Master of Arts Program in the Humanities

Director

- Hilary Strang, Senior Lecturer, Humanities and Affiliate Faculty, Department of English, Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality

OVERVIEW

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 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.

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

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for the 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 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. With good reason, students can instead take eight courses and complete an additional assignment rather than writing a thesis.

TWO-YEAR LANGUAGE OPTION

MAPH offers students the option to intensively study language over the course of two academic years and three summers through the Two-Year Language Option (TLO). TLO students complete the traditional MAPH curriculum during their first academic year, but must also take one language course at the intermediate or advanced level each quarter. During the second year, students take nine courses, six of which must be continued language study. Students have the option to take courses through the Summer Language Institute or to study abroad for three summers -- the summer before the program begins, the summer between the first and second academic year, and the summer following the second academic year.

PRECEPTORS

Preceptors are post-doctoral instructors or doctoral candidates 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 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).

**INFORMATION ON HOW TO APPLY**

The application process for admission and financial aid for all graduate programs in the Humanities is administered through the divisional Office of the Dean of Students. The Application for Admission and Financial Aid, with instructions, deadlines, and department specific information is available online at: http://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/admissions.

Questions pertaining to admissions and aid should be directed to humanitiesadmissions@uchicago.edu or (773) 702-1552.

International students must provide evidence of English proficiency by submitting scores from either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Current minimum scores, etc., are provided with the application. For more information, please see the Office of International Affairs website at https://internationalaffairs.uchicago.edu, or call them at (773) 702-7752.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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

**MAPH COURSES**

**MAPH 30100. Foundations of Interpretive Theory. 100 Units.**
The MAPH Core Course, Foundations of Interpretive Theory, 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.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 34100

**MAPH 30200. Thesis Writing Workshop A. 000 Units.**
MAPH students begin work on their MA thesis.
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter

**MAPH 30400. Thesis Writing Workshop B. 100 Units.**
MAPH students complete their MA thesis.
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter

**MAPH 39900. Independent Study: MAPH. 100 Units.**
Independent reading and research course; regular meetings with a faculty supervisor required.

**MAPH 30300. Prep of M.A. Thesis: MAPH. 100 Units.**
Preparation of MA thesis is a course only offered if a student has a special research component related to the thesis. It is very rarely used and there is no standing course description because it will vary with the student.

**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 German Romanticism to ecopoetics and beyond. (18th/19th, 20th/21st)
Instructor(s): John Wilkinson Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 34800

**MAPH 31414. MAPH Core Course: Contemporary Analytic Philosophy. 100 Units.**
This course is designed to provide MAPH students - especially those interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in Philosophy - with an introduction to some recent debates between philosophers working in the analytic tradition. The course is, however, neither a history of analytic philosophy nor an overview of the discipline as it currently stands. The point of the course is primarily to introduce the distinctive style and method - or styles and methods - of philosophizing in the analytic tradition, through brief explorations of some currently hotly debated topics in the field.
Instructor(s): M. Willer Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 31414

**MAPS 31507. Work in the Informal and the Gig Economy. 100 Units.**
In this course, we will understand work organization and labor practices in the informal as well as the gig (or the platform) economy. We would particularly examine issues of labor recruitment and control in the informal and the gig economy using the lenses of gender, race, social class and other identities. The course is open to undergraduates and graduate students, and would be of particular use for students planning to write a senior honors thesis or a master’s thesis proposal or a dissertation research proposal. This course also serves as one of
the approved electives for the Inequality, Social Problems and Change minor in the College, and for students in SSA's master program of study on Addressing Inequality: Innovations in Policy Practice.

Instructor(s): Amit Anshumali
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 21507, SOCI 30327, GNSE 31507

MAPS 31760. Conceptual Tools for Quantitative Research. 100 Units.
The main purpose for designing this course is to provide instruction on core principles of quantitative research methodology in the social sciences. This course will equip graduate students with the conceptual tools of quantitative research that form the foundation for data management, data analysis and inference. We will examine a series of topics related to measurement, sampling, hypothesis development, data structure and model interpretation which scholars would encounter when designing any project that uses quantitative data for empirical research. My main target audience is graduate students enrolled in the Masters Program in Social Sciences who will be using quantitative research techniques for their MS thesis project. Students enrolled in this course are expected to have taken at least one upper-level undergraduate course in multiple linear regression analysis. Students who are not planning to use quantitative methods in the future can also enroll in this course to develop proficiency in reading research publications and scholarly reports that use quantitative tools.

Instructor(s): Amit Anshumali
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 21507, SOCI 30327, GNSE 31507

MAPS 32840. Knowing the Good. 100 Units.
In this class we’ll think about a family of problems that arise concerning moral knowledge. What is the nature of the connection - if indeed there is one - between knowing what you ought to do and actually doing it? Is moral knowledge sufficient, or necessary, for virtue? Was Socrates right to think that weakness of will ('akrasia') is impossible? How is moral knowledge acquired, and how can it be passed on between people? Are there such things as moral experts, and if so, should we defer to their judgments concerning what we ought to do? To support our thought about these topics, we'll read a range of texts from throughout the history of philosophy, beginning with Plato and continuing to authors from the present day.

Instructor(s): Claire Kirwin
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 22840, PHIL 32840

MAPH 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): S.Skvirsky
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 48000, CMST 40000, ARTH 39900

MAPH 33600. History of International Cinema I: Silent Era. 100 Units.
This course provides a survey of the history of cinema from its emergence in the mid-1890s to the transition to sound in the late 1920s. We will examine the cinema as a set of aesthetic, social, technological, national, cultural, and industrial practices as they were exercised and developed during this 30-year span. Especially important for our examination will be the exchange of film techniques, practices, and cultures in an international context. We will also pursue questions related to the historiography of the cinema, and examine early attempts to theorize and account for the cinema as an artistic and social phenomenon.

Instructor(s): A. Field
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required. Required of students majoring or minoring in Cinema and Media Studies.
Note(s): For students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies, the entire History of International Cinema three-course sequence must be taken.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 28500, CMST 48500, ARTH 38500, ENGL 48700, MAAD 18500, ARTV 20002, CMLT 32400, ENGL 29300, CMST 28500, CMLT 22400

MAPH 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): Staff
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required. Required of students majoring or minoring in Cinema and Media Studies.
Note(s): CMST 28500/48500 strongly recommended
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 22500, REES 45005, ARTH 28600, CMST 48600, ARTH 38600, ARTV 20003, ENGL 48900, REES 25005, MAAD 18600, ENGL 29600, CMST 28600, CMLT 32500
MAPH 34516. 1990s Videogame History. 100 Units.
In this course, we will be turning to the 1990s to learn about videogame history and historiography. Focusing on this period will allow us to examine the videogame medium within broader historical and cultural contexts, and to explore issues related to doing recent and contemporary cultural history. What was the relationship between technological innovations and stylistic changes in the videogame medium? How did the entry of new corporate and creative players into the business affect industrial structures and strategies? What do we make of “freedom,” “realism,” and other concepts that dominated videogame press coverage - and how were they connected to broader cultural discourses? How did understandings of what it meant to play videogames and the types of experiences that videogames could offer change over the course of the decade? What was the relationship between developments in the videogame medium and other media - from film and fiction to virtual reality and the Internet? How has this decade been remembered, conceptualized, preserved, and repackaged in subsequent decades? How do we go about doing history of a still-young medium, operating in multiple national and cultural contexts, and focused on such a recent decade? This course will take advantage of the University of Chicago’s videogame collection and the Media Arts, Data, and Design Center’s hardware collection to provide as comprehensive a view as possible of the videogame medium in this period.
Instructor(s): Chris Carlroy Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 27867, MAAD 25416, CMST 37867

MAPH 36500. Advanced Theories of Gender and Sexuality. 100 Units.
This interdisciplinary seminar-style course will focus on debates within contemporary queer and feminist theory, but the implications impact beyond concepts, with implications for building worlds. We will begin by engaging diverging genealogies of the study of sexual identity, focusing on those developed from within affect theory and theories of performativity. The second half of the quarter will focus on varieties of precarity, examined within their social and political constellations. Generally, our aim will be to engage scenes and concepts central to the interdisciplinary study of gender and sexuality; to provide familiarity with key theoretical anchors for that study; to provide skills for deriving the theoretical bases of any kind of method; to examine inconvenient cases; to question our obligations to the “classics” of gender and sexuality theory; and to explore innovative pedagogies. In addition, aesthetic objects will be brought into contact with theoretical works, such as those by Gayle Rubin, Hortense Spillers, Gayatri Spivak, Paul B. Preciado, Mel Chen, Eve Sedgwick, Judith Butler, and Saidiya Hartman.
Instructor(s): Lauren Berlant Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Undergraduates by consent only.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 21400, GNSE 31400, PLSC 21410, ENGL 21401, ENGL 30201, PLSC 31410

MAPH 40130. Gender, Capital, and Desire: Jane Austen and Critical Interpretation. 100 Units.
Today, Jane Austen is one of the most famous (perhaps the most famous), most widely read, and most beloved of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British novelists. In the two hundred years since her authorial career, her novels have spawned countless imitations, homages, parodies, films, and miniseries - not to mention a thriving "Janetite" fan culture. For just as long, her novels have been the objects of sustained attention by literary critics, theorists, and historians. This course will offer an in-depth examination of Austen, her literary corpus, and her cultural reception as well as a graduate-level introduction to several important schools of critical and theoretical methodology. We will read all six of Austen’s completed novels in addition to criticism spanning feminism, historicism, Marxism, queer studies, postcolonialism, and psychoanalysis. Readings may include Shoshana Felman, Frances Ferguson, William Galperin, Deidre Lynch, D.A. Miller, Edward Said, Eve Sedgwick, and Raymond Williams.
Instructor(s): Tristan Schweiger Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21360, GNSE 21303, ENGL 41360, GNSE 41303

MAPH 40140. Lyric Intimacies in the Renaissance. 100 Units.
This course will examine how writers in the Atlantic and Mediterranean world used lyric verse as a tool for establishing, imagining, or faking intimacy—with potential lovers, employers, friends, and God. Poetry has often been perceived as a peculiarly intimate medium, tasked with providing access to a person’s inner experience: we’ll examine how Renaissance poets created the experience of lyric nearness and track the social functions the poetry of intimacy served. The course will feature British authors such as William Shakespeare, John Donne and Katherine Philips in conversation with Petrarch’s transformational sonnets, verse in the Islamic poetic tradition by Hafez and ‘A’ishah al-Ba’uniyyah, and the work of writers in the Americas such as Sor Juana Inez de la Cruz and Anne Bradstreet. Along the way, we will explore some of the following questions: what was the gender politics of Renaissance lyric? How did writers make space for queer or heteronormative writing and attachment within the conventions of the love poem? What looks familiar about the forms of intimacy we find in these texts? What remains profoundly strange about them?
Instructor(s): Sarah Kunjummen Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 22140, GNSE 44440, ENGL 40140, GNSE 24440

MAPH 41300. Our biopolitics, ourselves: feminist science fiction. 100 Units.
What could a feminist utopia be? What is it like to encounter the kind of difference in living relations that gender utopianism offers? This class enters into those urgent questions by way of a serious engagement with the feminist science fiction of the 1970s. 1970s feminist theory made a significant conceptual move in provisionally bracketing off biological sex from the historical/cultural work of gender. Feminist science fiction (in contrast), in its brief flourishing in the 70s, finds many of its utopian moments in the biological, in genetic manipulation,
reproductive technology, ecological forms of being, shared affects, new bodies, and transformed kinship relations. Readings will be from 1970s feminisms, contemporary theory (including biopolitical theory, new materialisms, gender and race theory), and as much science fiction as possible. SF authors include Le Guin, Russ, Butler, Piercy.

Instructor(s): Hilary Strang Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21420, ENGL 41420

MAPH 41400. Futures Other Than Ours: Science Fiction and Utopia. 100 Units.
Science fiction is often mistaken for a variety of futurism, extrapolating what lies ahead. This class will consider what kind of relationship science fiction might have to the future other than prediction, anticipation, optimism or pessimism. How might science fiction enable thinking or imaging futures in modes other than those available to liberalism (progress, reproduction, generation) or neoliberalism (speculation, anticipation, investment)? This class asks how science fiction constitutes its horizons, where and how difference emerges in utopias, and what it might be to live in a future that isn’t ours. Readings may include SF works by Delany, Le Guin, Russ, Butler, Robinson, Banks, Ryman, Jones; theoretical and critical readings by Bloch, Jameson, Suvin, Munoz, Murphy, and others.

Instructor(s): Hilary Strang Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Email the instructor directly for consent.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21420, ENGL 41420

MAPH 42002. Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations. 100 Units.
In this class we explore the philosophical foundations of human rights, investigating theories of how our shared humanity in the context of an interdependent world gives rise to obligations of justice. We begin by asking what rights are, how they are distinguished from other part of morality, and what role they play in our social and political life. But rights come in many varieties, and we are interested in human rights in particular. In later weeks, we will ask what makes something a human right, and how are human rights different from other kinds of rights. We will consider a number of contemporary philosophers (and one historian) who attempt to answer this question, including James Griffin, Joseph Raz, John Rawls, John Tasioulas, Samuel Moyn, Jiewuh Song, and Martha Nussbaum. Throughout we will be asking questions such as, “What makes something a human right?” “What role does human dignity play in grounding our human rights?” “Are human rights historical?” “What role does the nation and the individual play in our account of human rights?” “When can one nation legitimately intervene in the affairs of another nation?” “How can we respect the demands of justice while also respecting cultural difference?” “How do human rights relate to global inequality and markets?” (A) (I)

Instructor(s): B. Laurence Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 39319, HMRT 31002, LLSO 21002, PHIL 21002, PHIL 31002, INRE 31602, HIST 29319, HMRT 21002

MAPH 41600. American Muckrakers: The Literature of Exposé, 1900/2000. 100 Units.
This seminar examines the genre of American “muckraking,” a form of journalism and fiction intended to expose social and economic injustices. We attend, in particular, to writers active in the years surrounding 1900, when muckraking narratives enjoyed great social influence, and then turn to the new crop of prominent muckrakers that emerged around 2000. In coining the term “muck-rake” in a 1906 speech, President Theodore Roosevelt linked the genre’s aesthetic deficiencies to a potentially dangerous political impact: Its tendency towards “hysteric sensationalism” threatened to provoke a “morbid and vicious public sentiment” marked by cynical apathy. Though we may not end up agreeing with Roosevelt, the seminar picks up his emphasis on the relationship between the aesthetics and politics of exposé in our examination of muckraking media. We will discuss the narrative strategies of a genre often designated as “bad” literature, focusing, in particular, on the link between its purported aesthetic deficiencies-populism, sentimentalism, melodrama, sensationalism-and its political mission. Last but certainly not least, this seminar situates muckraking narratives in their historical contexts-what they hoped to expose, why, and what impact they ended up having. Texts in this course may include the work of: Upton Sinclair, Ida Tarbell, Jacob Riis, Ray Stannard Baker, Frank Norris, Lincoln Steffens, Barbara Ehrenreich, Eric Schlosser, Naomi Klein, Michael Moore, and Laurie Garrett.

Instructor(s): Agnes Malinowska Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21644, ENGL 41644

MAPH 40202. Postcolonial Bildungsroman. 100 Units.
In this course, we consider the novel of subject formation in the twentieth-century, with a particular emphasis on postcolonial adaptations of this form. We examine how different instances of the genre play across tropes of aesthetic education, self-making, and nation-building. Readings will likely include Conrad’s Lord Jim, E.M. Forster’s A Passage to India, Olive Schreiner’s Story of an African Farm, and Tsitsi Dangarembga’s Nervous Conditions, as well as key critical pieces by Mikhail Bakhtin, Marc Redfield, and Jed Esty, among others.

Instructor(s): Darrel Chia Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21212, ENGL 40202

MAPH 40150. American Literature and Photography. 100 Units.
This class considers how photographic techniques spurred new literary methods. We’ll discuss how visual media impact the development of forms, methods, and genres of literature, and how pictures and novels can be read together. Students will learn how to consider the visual register in novels, and how the drive to make fiction “real,” or “photographic,” helps to shed light on many attendant issues - the question of evidence, the problem of
reliability, the terms of objectivity. We will discuss the drive to narrate real events in photographic and literary
terms, and the limits of representation. Furthermore, we will think carefully about how discourses of race and
poverty are imbricated with the development of photographic technologies and methods, and how racial groups
such as American Indians are invented and reinvented in the advent of the mobile camera. Primary texts include
fiction by Stephen Crane, Ella Cara Deloria, and Ralph Ellison and secondary texts include works from Roland
Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Judith Butler, Susan Sontag, and Gerald Vizenor.
Instructor(s): Megan Tusler Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Instructor consent required for undergraduates.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 26150, AMER 40150, AMER 25150, ENGL 45150