MALS
Spring 2014
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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 MALS website or MALS Administrator for further details.

MALS 132: Writing Methodologies: Strategies for Creative Writers (CT/NC – Symposium Substitute)
Instructor: Anna Minardi – French & Italian

Description:
This is a discussion based course focused on the preparation and discipline writers need to develop as they progress in their chosen genres. The text selected as the basis for class conversations offers a discussion of various writing concerns that all writers face as they consider such questions as audience, goal, use of language, placement of oneself. The text will be supplemented by short student pieces that may reflect the issues raised by Todd and Kidder in the book. The course goal is create a sense of familiarity with the writing process for students who are starting to write. For students with more experience, the goal is to articulate the questions related to the areas they want to develop. The exchange between beginning and more advanced writers will be valuable in creating an awareness of the questions that propel writers at all levels and in all genres. The class will be enhanced by visits from MALS writing professors and creative writing thesis students.

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MALS 205: Narrative Non-Fiction (CW)
Instructor: Barbara Kreiger - MALS

Description:
This course is aimed at those with a special interest in non-fiction creative writing. (e.g., memoir, travel, nature) Writing experience is preferred, but is not a prerequisite. What is required is a commitment to the imaginative exploration of experience and a serious desire to devote oneself to the writing process.

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MALS 239: Poetry Workshop (CW)
Instructor: Gary Lenhart – Poetry

Description:
This course will follow workshop format, with students submitting substantial weekly assignments that will be distributed to and considered by participants before class hours. There are no length expectations for each submission, as some are prolific, others deliberate. A guiding aim will be to school workshop members with self-critical tools to apply toward future efforts in the art of poetry. To refine these tools and to inspire our own compositions, we will also read and discuss other poems selected and introduced by the instructor and participants. There will be no text for the course, though a list of recommended critical texts and anthologies will be distributed. All approaches and aesthetics are welcome.

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MALS 244: World Wars & Global Peace Culture  
Instructor: Ronald Edsforth - MALS

Description:
This seminar offers all of us (including the instructor) an opportunity to read, think, talk, and write about two of the most important subjects in globalization studies: war and peace. The seminar is organized as a historical investigation. It focuses on the global history of war and on efforts to make a more peaceful world. Since warfare and terrorism dominate so much of the news and policy debate in the United States, it may surprise many students to know that the probability of a human being killed in war has never been lower than it is now in the early 21st century. This seminar explores the reasons behind this surprising fact. Students will examine the intertwined history of war and peace since 1900, focusing especially on increasingly diverse global efforts to eliminate interstate war, suppress collective violence within states, develop non-violent strategies for conducting political conflict, and establish universal human rights. Our historical investigation will be more topical than chronological. We begin the term examining the long history of ideas about war and making peace. Then, emphasizing developments since 1900, we study changes in international relations, warfare, liberal internationalism, international law, human rights, nonviolent political conflict, and third party interventions designed to end conflicts and build lasting peace.

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MALS 346: Diasporas and Migrations (I/D, CS)  
Instructor: Klaus Milich, MALS  
Regine Rosenthal, MALS

Description:
Over the past two decades, the term diaspora has gained wide currency and intense scrutiny in scholarly work. Originating in the Hebrew Bible as prophesy of the Jewish “dispersion in all kingdoms of the earth,” contemporary uses of the term have accrued meaning in a variety of contexts and disciplines to designate “the movement, migration, or scattering of people away from an established or ancestral homeland.” Considering mass-migration, exile, and expulsion in all sectors of the world, this seminar will focus on a variety of concepts and theories related to diaspora. Studying a range of ethnographic, historical, theoretical, and literary texts, we will compare Jewish, African, and Asian diasporas in the context of historical, cultural and territorial characteristics. We will also discuss questions such as “the power of diaspora” vs. homeland, the role of the nation state vs. transnational or post-national aspects of culture, cultural identity, and hybridity.

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MALS 364: Telling Stories for Social Change (I/D, CS)  
Instructor: Pati Hernandez, MALS

Description:
Our social structure is full of unseen, unspoken, and unheard dynamics. These hidden and irresponsible social behaviors have always contributed to the building of visible and invisible social walls. Behind these walls, a growing invisible population has found a way to social visibility through addiction, violence, and crime. This course offers students the unique opportunity to collaborate with a group of people from behind those social walls from two distinct perspectives:
theoretical and practical. For one class each week, students will study the root causes of social isolation and invisibility mainly pertaining to incarceration and addiction, in an active learning classroom. For the other half, students will travel to Sullivan County Department of Corrections, in Unity, NH and participate in an interdisciplinary arts program for inmates there. Its final goal is the creation and performance of an original production on the theme of the inmates’ voices. The final project for the course will combine research on themes related to incarceration, rehabilitation, transition, facilitation with critical analysis and self-reflection on the effectiveness of community-based learning and performance in rehabilitation.

**Goals:**

The goal of this community-based learning course is to inform students about the root causes of social isolation and invisibility mainly pertaining to incarceration and addiction, and the issues this population faces as prisoners, and parolees/ex-offenders. On a deeper level, this course asks students to test theoretical propositions against real-life experiences. It challenges them to leave the classroom and enter the world of invisible populations. Creating a theatrical performance allows students and inmates to work together, share knowledge and expertise, and learn from each other as people and equals. A related goal is learning how to facilitate and improvise, in the broad sense of that term. In these ways, the course aims to break down stereotypes about invisible populations, have the students experience the power of listening to and sharing their own stories, and emphasize the importance of critical presence in society. Students will be asked to reflect on their personal roles in working toward social change.

Throughout the collaboration, all participants face social ignorance; the need of an active participation; the responsibility to break through walls, visible and/or invisible, that stop individuals from practicing their social rights, presence and voice. The experience takes people to embrace vulnerability, doubts, getting lost, mistakes, and the lack of control in order to deconstruct our much-ingrained “secure” educational experience. We know everything (really?)—we know nothing (really?).

**Seminars:**

Each week during the campus sessions, we will have group reflections and discussions focused on the philosophy and educational theories of Paulo Freire; on Critical Pedagogy (a concept developed by followers of Freire’s work); on the experience, reflections and discussions of the weekly sessions at the facility, and on the weekly readings. With this potluck of knowledge, experience, and theoretical information, we will focus on critical presence, which works on finding an active place in life and society at large, facing the challenge of living in the midst of a time where indifference and social apathy has become the way to face the complexity of life. From an academic perspective the objective of your reading is meta-critical: you will take one or more of the readings from the list, distill their essential points, compare and contrast them (if that would be helpful) and show how they illuminate some aspect of your experience in the SCDOC facility by giving specific examples from the workshops and analyzing these examples in the light of the ideas you find in the readings. Some questions you might ask: Does the theory help you understand your experience or does your experience contradict or counteract the theory? Speculate on why. How can you change or adapt the theory to make it relevant to your experience or practice?

On a more personal level, we will work to understand and transform the motivation and inspiration sparked from these materials into the political exercise of answering questions like: Why am I here in this class? What should be done? What do I need to do personally to change something? What is my contribution to the way things are now? Do I like the way things are? How can I be actively engaged in my own learning process? What do I want and need to do in order to move forward using the tools I’ve gathered from this experience? What do we do with social and personal resentment? Where do we go when experiencing social abandonment? How do we get over dehumanizing experiences? What is social responsibility? Who is in charge of social responsibility? What is my social responsibility? How can people respect others when
having experienced only disrespect? What is the danger of invisibility? What is the power of visibility? What does it mean to walk on somebody’s shoes? We will also add questions that will arise from the work. We will work on motivating our social presence. Where Am I now? A final evaluation of the session will be done at the end of each session.

**Workshop:**

Students participate in the program Telling My Story. They will collaborate with inmates from the Sullivan County Department of Correction Facility in Unity NH. The goal of the program is to empower participants to make their own positive choices in daily life and to develop self-awareness and communication skills through the arts. The students’ role is to provide a platform that will make possible to hear the voices of that invisible population. The program’s activities bring a life experience that provides tools to lead constructive lives. Through writing, performance and arts in general, people work on finding their own voice and strengths. The performance itself creates a cultural bridge between the “inside” and the “outside”, giving the audience and participants the opportunity to experience a much-needed social reflection.

**Logistics:**

The course is capped at 12 students so that the group working on the performance is not too large. We will meet together as a group every Tuesday at the Sullivan County Department of Corrections in Unity, NH (outside of Claremont), and every Thursday in class for discussions on the readings, assignments, and the group reflections of the progress of the program. We will arrange groups and transportation in class. We will be using the X hour for the first 3 weeks, and when needed after, setting it up a week in advance. Please don’t schedule anything on a regular basis for that time period.

**Required Texts:**

- Paulo Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.*
- Edited by Stephen John Hartnett, *Challenging the Prison Industrial Complex. Activism, Arts & Educational Alternatives*
- Bell Hooks, *Teaching to Transgress. Education as the Practice of Freedom.*