

MALS 601—Introduction to Graduate Liberal Studies

Thursday, 6-9 p.m.

Course description:

A gateway experience for incoming Master of Arts in Liberal Studies students. Students will learn the conventions and expectations of graduate-level reading, writing, research, and critical analysis and explore the concept of interdisciplinarity. Topics include documentation of sources, formulation and development of independent research projects, research methods, and the use of online databases. Students will explore liberal-studies topics typical of those taught in other MALS courses. The content will be interdisciplinary and/or intercultural, and the course methodology will include lecture, discussion, independent research, group projects, and varied forms of academic writing.

Course goals:

- Become familiar with the expectations and practice of academic writing, including proper documentation and citation of sources
- Understand how to read, evaluate and analyze source material at the graduate level
- Learn to formulate, develop and carry out a research project
- Become familiar with the use of online databases and other library resources
- Practice productive classroom discussion skills
- Hone presentation skills by sharing research findings with the class in the form of an oral and/or multimedia presentation
- Become acquainted with the UD campus and its resources, including the library and the Writing Center, campus activities, MALS students and faculty, and UD policies and procedures
- Understand the concept of interdisciplinarity in graduate study
- Explore the ways in which an interdisciplinary study of a particular subject fits into the concept of a graduate liberal arts program
- Reflect on the study of the liberal arts and the associated writing and research skills

General Guidelines:

Attendance and Emergency Absences

Attendance is crucial because participation in class discussions and activities comprises a large part of your grade. If you have an emergency or will be late, please let the instructor know so that other arrangements can be made.

Writing Center

The Writing Center in 017 Morris Library provides free one-on-one instruction to all students who have writing assignments. You can have 50 minute one-on-one appointments

with tutors during the day and in the evening. The Online Scheduler is accessible from www.writingcenter.udel.edu/for-graduate-students/graduate-student-writing-center.

Academic Integrity

Any work that you submit at any stage of the writing process—draft, thesis and outline, bibliography, etc. through the final version—must be your own; in addition, any words, ideas, or data that you borrow from other people and include in your work must be properly documented. Failure to do either of these things is plagiarism. The University of Delaware protects the rights of all students by insisting that individual students act with integrity. Accordingly, the University severely penalizes plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Students with Disabilities

Let one of us know if you have a documented disability that affects your performance in this class, and we will find a way to work together. Sit up front if you need to see or hear better. Ask us to repeat if you have trouble understanding. If your situation means you need extra time to complete written work, we can make adjustments as necessary.

E-Mail

Please check your email regularly because you might miss important information, such as a change in assignments. The instructors check their emails several times a day on weekdays.

Books

This link will provide information on the books for the course: <https://tinyurl.com/F18-MALS-601-010>. Please note that this link is to the UD bookstore, but you may buy the books from any source as long as the editions are the same. Please note that *Style* is the 7th edition—it may also be available at an advantageous price used from Amazon.

Grading

Part 1: Writing 30% (see below for details)

Part 2: Research 30% (see below for details)

Part 3: Interdisciplinary Study 15% (see below for details)

Writing Center Visit: 5%. At least one visit to the UD Writing Center is required. Make an appointment to discuss any of the assignments for the course. We'll provide a brief form for the Writing Center tutor to complete.

Final paper: 20% (see below for details)

Part 1: Writing in the MALS Program

Dorry Ross

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Office hours: Thursdays 4:30 to 6:00 pm and by appointment in room 105, 77 E. Main Street—use the back entrance. Keypad code will be distributed the first night of class.

Required:

1. *Little Penguin Handbook* by Lester Faigley, fourth edition
2. *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace* by Joseph Williams, 7th edition
3. *Verdict of Twelve* by Raymond Postgate
4. *Night of January 16* (The Final Revised Version, published by Penguin) by Ayn Rand
5. An online subscription to the *New York Times* (the University provides it!)
6. *12 Angry Men*, 1957 version, available on Amazon Prime and Youtube (and maybe the 1997 version as well—available the same places)
6. A package of 5x8 index cards—these are the large ones. They can be lined or unlined, any color. Always bring several blank ones to class.
7. A package of lined notebook paper

Description

This section of the course is designed to introduce you to writing in both the MALS program and the University of Delaware. You will read one book, one play, watch one or two movies, and do research in the *New York Times* online. In addition, you will write several short, focused papers (1-5 pages) in which you support your points with data from the assigned sources and informed personal opinions.

We will review the skills of summarizing, evaluating, and synthesizing source material. In addition, we will brush up on the characteristics of all effective writing: clarity, unity, coherence, organization, support, and audience awareness. I will also go over troublesome or confusing grammar and punctuation issues so that you can get your ideas across clearly and accurately.

Format

To make this class successful, we will spend much of our time wallowing in complexity as we discuss the readings. In addition, you will also be doing in-class and group writing activities as well as evaluating and revising not only your own writing but also that of your classmates. Also—because we all improve our writing skills by revising our written work—you will have a

chance to revise all your papers except the last one. In addition, I encourage you—if possible—to have an individual conference with me outside of class.

Grading

For this section of the course, papers will count for 60% of your grade, and class participation will count for 40%.

Papers

All papers must be typed, double-spaced with 1-inch margins in 12-point font using Times New Roman, Calibri, or Cambria. The response papers should be between 1 and 3 pages, the long paper between 5 and 7 pages. If you need a little extra space, that's okay.

All papers should have a works cited page. **Good News:** We will learn how to do this in class, using the handbook.

MEETINGS

August 30

Introduction to the course, grammar, punctuation, sources, and clear and interesting writing.
How to use *Little Penguin* for grammar and punctuation.

For next week:

Read *Verdict of 12*

Read *Style*, pp 1-26. The section on gender and language on page 27 and 28 is now out of date. I will take care of that in class.

Introductory Paragraphs

Writing Assignments

1. Evaluate the book, using no more than two criteria of your choice. Be sure to define your criteria. It should be no more than 2.5 pages. Citations are not necessary.
2. Write a two-page paper discussing a juror who interested you, evaluating her or his impartiality and contribution to the verdict. Citations are not necessary.

September 6

Discuss *Verdict of 12*.

Little Penguin: pp. 58-71, using sources, etc.

For next week:

Style: pp. 33-52. Exercise 3.3, 3.4 (**only** identify the clear sentence). You can do these in the book. You won't be handing them in.

Little Penguin Handbook. Chapter 14, in-text citations, and works cited. Just be familiar with it. We will go over it and learn how to use it in class.

Read *The Night of January 16*

Writing Assignment: After reading the play, in no a one- or two-page paper, tell me how you would have voted. Be sure to provide support. First person is acceptable; please provide citations.

September 13

Discuss *The Night of January 16*.

For next week:

Watch 1957 version of *12 Angry Men* (available on YouTube or Amazon Prime).

Style: Chapters 7 and 8, but only through page 150. Do exercises 7.1, 7.2. and 8.2, but only the first 4 sentences of each. You can write in the book because you won't be handing these in.

Writing Assignment: In a two- or three-page paper, explore how *this* jury would have decided one of the two readings we have discuss. Citations not needed.

Extra Credit: Watch the 1997 version of *12 Angry Men*. Write a 2-3 page paper discussing/comparing the two movies. We will talk about ways to do this in class.

September 20

Style Chapter 12, pp. 188-95. Exercises 10.1 and 10.2.

Murder Cases assigned, drawing for prosecution or defense for out-of-class paper.

For next week:

Little Penguin Handbook, Chapter 5, pp. 13-19, writing an argument.

Writing Assignment: Write a chronological history of the murder. Citations necessary.

Work on strategies for writing an argument.

What do you want to work on/discuss?

September 27

Style Epilogue, pp. 209-220.

Group work.

Progress reports.

In-class essay, arguing the other side of your murder case.

For next week:

Murder paper due.

Come prepared with questions for next week's guest speaker.

October 4: Guest Lecture on Interdisciplinary Study

Final part 1 paper due.

Meet Aimee Gee, instructor for research section of class.

Guest lecture: In class on **October 4 and November 29**, we will have guest lecturers who are doing exemplary interdisciplinary work at UD. They will discuss with the class the opportunities and challenges of interdisciplinarity from the perspective of their respective disciplines and tell us about the interdisciplinary projects they are working on. These will be informal sessions with lots of time for us to ask questions and interact.

The 10/4/18 guest speaker will be **Dr. Tom Powers**, Director, Center for Science, Ethics and Public Policy (www.sepp.ucel.edu), Associate Professor, Departments of Philosophy and Public Policy and Administration and Delaware Biotechnology Institute.

NOTE: You will write a one page reflection paper about either the October 4 or November 29 speaker, due 12/6 (see November 29 for assignment details).

Part 2: Interdisciplinary Graduate Research

Aimee Gee

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Description: In this part of the course, you will learn about interdisciplinary research methods, develop research topics, and engage in research using UD Library resources. Readings will include theoretical and practical approaches to interdisciplinarity. Short writing assignments will help you reflect on your academic and professional experiences in preparation for interdisciplinary graduate research.

Papers: All papers in this section are brief reflective writing assignments, i.e., expressing your thoughts and experiences while engaging with the course materials. They are designed to help prepare you for the research prospectus assignment due at the end of the course. Papers should be 1-2 pages and use the same formatting as in the first part of the course. Bring a printed copy of your paper to class with you on the due date.

Readings: All readings will be available as links or PDF files on our Canvas site by 9/6. You can print the readings or read them on a screen, depending on your preference. Either way, bring them to class so that you can refer to the text during discussion.

Grading: Within this section of the course, papers will count for 50 percent of your grade and participation will count for 50 percent. Participation will involve sharing ideas from your reflective writing, discussing the ideas of your classmates, discussing the readings, and completing in-class activities.

Technology: If you have a laptop, you should bring it to class. If you do not have a laptop, let me know so that I can plan activities accordingly.

MEETINGS

October 11: Defining Interdisciplinarity

DUE: Reflective Writing (1-2 pages)

Choose one of the topics below, and consider it from the perspective of your professional or academic background. If you were starting research from this perspective, what kinds of questions would you ask? What types of evidence would you need in order to answer those questions? Which other professions and/or academic disciplines might be able to provide you with useful information on this topic?

- Extreme weather events
- Government accountability / transparency
- Artificial intelligence and automation

READING: Latucca, "[Considering Interdisciplinarity](#)"; Szostak, "[The Interdisciplinary Research Process](#)"

You will share your reflective writing responses; discuss definitions and features of interdisciplinary research; create a RefWorks account.

October 18: Interdisciplinary Scholarly Conversations (MORRIS LIBRARY, ROOM 116A)

DUE: Reflective Writing (1-2 pages)

Choose two of the readings for this week and discuss each as an example of interdisciplinary research. Consider any information provided about the author(s), the journal where the article was published, the sources cited in the article, and the nature of the research project itself.

READING: Ellis and Albrecht, "[Climate change threats to family farmers' sense of place and mental wellbeing](#)"; Sharma, "[Appreciating migration flows for health-social services planning](#)"; Appleby, Wilson, and Swinton, "[Spiritual Care in General Practice](#)"

You will describe features of interdisciplinary research publications; use library resources to find sources cited in a literature review; import source citations into RefWorks.

October 25: Interdisciplinary Research Strategies

DUE: Reflective Writing (1-2 pages)

Describe an interdisciplinary research topic you would like to investigate. What makes it interdisciplinary? What questions will you consider? What interests you most about this topic? Be ready to share your research topic with the class.

READING: Jacobs, "Specialization, Synthesis, and the Proliferation of journals" [PDF], Sage Research Methods: "[Developing a Researchable Question](#)"

You will discuss research topic ideas; explore strategies for refining research questions; brainstorm search terms and identify databases to search; continue collecting relevant sources in RefWorks.

November 1: Integrating Research and Writing

DUE: Reflective Writing (1-2 pages)

Read two of the sources you have discovered in your research. For each one, summarize the argument, say why the source seems authoritative, and describe how you could use the information in writing about your topic.

READING: two sources relevant to your topic to discuss in this week's reflective writing (above)

You will discuss strategies for integrating research from sources into your writing; practice creating citations and bibliographies in RefWorks.

November 8: Writing a Research Prospectus

DUE: Reflective Writing (1-2 pages)

As you continue searching for sources and collecting them in RefWorks, reflect on your experience. What was a research challenge you encountered? What was a successful strategy you used? How have you refined your research question?

READING: Moore, "Write the Proposal" [PDF]; Sage Research Methods: "[Research Design](#)"

You will share research strategies, challenges, and successes; receive instructions for the prospectus assignment (to be workshopped on 11/15, due on 12/6).

Part 3: Interdisciplinary Study and the MALS Program

Tara Kee

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November 15: Final Paper Workshop

Please bring a draft of your final paper (or at least the introductory part). We will answer questions and “workshop” the papers in small groups.

For next class: Come prepared with questions for the guest speaker on 11/29/18.

November 22: Thanksgiving, no class

November 29: Guest Speaker on Interdisciplinary Study

Tonight we have the second guest lecturer who will talk about the exemplary interdisciplinary work he does at UD. This will be an informal session with lots of time for us to ask questions and interact.

The 11/29/18 guest speaker will be **Jon Cox**, National Geographic Explorer, an assistant professor in the Department of Art at the University of Delaware, Board Member of the Dorobo Fund for Tanzania and Board member of the Amazon Center for Environmental Education and Research.

Guest speaker assignment: Write a one-page reflection on the guest speaker you found most interesting. What intrigued you? What surprised you? Can you draw parallels to any work you’ve done? **Due 12/6.**

Research prospectus due next week.

December 6: MALS Student/Alumni Panel

The last class on 12/6 will be a panel of MALS alumni who will offer their perspectives on getting the most out of the MALS program. They will tell you what they wish they had known when they started the program, how they chose their thesis/project topic, what was most helpful to them, etc. Ask them whatever you want!

Research prospectus and guest speaker reflection due tonight.