MALS 601—Introduction to Graduate Liberal Studies
Thursday, 6-9 p.m., Old College 122

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 writing and research skills associated with it
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.

Late Work

No late work will be accepted unless previous arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the due date.

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 (Links to an external site.). An appointment at the Writing Center is a requirement for the course. Please see details on the next page under Grading.

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 University of Delaware 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

Books are available from the UD bookstore, but you may buy the books from any source as long as the editions are the same. The required texts are:

3. *Verdict of Twelve* by Raymond Postgate

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. A form for the Writing Center tutor to complete is at the end of the syllabus. Please return the form to Tara Kee.

Final Assignment: 20%. The final assignment is to write a prospectus of 5-7 pages for a hypothetical research project on an interdisciplinary topic. The research question, research methods, and sources you explore in the second part of the course will form the basis of your proposal. This assignment is intended to help you practice skills you will need to write successful research papers in future courses and to complete the capstone thesis or project at the end of the MALS program. You will find the complete Research Project Prospectus Assignment at the end of this syllabus.

Note: Please turn assignments in on paper rather than in electronic form.
Part 1: Writing in the MALS Program

Christienne Woods

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Required:

3. *Verdict of Twelve* by Raymond Postgate
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)
7. 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.
8. 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, much of our time will be spent 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.

CLASS MEETINGS

August 29

Introduction to the course, grammar, punctuation, sources, and clear and interesting writing.

How to write introductory paragraphs.

How to use *Little Penguin* for grammar and punctuation.

For next week:

Read *Verdict of 12*

Read *Style*, pp 1-27

Introductory Paragraphs

Writing Assignments

1. Raymond Postgate opens his novel with a quote from Karl Marx. “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary their social existence determines their consciousness.” In no less than 2 and no more than 3 pages, explain the meaning of this quote in detail. Next, give examples from the novel of 2 types of “social existence” (social class, economic class, gender, religious belief, etc.), and how that "existence dictates the characters' consciousness."
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 5**

Discuss *Verdict of 12*.

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

For next week:

*Style*: pp. 28-46. 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 more than a 2.5-page paper, tell me how you would have voted. Be sure to provide support. First person is acceptable; please provide citations.

**September 12**

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 do an exercise that I will hand out in class or post later.

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.

**September 19**

*Style* Chapter 12, pp. 176-181. Exercises 12.1 and 12.2.

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

For next week:

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 26**

*Style* chapter 8 exercise 8.2

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 3: 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 3 and November 14**, 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.

**NOTE:** You will write a one page reflection paper about either the October 3 or November 14, due 12/5 (see November 14 for assignment details).
Part 2: Interdisciplinary Graduate Research

Aimee Gee

gee@udel.edu

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 intended to help prepare you for the research prospectus assignment due at the end of the course. Papers should be 2-3 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 on our Canvas site. 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, responding thoughtfully to the ideas of your classmates and the assigned 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.

CLASS MEETINGS

October 10: Defining Interdisciplinarity

DUE: Reflective Writing (2-3 pages)

Choose one of the topics below. What concerns and questions do people of your professional or academic background have about this issue? What types of information do they gather to inform themselves and/or share with others? Which other professions
and/or academic disciplines might be able to provide you with useful information on this topic?

- Extreme weather events
- Government accountability
- Technological advancement and automation

READING: Latucca, “Considering Interdisciplinarity (Links to an external site.)”; Menken & Keestra, “The Interdisciplinary Research Process (Links to an external site.)”

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

October 17: Interdisciplinary Scholarly Conversations (MORRIS LIBRARY, ROOM 116A)
DUE: Reflective Writing (2-3 pages)

Choose two of the readings for this week and discuss each as an example of interdisciplinary research. Consider the authors’ credentials, the journal where the article was published, the types of 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 (Links to an external site.)”; Sharma, “Appreciating migration flows for health-social services planning (Links to an external site.)”; Appleby, Wilson, and Swinton, “Spiritual Care in General Practice (Links to an external site.)”

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 24: Interdisciplinary Research Strategies
DUE: Reflective Writing (2-3 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: Winowiecki et al., “Tools for Enhancing Interdisciplinary Communication (Links to an external site.)”; Sage Research Methods: “Developing a Researchable Question (Links to an external site.)”

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.

October 31: Integrating Research and Writing
DUE: Reflective Writing (2-3 pages)

Using criteria from the guide in this week’s reading, read and evaluate one of the sources you have discovered in your research. Summarize the argument, explain its strengths and limitations, and describe how you could use the information in writing about your topic. Be sure to include a citation for the source you are discussing.

READING: Lyall et al., “A Short Guide to Evaluating Interdisciplinary Research (Links to an external site.)”; one source 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 7: Writing a Research Prospectus
DUE: Reflective Writing (2-3 pages)

Create a bibliography of at least three sources relevant to your project using RefWorks, and reflect on your research experience. What was a challenge you encountered? What was a successful strategy you used? How has your research question or focus changed during the process?
READING: Blair, “Writing the Proposal (Links to an external site.)”; Denicolo & Becker, “What Should Be Included in the Methodology / Research Implementation Sections? (Links to an external site.)”

You will share research strategies, challenges, and successes; discuss instructions for the prospectus assignment (to be workshopped the week of 11/21, due on 12/5).
Part 3: Interdisciplinary Study and the MALS Program
Tara Kee
twkee@udel.edu

CLASS MEETINGS

November 14: Guest Speaker on Interdisciplinary Study
Tonight we have the second guest lecturer, Jon Cox, who will talk about the exemplary interdisciplinary work he does at UD. Jon is assistant professor of Art & Design and a National Geographic Explorer who has directed more than 20 photographic study abroad programs across the globe. His biography can be found at https://www.art.udel.edu/people/faculty/joncox (Links to an external site.). This will be an informal session with lots of time for us to ask questions and interact.

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 12/5.

November 21: Research Prospectus Workshop
In lieu of an in-classroom session this week we will break into small groups (to be announced) and “workshop” the final prospectus. We will electronically exchange drafts and you will comment on each other’s work using a rubric which we will supply.

November 28: Thanksgiving, no class
Research prospectus due next week.

December 5: MALS Student/Alumni Panel
The last class on 12/5 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.
Research Project Prospectus Assignment

Due: 12/5/19

The final assignment for MALS601: Introduction to Graduate Liberal Studies is to write a prospectus for a hypothetical research project on an interdisciplinary topic using the research question and sources you explored in the second part of the course.

This assignment is intended to help you practice skills you will need to write successful research papers in future courses and to complete the capstone thesis or project at the end of the MALS program.

The prospectus must include the following sections:

• Introduction
  o introduces your problem or research question
  o provides necessary context and background information, including key definitions
• Literature review
  o discusses at least three scholarly sources relevant to the project
  o explains what essential information or perspectives they contribute to the project
• Design
  o discusses a plan for carrying out the research project
  o may describe how data will be collected and analyzed
  o may define theoretical approaches
• Conclusion
  o anticipates research findings
  o discusses who will benefit from the research
  o may suggest future directions for research

In addition to the essential components above, the prospectus will be graded on the following criteria:

• Uses MLA citation style correctly.
• Is written in a clear and concise style.
• Avoids errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
• Length: 5-7 pages, plus bibliography.

Submission of rough drafts prior to the final deadline encouraged!
WRITING CENTER VISIT CONFIRMATION FORM

This is to confirm that ___________________________ has completed a one-on-one tutorial appointment at the UD Writing Center on _____________.

_________________________________________
UD Writing Center Representative

MALS Students: Please return this form to Tara Kee (in class; by mail to 77 E. Main Street, Newark DE 19711; or scanned and attached to an email to twkee@udel.edu).