MALS 127: Independent Study & MALS 137: Thesis Research, are offered every term. Enrollment is determined based upon completion of prerequisites, and committee approval. Please see student handbook or Departmental Administrator for further details.

MALS 131: Social Science Research Methods
(May be used for Symposium Substitute Credit)

Instructor: Kerry Landers, Graduate Studies

Schedule: Tuesday/Thursday 11:30 to 1:30 pm

Description:

Qualitative and quantitative data provide different kinds of information to the researcher. Quantitative research measures the reactions of large numbers of people and provides generalizable data. Qualitative research produces detailed data on a small number of cases for an increased depth of understanding. Conducting research in the social sciences requires knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Numerous qualitative methods exist with a great diversity of theoretical models. This workshop will focus on ethnographic research, often used by sociologists, anthropologists, and educators to look at the culture of groups and settings. The primary focus of this workshop will be on qualitative methods with discussion on survey methods.

Students will design their own research projects based on their scholarly interests (generated by previous classes) that they would like to further pursue for the basis of their thesis research.

Goals:

Students will investigate a social phenomenon that interests them. They will create their own projects and actively engage in the necessary components of conducting research in the social sciences. This requires students to develop fieldwork plans, identify interviewees, write interview questions, conduct 3-5 interviews, take observation notes, and learn survey skills.

Materials:

Students will need to purchase a tape recorder for interviews or plan on borrowing one from the Jones Media Library. In addition, students should come to class with a three ring binder with page dividers.
MALS 206: The Craft and Culture of Journalism in the 21st Century
(Creative Writing OR Interdisciplinary)

Instructor: Christopher Wren, MALS

Schedule: Monday/Wednesday 1:30 to 3:30 pm

Description:

The logic and fundamentals of news gathering as reinvented for the 21st century. What constitutes news today and why it matters. How to make the significant more interesting.

Distinguishing between journalism and the media. Issues and opportunities in the changing economics of journalism, the collapse of traditional print outlets and the demise of the twenty-four-hour news cycle.

The conflation of reporting, analysis and opinion in the digital transformation of multi-platform news. The rise of social media like Facebook and YouTube as disseminators of breaking news and information. Wikileaks and other ethical dilemmas for journalists.

Students should expect to write weekly, experimenting with an expanding variety of media outlets, from legacy newspapers and magazines to digital websites and citizen blogs, and mining numbers, polls and statistics to extract the essentials worth covering.

Exploring the injunction of the veteran journalist Gay Talese that the best journalism should be as well-written and compelling as fiction, students will hone skills applicable to drama and arts criticism and narrative non-fiction and fiction. This writing course, taught by a former New York Times foreign correspondent, reporter, editor and author, will also track political, economic and conflict developments in real time via the Internet.

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MALS 228: The Lyrics of Bob Dylan
(Cultural Studies)

Instructor: Louis Renza, English

Schedule: Tuesday/Thursday 4:00 to 6:00 pm

Description:

We will do close critical readings of certain Dylan lyrics spanning his entire career, also taking into account their social, historical, and biographical circumstances. The course aims to discuss how these lyrics variously exploit, complicate, and question their wider cultural imbrications. Note: Some attention will be given to the performance aspect of Dylan's songs, but we will not listen to them in class. All of the songs assigned and discussed will be available for your listening beforehand in the Paddock Music Library. Course Requirements: regular attendance, at least two in-class oral reports, and two papers.

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MALS 276: America in the 70’s
(Cultural Studies)

Instructor: Julia Rabig, MALS

Schedule: Monday/Wednesday 6:15 to 8:15 pm

Description:

The 1970s has been defined by the “oil crisis” that had Americans lined up for gas, the “crisis of confidence” diagnosed by President Jimmy Carter, and the “crisis” of narcissism described as the “Me Decade.” Scholars until recently overlooked the 1970s, dismissing it as trite, with embarrassed references to defeat and self-indulgence. Yet the 1970s was the decade in which far-reaching changes brought about by the political rebellion and cultural upheaval of the 1960s took hold in unexpected ways. Leftist activists of the 1960s sought to institutionalize feminism, black power, and sexual liberation, while the New Right sharpened the cultural politics and grassroots strategies that would yield the major conservative victories that defined the 1980s. Experiments in financial and government deregulation accelerated patterns of globalization; workers fought a losing battle against the erosion of the New Deal. While devolving, breaking down, getting loose, and dropping out, Americans responded to globalization, environmental crisis, social inequality, and cultural upheaval in conflicted, but enduring ways. In this course we’ll reappraise the 1970s through a close analysis of primary texts and new scholarship, and through assignments that include a review essay, an annotated bibliography, a major research paper, and a brief oral presentation.


Beth Bailey and David Farber, eds. America in the Seventies (University Press of Kansas, 2004)


# # # # #
Globalization and the pursuit of market-led development have become two crucial concepts that re-emerged full-blown in the wake of the Cold War as the West emerged victorious in its longstanding struggle against socialism and communism. Led primarily by policy-makers and intellectuals in the United States—the sole remaining superpower—defenders of both processes argue that democracy is an inevitable outcome of this ongoing process of globalization. Yet, this process of globalization has also been highly uneven and, according to its critics, augments the divisions between rich and poor in the world. Who is right? The three supposedly interlocking aspects of the newly emerging globalized world—democracy, markets, and globalization—have been the subject of numerous studies and critiques. In this course, we examine the links between them in greater theoretical depth, through studying a number of practical applications around the world.

The first part focuses on globalization in general, its impact on the economy of countries as well as its impact on single firms. The tensions between globalization and moral questions will be elaborated as well. The second part of the course will build upon these arguments and will analyze influence of globalization on political structures—ranging from democracy to revolution and to state failure. Case studies in Part II include Iran, Nicaragua, and the Philippines.