collective memory even as it fashions the future.

Credit 3 units.

---

#### **U98 MLA 5565 From Mikado to Makudo: A Literary View of Japan**

This course will survey Japan's social and cultural history through selected literary works that span the seventh century (Mikado) to the present day (Makudo). Our readings — including fiction, poetry, drama, and personal writings — will serve as guides to key historical epochs: the aristocratic culture of the Heian era (*Tale of Genji*), the warrior society of the medieval era (*Tale of the Heike*), and the insular Tokugawa period (Basho's haiku). Novels by Soseki, Tanizaki, Mishima, and Oe will expose the complexities of modern Japan. Students will gain an appreciation of Japan's unique heritage, social complexity, and place in East Asia and the world today.

Credit 3 units. UColl: CD

---

#### **U98 MLA 566 The Experience of Modernity**

This course explores what it means to be modern. Our expansive study will engage the concept of radical change as it affects a range of historical periods and geographical areas. The course will consider how modernity entails a breakaway from tradition; the development of new intellectual, scientific, and geographic frontiers; and the experimentation with new technologies and art forms as a way of creating new futures and ruptures with the past. By examining questions of time, space, innovation, and translation, we will study key literary and cultural works that express a groundbreaking sense of modernity and revolution in ways that highlight epistemological, political, and social tensions. Works studied include Cervantes's "Don Quixote," Blake's poems, Wharton's "Age of Innocence," Conrad's "Heart of Darkness," Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway," Lorca's "Poet in New York," Achebe's "Things Fall Apart," and Lispector's "Hour of the Star." We will also discuss Dalí's collaboration with Bunuel in their film "An Andalusian Dog" ["Un Chien Andalou"], along with Kurosawa's "Rashomon" and other visual works that capture the inventions, uncertainties, and energy of the modern experience.

Credit 3 units.

---

#### **U98 MLA 567 Translating Worlds**

This course studies different forms of cultural translation, that is, the communication of knowledge, behavior, and language from one culture to another. We will examine how an author reworks earlier and foreign traditions, adapting ideas and practices for which there may be no direct equivalent in the author's own culture. In the new cultural setting, do the roles of men and women shift? Do questions of ethnicity, class, religion, and sexuality become more pronounced, or do they fade away? These questions will frame our study of historic cultural encounters, colonialism, exile, and other processes that shape modernity. Students will explore two dramatic points of cultural intersection: Tolkien's modern reworking of *Sir Orfeo*, a medieval version of the classical myth of the musician Orpheus and his wife Eurydice; and Goethe's *Italian Journey*, the journal of the German writer's experiences with the people, art, and history that he encountered during his travels. We will see how diaspora and migration shape perceptions in works by Alejo Carpentier (*The Kingdom of this World*), Salman Rushdie (*East/West*), and Jhumpa Lahiri (*Interpreter of Maladies*). The class will also learn how different scholarly and artistic fields address the concept of cultural translation, including cultural anthropology (James Clifford), film adaptation (Louis Malle's *Vanya on 42nd Street*, inspired by Chekhov's play), and colonial history (Vicente Rafael). In addition, we will discuss how digital technology

affects cultural translation today (Google Translate, and projects using geographic information system [GIS] technology). Students will consider challenges facing the humanities and the sciences as these technologies advance. Will it be possible to make all knowledge, and all culturally-specific information, universally accessible? No foreign language experience required.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 569 Film, Politics, and Aesthetics in the Global South**

This class introduces students to the cinema of industries outside the United States and the historically dominant markets of East Asia and Western Europe. Focused mostly on fiction films, the class explores the ways in which filmmakers around the world touch upon significant questions of our times -race, immigration, climate change, political strife-and develop new forms of filmmaking that seek new aesthetic pathways, distinct forms of cinematic experience and attention, and projects shielded from market pressures. Discussion will also focus on the ways in which this cinema, which rarely has access to movie theaters at a global scale circulates, through mainstream and alternative streaming platforms, including Netflix, MUBI and the Criterion Channel.

Credit 3 units. UColl: CD

---

**U98 MLA 5701 The Making of the Modern Catholic Church**

This course will look at three church councils that put their stamp on the Catholic Church at key moments in its history, making it what it is today. The first section will be dedicated to the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), which defined the high medieval church as an all-encompassing papal monarchy with broad powers over the lives of all Europeans Christian and non-Christian alike. In the second section, we will turn our attention to the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which responded to the threat posed by the Protestant Reformation by reforming the Catholic Church, improving clerical education, tightening ecclesiastical discipline, and defining and defending Catholic doctrine. We will conclude with a consideration of the largest church council ever, Vatican II (1962-1965), which reformed the liturgy and redefined the church to meet the challenges of the modern, multicultural, postcolonial world.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 572 Genre Cinema: The Art of Variation**

This seminar explores the role of genre as a powerful means of mainstream cinema to tell compelling stories and structure the viewer's identification. Even though genres such as the melodrama, the western, the romantic comedy, the musical, the science fiction film, the horror film, or the thriller are often seen as quite predictable staples of dominant filmmaking, they also inspire and allow for considerable formal experimentation and thematic departure. This seminar examines the logic of some of the most important genres of Hollywood filmmaking while at the same time emphasizing the creative possibilities of working with certain genre expectations. We discuss such classic representatives of certain genres as *Imitation of Life*, *Stagecoach*, *His Girl Friday*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, *42nd Street*, and *North By Northwest*, and then juxtapose these paradigmatic examples with more contemporary films reworking or pushing the limits of the classical genre system such as *Far from Heaven*, *Lone Star*, *Blade Runner*, *Dancer in the Dark*, and *Breathless*.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 575 From Buggy to Benz: Global Capitalism, Gender, and Race**

In this course, students will examine global capitalism, with particular attention given to how it intersects with gender, race, and place in specific historical moments. Using critical, historical, and ethnographic perspectives, we will consider the emergence of and changes in capitalism and how it relies on and reproduces particular gender,

racial/ethnic, and other hierarchies. Course materials will draw examples from around the world and will include novels, ethnographic and historical case studies, social theory, films, and articles from the popular media. Through written assignments, students demonstrate the ability to examine the impact of capitalism on the environment, health, indigenous and marginalized groups, policy, and access to education, jobs, housing, and other resources.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 576 Haunting the World: Refugees in Literature & Film**

As of 2019, 65.8 million people (or 1 in 113 individuals) had been forcibly displaced within their own countries or across borders. In this course, we will study literary texts, film, and other forms of cultural production that will provide a window into the complex lives of displaced individuals from World War II to the present. In addition to contextualizing the historical and legal significance of such terms as "refugee," "asylum," "sanctuary," "non-refoulement," and "forced displacement," our discussions will also allow us to engage with the broader meanings of concepts that include human rights, hospitality, identity, belonging, and citizenship. Our course will move chronologically from the early 20th century to the present; the last part of the semester will focus specifically on new forms of storytelling that have emerged as a response to the current "crisis."

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF, ACH

---

**U98 MLA 578 Representing Religion, Race, and Gender in Early Modern Latin America**

This seminar explores the history of religion, gender, and empire in Latin America, focusing primarily on the colonial period (1492-1821) but also including some precolonial materials. Through primary documents, secondary scholarship and student-centered discussion, we will consider connections between religious beliefs, gender norms and relations, and the ways that race, class, and gender intersected with ideas about religion, empire and power. We will study the clash of religions that occurred during the conquest and its terrible aftermath, the politics of evangelization, and how marginalized subjects such as women, African slaves, and Indigenous peoples navigated religious authoritarianism to develop their own spiritual beliefs and expressions. Finally, we will take a brief look at how some of these religious practices have persisted until the present day and what these legacies can tell us about questions of race and gender in a religious context in Latin America. This course will also introduce students to key research methods in the humanities and to the conventions of graduate-level writing necessary for completing the degree thesis.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 579 National Identity and the Visual Arts**

What is national identity? What does it mean to call oneself "an American," "a Moroccan," or "a Tahitian"? What elements comprise a national identity, and, more specifically, how do visual artists express them? This course will explore these questions in art and architecture from an array of periods and cultures, with an emphasis on the past 150 years and a special focus on art made after the Cold War. Readings in political theory will ground our study of specific artists whose works explore the tensions and complexities inherent in the construction of and challenges to national identities. Among the themes we will address are territory, history, language, ethnicity, immigration and emigration, "foreignness," colonization, exile, and diaspora. We will also touch on issues of intersectionality, considering how gender, religious and class identity can inflect one's sense of national belonging.

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACS, OLI



---

**U98 MLA 581 DLA Interdisciplinary Proseminar**

This gateway course to the DLA program provides training in analytic thinking and writing through critical examination, discussion, research, and progressive writing on interdisciplinary topics such as historical narrative, text and image, the life of the mind, the creative impulse, the good life, and other major themes that have guided scholarly investigation and research in many fields. Students will analyze works from at least four disciplines (e.g., literature, art history, film, history, philosophy, women and gender studies, religion, political science, anthropology, history of science) and write a progressive research paper, submitted and reviewed incrementally, that demonstrates comparative, analytic, and critical thinking.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 582 Black is...Black Ain't: Society, History, and the Politics of Race**

This course is framed by a simple contradiction. Race is "socially constructed," yet racial categories have very real social, economic, material, legal, and health consequences. Racial categories are rooted in history and culturally constructed through laws, the media, and various institutions. These categories are reproduced, subverted, and sometimes changed by people through socialization, media consumption, interaction, dialogue, protest, and political participation. Yet, what makes race real, animates it with so much power, and fosters its tenacious hold on much of the Western world's collective psyche? It is the fact that people largely believe that race has something to do with nature, biology, or rational science. Ironically, it is biology and the so-called natural sciences that provide the best evidence that there is no valid basis to organize people by racial categories. We will explore both race's historical construction and its contemporary manifestation as a crucial aspect of many places around the world and an integral component of people's identities. Drawing on classical and contemporary readings from Du Bois to Gould to Gilroy to contemporary ethnographies, we ask whether the logic of race has shifted over time, and, with that changed logic, how we can respond today to new configurations of race, science, technology, and inequality. Considered are the rise of evolutionary racism, debates about eugenics in the early 20th century, Nazi notions of "racial hygiene," nation-building projects and race in Latin America, colonial monuments, racialized state violence, and Black liberation such as the Black Lives Matter Movement. At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to critique contemporary ideas of biological notions of race; explain how race is socially constructed through laws, media, and popular culture; and understand that patterns of human diversity do not fit neatly into categories of race. Finally, students will begin to understand why race remains a powerful force in contemporary society.

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, OLI

---

**U98 MLA 583 Global Energy and the American Dream**

This course explores the historical, cultural, and political relationship between the United States and global energy politics. We focus primarily on the problem of fossil fuels (oil, coal, natural gas) and the challenge of transitioning to renewable energy (sun, wind, and water). Through international and US-based case studies, we learn about the social and technical dimensions of fossil fuel extraction, production, distribution, and use. We consider impacts on public health, politics, and the environment and how we are intimately connected to fossil fuels in daily life. The United States is the world's largest consumer of oil and energy (per capita). That makes it one of the contributors to climate change (and to some extent, militarism and war). A major contradiction is this: the United States' voracious demand for fossil-fuel based energy generates multiple kinds of violence both abroad and at home even though our culture tends to express love and desire for fossil fuel-dependent ways of life (trucks, gas stoves, SUVs, etc.). How might we think more deeply about the culture and politics of energy as a way of thinking more clearly about what a better relationship to energy and the climate might look like in the future?

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 584 Mixed Mediums: Gender in American Visual Culture**

This course will investigate how American visual culture has, across time, captured moments that have not only formed our collective historical memory, but defined, shaped, challenged, and contradicted our understanding of gender, race, class, and sexuality. Examining visual media ranging from photographs and paintings to television and film, to graphic novels and performance art, students will be introduced to gender, feminist, and visual culture theories, as well as contemporary American Studies approaches to visual analysis. Students will practice reading a variety of images as cultural texts gaining the ability to identify and utilize visual media in their own research and writing. This course will visit several St. Louis cultural institutions to explore first-hand how various visual medias are used by public historians and artists on a daily basis. By the end of the semester, students will have a strong working knowledge of the history of American visual culture and an understanding of some of the major theoretical trends in visual culture- and feminist-based studies.

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, GRES

---

**U98 MLA 5880 Against Development: International Affairs Otherwise**

One of the key tenets of 20th-century geopolitics -- from various models of modernization theory to contemporary understandings of neoclassical and neoliberal theory -- has been the ideal of development as a key goal to address economic and political inequalities in the world system. This course focuses on different lines of thinking that challenge this worldview. We examine the work of both global north dissident thinkers and global south traditions of thinking, such as dependency theory, decolonialism, and liberation philosophy. The course will depart from critiques of the idea of development as an extension of colonialism and imperialism by authors like John Patrick Leary and Arturo Escobar. It will continue to discuss critiques of the contemporary geopolitical and geo-economic orders from the perspective of global south countries through concepts such as necropolitics (Achille Mbembe), gore capitalism (Sayak Valencia) and slow violence (Rob Nixon). The course will conclude with the study of theories that propose postdevelopmental and counterdevelopmental models of economic organization and political engagement, including decolonialism (Macarena Gómez Barris and others), "Epistemologies of the South" (Boaventura de Sousa Santos) and "Neoliberalism from Below" (Verónica Gago).

Same as U85 IA 5880

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5911 Reading the Globe**

While literature from the United States and other English-speaking countries is translated into many languages across the world, only a very small percentage of literature published in English in the US is in translation. However, as readers, scholars and writers it is important that we go beyond the borders of our own national literary traditions and the English language and engage with the cultural contexts that the larger global literary landscape offers. Literary translation, moreover, goes beyond simply translating one text into another - it is an art form in itself. In this class, we will read literature from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas written in languages other than English. We will read and discuss them as novels in their own right and develop and strengthen our tools of literary analysis and close reading. However, we will also reflect on and study the question of translation and the theories that inform the task of the translator including. We will also look at translation concepts and debates including fidelity and foreignization as well as examine translation as activism, LGBTQ translation and translation's intersection with race and gender. This class will also offer a focus on research and writing conventions for graduate students

and will include: writing an abstract, writing an outline, peer review, citation, and preparing an annotated bibliography. Visits to the Writing Center and relevant research librarians are encouraged. No prior foreign language experience required.

Credit 3 units. UColl: GRES, GWRT

---

**U98 MLA 592 Decoding the City**

Does the space between a house and the sidewalk tell you something about class? Does a vacant lot on a dead-end street record the forced relocation of thousands of black residents? Can street names narrate the relationship between the growth of the city and national narratives of immigrant assimilation, continental expansion and world wars? The answer to these questions is yes, but it is far from obvious. The built environment of an American city like St. Louis can seem opaque and silent, when actually it is laden with social, economic, political, gender and racial meanings. This course unpacks St. Louis' built environment by drawing broad historic and theoretical readings on urban space to specific local sites. Readings will assist students in the interrogation of actual places in St. Louis through field visits, so that the streets become unquiet and the embedded meanings in plain sight. This is a hybrid course, with an online discussion component and weekly field work sessions. Attendance at these field work sessions is mandatory. The course counts toward the American Culture Studies major for day students, and fulfills the Humanities and Social Science requirements for the M.A. Program in American Culture Studies.

Same as U89 AMCS 492

Credit 3 units. UColl: ACH, ACS, HSM, HUS, OLH

---

**U98 MLA 5931 The Baroque of Milton, Rembrandt, and Bach**

In his magisterial *J.S. Bach*, Albert Schweitzer observes that we "classify the arts according to the material [artists] use to express the world around them." We describe tones for a musician, colors for a painter, and words for a poet. But "the material," he notes, "is secondary. [Each] is not only a painter, or only a poet, or only a musician, but all in one." In this course we will examine works by the poet Milton, the artist Rembrandt, and the musician J.S. Bach, three major figures of the Baroque era. We will examine how they conceive their role and the function of their works, as well as their treatment of both religious and secular subjects. We will also consider the rich variety of techniques that these artists employ to achieve the most complex and compelling rendering of subjects that extend from the mystery of divine justice in a dark world to the most intimate and searching self-examination. Works to include, among others, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes*; Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and *Art of the Fugue*; self-portraits by Rembrandt, as well as some of his Biblical paintings and etchings.

Credit 3 units.

---

**U98 MLA 5941 Milton**

This course analyzes the world of John Milton, arguably the greatest of English poets and also among the greatest of polymaths. The class will examine how, for Milton, extensive learning rhymed with magnificent poetry. Having read every significant book published up until his time in an attempt to educate himself "to perform justly, skillfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war," Milton produced an epic poem of such scope and power that "the world would not willingly let it die." We will closely read that poem, *Paradise Lost*, as well as his other major poems (*Paradise Regained*; *Samson Agonistes*), adding lesser poems and prose works to illuminate his development as a writer and thinker, and his relation to theological, literary, intellectual, and political currents of the 17th century.

Credit 3 units.

---