Doctor of Liberal Arts

We live today in a rich and varied culture. Every moral, social, political, and cultural question we face demands the broadest consideration we can give it, drawing from the multiplicity of methods and perspectives nurtured and cultivated in the many disciplines of a great university.

The Doctor of Liberal Arts (DLA) is designed for the experienced adult learner who wishes to pursue rigorous interdisciplinary study along with independent, scholarly reading and research. The degree is designed to cultivate interdisciplinary skills, intellectual habits, analytical and critical reasoning, effective writing, and broad-based decision making.

The DLA is primarily for working professionals who have already earned a master’s degree and who seek further intellectual enrichment while pursuing advanced graduate study on an evening, part-time basis. This degree neither constitutes a professional credential nor provides training for an academic career.

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Degree Requirements

Doctor of Liberal Arts

To earn the Doctor of Liberal Arts degree, a student must complete 45 credit hours after earning a relevant master’s degree, pass written and oral comprehensive examinations, and write and defend a thesis. There are 36 units of graduate course work, including two required DLA seminars, five concentration courses, and five elective courses. Students choose among four interdisciplinary concentrations to focus their studies: Textual Traditions, Historical Context, Visual Culture, or Global Perspectives. The DLA thesis (9 units) emphasizes original interpretation and synthesis.

Courses

Visit online course listings to view semester offerings for U96 DLA (https://courses.wustl.edu/CourseInfo.aspx?sch=U&dept=U96).

U96 DLA 600 Independent Work in DLA
Requires signed proposal, approved by program coordinator and dean in University College.
Credit variable, maximum 4 units.

U96 DLA 6012 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; fiction 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.
Same as U98 MLA 5012
Credit 3 units.

U96 DLA 605 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. Topic Fall 2017: DLA Interdisciplinary Proseminar: 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 Elegance of the Hedgehog and Foer’s Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close. The animated film 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.

U96 DLA 6050 Midlife Questing in the Odyssey and Don Quixote: The Long Road Home or Breaking Loose?
Same as U98 MLA 5403
Credit 3 units.
U96 DLA 606 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 by Means of 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, 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.
Same as U98 MLA 5117
Credit 3 units.

U96 DLA 6151 Hollywood on Hollywood
Same as U89 AMCS 5151
Credit 3 units. UColl: ACF

U96 DLA 620 DLA Counterpoints and Flashpoints
Topic varies each year.
Credit 3 units.

U96 DLA 621 Seminar: Literature and Religion
Same as L14 E Lit 521
Credit 3 units.

U96 DLA 6261 The American Renaissance
Literature of the mid-19th century with attention to social and intellectual backgrounds and the sources of the transcendentalist movement.
Same as L14 E Lit 426
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM Art: HUM

U96 DLA 630 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).
Same as U98 MLA 5300
Credit 3 units.

U96 DLA 6310 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 the way they represent? What is style in the arts and how do we understand the way it is used? What is 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.
Same as U98 MLA 5310
U96 DLA 633 Against the Grain: Transgression and Controversy in Modern Art
We examine the public controversies that surround the development of modern art over the last 150 years, to probe the question of the social functions of transgressive art. After reviewing key theories of the avant-garde, we analyze both the persona of the modern artist (Van Gogh, Picasso, Pollock) and the place of women artists in the revolutions of modernism (Bonheur, Cassatt, Kahlo). We next consider modernism’s testing of limits in asking what is (and is not) art (Duchamp and Brancusi). We study the most controversial exhibitions (from the First Impressionist Exhibition of 1874 to the Nazi Degenerate Art shows), and the challenges raised by modern artists’ treatment of the body and of politics. We end with debates waged over public art in St. Louis, and with recent controversies over public funding of contemporary art. No prior knowledge of art history required.
Same as U98 MLA 5301
Credit 3 units.

U96 DLA 639 Advanced Literary Theory
Literary Theory course
Same as L14 É Lit 439
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

U96 DLA 643 Imagining Germany in the Long Nineteenth 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 Patrioteer by Heinrich Mann; and The Jewish State by Theodor Herzl.
Credit 3 units.

U96 DLA 6450 Pilgrims and Seekers: American Spirituality from Transcendentalism to the New Age
The seminar focuses on the formation of “spirituality” in American culture from the transcendentalist world of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman on through more recent expressions of the “spiritual-but-not-religious” sensibility. For the purposes of this course, “spirituality” is usefully placed in quotation marks in order to emphasize its peculiar construction as something positively distinct from “religion” — a re-ordering of American religious thought and experience that we will explore in historical and contemporaneous terms. The social and political consequences of this turn to the spiritual over the religious will also be explored: for example, the consecration of liberal individualism, the environmental vision of nature mysticism, the blessing of a “bourgeois-bohemian” consumerism, and the negotiation of cultural pluralism.
Same as L57 RelPol 430
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

U96 DLA 6451 Introduction to American Culture Studies
An introduction to interdisciplinary approaches to the study of American culture. The class will examine the relationship between cultural criticism and scholarship on American culture, the history of the American studies and cultural studies movements, the simultaneous turn to “historicist” approaches in literary studies and to “textualist” approaches to historical studies, the moral and interpretive implications of the shift from a modernist to a postmodernist stance in cultural inquiry, and the challenges that multiculturalist and transnational perspectives pose to the study of a national American culture. Many of the readings will emphasize trends in cultural history, but will also include works in anthropology, art and architectural history, literary history, media studies, political and social theory, and religious studies.
Same as L98 AMCS 645
Credit 4 units.

U96 DLA 6451 Introduction to American Culture Studies
An introduction to interdisciplinary approaches to the study of American culture. The class will examine the relationship between cultural criticism and scholarship on American culture, the history of the American studies and cultural studies movements, the simultaneous turn to "historicist" approaches in literary studies and to "textualist" approaches to historical studies, the moral and interpretive implications of the shift from a modernist to a postmodernist stance in cultural inquiry, and the challenges that multiculturalist and transnational perspectives pose to the study of a national American culture. Many of the readings will emphasize trends in cultural history, but will also include works in anthropology, art and architectural history, literary history, media studies, political and social theory, and religious studies.
Same as L98 AMCS 645
Credit 4 units.

U96 DLA 6464 Medicine and Morality in Global Perspective
What does it mean to be sick? What does it mean to be 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 illnesses 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). 
Same as U98 MLA 5454 
Credit 3 units.

**U96 DLA 665 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 (Tales 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. 
Same as U98 MLA 5565 
Credit 3 units. UColl: NW

**U96 DLA 667 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. 
Same as U98 MLA 567 
Credit 3 units.

**U96 DLA 671 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, post-colonial world. 
Same as U98 MLA 5701 
Credit 3 units.

**U96 DLA 672 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. 
Same as U98 MLA 572 
Credit 3 units.