Master of Arts Program in the Humanities

Director

- Malynne Sternstein, Associate Professor of Russian and East European Studies, Associate in Cinema and Media Studies, Affiliate in Germanic Studies and Chair of the Fundamentals Program in the College

Deputy Director

- Hilary Strang, Lecturer, English Language and Literature

The Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (MAPH) is an intensive one-year interdisciplinary program leading to the A.M. degree. MAPH is designed to address the diverse needs and interests of intellectual generalists and specialists who may benefit from a year of intensive work in the humanities. Many MAPH students are recent college graduates. Others are professionals at mid-career, freelance writers, or performers. They hold undergraduate degrees from public and private institutions throughout the world in disciplines ranging from biology to English to marketing. Others come with extensive experience in non-academic fields, including independent film-making, politics, science, non-profit work, and business.

Many students in MAPH plan to continue their studies at the doctoral level in preparation for a career in university teaching and research. For these students, MAPH provides an ideal setting for clarifying their academic and professional goals and offers a year of intensive preparation for competitive Ph.D. programs.

For students interested in careers at cultural institutions and in cultural policy, publishing, journalism, business, politics, or secondary school or community college teaching and the full spectrum of the nonprofit sector, MAPH’s emphasis on critical writing, analytical thinking, scholarly research, and flexible cultural perspectives is invaluable.

Degree Requirements

Requirements for the A.M. degree include:

- The fall quarter MAPH Core Course, Foundations of Interpretive Theory (known to MAPH students as “Core”). Core begins two weeks before regular University classes and covers seminal works by thinkers such as Freud, Lacan, and Marx. It is taught by the MAPH Director and Deputy Director and may include guest lectures by distinguished
faculty members from different disciplines. The course is designed to give MAPH students a shared base for their further study.

- Seven elective courses chosen from the Division of the Humanities, Social Sciences, or the other divisions and professional schools. The choice of these courses is left largely to the student, although a program of study will be designed in consultation with and approved by the student’s preceptor and other faculty advisers. Some students concentrate their courses in one field of study; others take a wide-ranging variety of courses in multiple disciplines. Most programs of study fall somewhere in between these two extremes.

- A master’s thesis of 25 to 35 pages, produced under the supervision of a faculty thesis adviser and a preceptor, and completed toward the end of the spring quarter. In conjunction with thesis preparation, students take a thesis workshop, which involves small group meetings focused on the development of thesis topics and the writing of the thesis. MAPH thesis projects range from traditional research papers to creative works accompanied by a critical assessment.

Preceptors

Preceptors are advanced graduate students or recent Ph.D. graduates who oversee the progress of 10-12 MAPH students. Each student is assigned a preceptor for the academic year. In addition to serving as a general adviser, the preceptor leads small discussion groups in connection with the Core course and leads the winter and spring thesis workshops. Preceptors also may teach courses in the winter and spring quarters specially designed for MAPH students.

Admission

Applicants to MAPH must meet the general divisional requirements for admission and must submit a critical writing sample of no more than 15 pages. Students applying to the MAPH Creative Writing Option must also submit a substantial creative writing sample in their chosen genre (e.g., several poems, a short story, a chapter from a work of longer fiction in progress, a play, or a 10-15 page work of creative nonfiction).

To apply, click here (https://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/admissions/apply-now).

Contact

MAPH Website: http://maph.uchicago.edu/
Email: ma-humanities@uchicago.edu
Phone: (773) 834-1201

Master of Arts Program in the Humanities Courses

MAPH 30100. Foundations of Interpretive Theory. 100 Units.
No description available.
MAPH 30200. Thesis Writing Workshop. 000 Units.
No description available.

MAPH 30400. Thesis Writing Workshop. 100 Units.
No description available.

MAPH 31414. MAPH Core Course: Contemporary Analytic Philosophy. 100 Units.
This course is designed to provide MAPH students with an introduction to some recent and ongoing debates between philosophers working in the analytic tradition. The course is, however, neither a history nor an overview of analytic philosophy. Instead, we will focus on three different debates, spending about three weeks on each. We will likely consider one debate in metaphysics (on the freedom of the will), one in metaethics (on “constitutivism”), and one in epistemology (on the nature of knowledge and reasons for belief).
Instructor(s): K. Davey Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): This course is open only to MAPH students. MAPH students who wish to apply to Ph.D. programs in philosophy are strongly urged to take this course.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 31414

MAPH 32001. Teaching Precollegiate Philosophy. 100 Units.
This course will consider the practices of philosophy through a critical examination of different approaches to teaching precollegiate philosophy. Philosophy at the precollegiate level is common outside of the United States, and there is a growing movement in the US to try to provide greater opportunities, in both public and private schools, for K–12 students to experience the joys of philosophizing. But what are the different options for teaching precollegiate philosophy and which are best? That is the main question that this course will address. Students in this course will also have the opportunity to include an experiential learning component by participating in the UChicago Winning Words precollegiate philosophy program. A and B.
Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Course is open to undergraduates and MAPH students.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 22001

MAPH 32209. Philosophies of Environmentalism and Sustainability. 100 Units.
Some of the greatest ethical and political challenges confronting the world today are related to environmental issues: for example, climate change, loss of biodiversity, the unsustainable use of natural resources, and other threats to the well-being of both present and future generations. Using both classic and contemporary works, this course will highlight some of the fundamental and unavoidable philosophical questions informing such environmental issues. Can a plausible philosophical account of justice for future generations be developed? What counts as the ethical treatment of non-human animals? What does the term “natural” mean, and can natural environments as such have moral standing? A and B

Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Course is open to undergraduates and MAPH students.
Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 22201, ENST 22209, GNSE 22204, PLSC 22202, PHIL 22209
MA PH 32250. Philosophy: Practice, Form and Genre. 100 Units.
This course provides an introduction to philosophy through a consideration of the extraordinary diversity of its historical pedagogical practices and literary (and non-literary) forms and genres. “Philosophy” has been everything from a way of life to an academic profession, and “philosophizing” has been conducted in such forms and genres as Socratic conversation, scholastic debate, lectures, group discussions, dialogues, aphorisms, fables, poetry, meditations, novels, reviews, essays, treatises, music, and more. Cultivating some sense of this diversity is crucial to understanding many of the deep differences between philosophical perspectives, past and present. A and B
Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Course is open to undergraduates and MAPH students.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 22515

MA PH 33000. Methods and Issues in Cinema Studies. 100 Units.
This course offers an introduction to ways of reading, writing on, and teaching film. The focus of discussion will range from methods of close analysis and basic concepts of film form, technique and style; through industrial/critical categories of genre and authorship (studios, stars, directors); through aspects of the cinema as a social institution, psycho-sexual apparatus and cultural practice; to the relationship between filmic texts and the historical horizon of production and reception. Films discussed will include works by Griffith, Lang, Hitchcock, Deren, Godard.
Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 48000, CMST 40000

MA PH 33700. History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960. 100 Units.
The center of this course is film style, from the classical scene breakdown to the introduction of deep focus, stylistic experimentation, and technical innovation (sound, wide screen, location shooting). The development of a film culture is also discussed. Texts include Thompson and Bordwell’s *Film History: An Introduction*; and works by Bazin, Belton, Sitney, and Godard. Screenings include films by Hitchcock, Welles, Rossellini, Bresson, Ozu, Antonioni, and Renoir.
Instructor(s): D. Morgan Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required. Required of students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies.
Note(s): CMST 28500/48500 strongly recommended
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 28600, ARTH 38600, ARTV 26600, CMLT 22500, CMLT 32500, CMST 48600, ENGL 29600, ENGL 48900, CMST 28600
MAPH 34010. Expanded Arts, 1958-1978. 100 Units.
During the 1960s and 1970s, many artists challenged traditional media, transgressed disciplinary boundaries, and revolutionized the ways that art is produced, exhibited, and experienced. Through a mixture of overview and case studies, this seminar will focus on key international developments in this process, including Fluxus, Happenings, New Music, Performance, Expanded Cinema, “Structural” film, Experiments in Art and Technology, Land Art, artists’ books and publications, and more. Taught in coordination with three related exhibitions on view concurrently at the Smart Museum of Art, Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society, and Special Collections Research Center.
Instructor(s): J. Proctor Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 34010, ARTV 20410, ARTV 30410, ARTH 24010

MAPH 34800. Poetics. 100 Units.
In this course, we will study poetry “in the abstract.” We will study various efforts on the part of philosophers, literary critics, and poets themselves to formulate theories of poetic discourse. We will examine a range of historical attempts to conceptualize poetry as a particular kind of language practice, from Aristotle to Adorno and beyond. But we will also question the very project of thinking about “poetics” as opposed to “poetry” or “poems.” Is it possible to theorize the art form without doing violence to the particularity—and peculiarity—of individual poems themselves?
Instructor(s): J. Wilkinson Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): MAPH Poetics Core
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 34800, ENGL 34800

MAPH 36000. History of International Cinema I: Silent Era. 100 Units.
This course introduces what was singular about the art and craft of silent film. Its general outline is chronological. We also discuss main national schools and international trends of filmmaking.
Instructor(s): T. Gunning Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required. Required of students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies.
Note(s): This is the first part of a two-quarter course.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 28500, ARTH 38500, ARTV 26500, ARTV 36500, CMLT 22400, CMLT 32400, CMST 48500, ENGL 29300, ENGL 48700, CMST 28500
MAPH 36750. Anxiety. 100 Units.
The phenomenon of anxiety emerged as one of the leading psychological disorders of the 20th and 21st centuries. Worrying ourselves into the realm of the pathological, we now have a requisite measure of anxiety for every prescribed stage of life. But why are we so anxious? Considering its prevalence in everyday life, the concept and theories of anxiety have been employed surprisingly seldom as a way into film, fiction, and art. In this course we examine the modern origin of contemporary discourses specific to anxiety and their unique manifestation in cultural artifacts. To understand the complex of anxiety in the so-called Western world, we rely on the theories of Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, and Alenka Zupančič; fiction by Stoker, Schnitzler, Kafka, and Sebald; and film by Haneke, Kubrick, Ophuls, and Hitchcock. We will also have guest speakers from the fields of clinical psychiatry, geriatric medicine, philosophy, and comparative anthropology.
Instructor(s): M. Sternstein, A. Flannery Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Third- or fourth-year standing
Note(s): English majors: This course fulfills the 1830-1940 (G) and Theory (H) distribution requirements.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 24260, GRMN 26715, BPRO 26750

MAPH 39411. Consequentialism from Bentham to Singer. 100 Units.
Are some acts wrong "whatever the consequences"? Do consequences matter when acting for the sake of duty, or virtue, or what is right? How do "consequentialist" ethical theories, such as utilitarianism, address such issues? This course will address these questions by critically examining some of the most provocative defenses of consequentialism in the history of philosophy, from the work of the classical utilitarians Bentham, Mill, and Sidgwick to that of Peter Singer, one of the world's most influential living philosophers and the founder of the animal liberation and effective altruism movements. Does consequentialism lend itself to the Panoptical nightmares of the surveillance state, or can it be a force for a genuinely emancipatory ethics and politics? A and B
Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Course is open to undergraduates and MAPH students.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 29411, PHIL 29411

MAPH 40201. Topics in Contemporary Theory and Criticism. 100 Units.
This seminar focuses on key theories and theoretical debates in the critical discussion of contemporary art. Through close examinations of selected texts, exhibitions, and artworks, we will engage with a set of concepts and concerns that have shaped the discourse around cultural production in recent decades. Rather than presenting a comprehensive survey, the seminar will involve intensive investigation of certain key positions and debates and their relevance for thinking about artistic practice today.
Instructor(s): J. Proctor Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 30201, ARTV 20201, ARTV 40201, ARTH 20201
MAPH 44319. Writing Images/Picturing Words. 100 Units.
What is the relationship between reading and looking? To what extent are all texts images, and all images texts? What are the cognitive, phenomenological, social, and aesthetic consequences of foregrounding the pictorial aspect of alphabetical characters? How do textual and visual images compare to our mental visualizations? In this arts studio course, students will construct original works of literary and visual art that "picture language" in order to investigate the overlapping functions of text and image. Studying works by contemporary visual artists like Alison Knowles and Jenny Holzer, and practicing poets such as Susan Howe and Tan Lin, we will frame our artistic and literary practice within the ongoing conversation between word and image in modern culture. The course will feature visits to our studio by contemporary poets and visual artists, who will provide critiques of student work and discussion of their own ongoing projects. Faculty members working at the intersection of word and image will also visit the class to help us frame our creative practice within a critical, historical, and theoretical context. Students will submit a final project, which may be accompanied by a critical background essay, at the end of the term.
Instructor(s): S. Reddy and J. Stockholder Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor required. Interested students, please email faculty a paragraph about your background and interest in the material.
Equivalent Course(s): CDIN 44319, ENGL 44319, ARTV 44319

MAPH 46000. Teaching in the Community College. 100 Units.
Community colleges serve as an important entry point to higher education for many Americans. As open-access institutions, they take students regardless of their performance in high school or its equivalent and serve as a second educational chance for many. Because community colleges are often heavily subsidized by taxpayers, and because classes are relatively small and taught by credentialed faculty, students have an opportunity for a low-cost, high-quality education. Many MAPH students identify with the community college's academic mission and ideals of democratic access.

MAPH 46000, "Teaching in the Community College," prepares students both for the teaching job market and the classroom. Students examine the history and social location of the community college and the sometimes troubling contradictions embedded in its mission. The course raises some core questions of teaching and educational justice, introducing key figures in critical pedagogy and some important voices in recent debates in higher education. Students also prepare a teaching portfolio, including a sample syllabus, resume, and cover letter, and lead a teaching demonstration.
Instructor(s): TBD Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Open only to MAPH students. Instructor consent required.
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.