

# MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN THE HUMANITIES

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## Director

- Hilary Strang, Associate Senior Instructional Professor, 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 includes guest lectures by Assistant Instructional Professors from different disciplines. The course is designed to give MAPH students a shared base for their further study.
- Eight elective courses chosen from the Division of the Arts & 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.
- One elective may be devoted to a larger project. Some MAPH students choose a curricular option, such as a research seminar. Others opt to complete an MA thesis under the supervision of a UChicago faculty advisor. Some students write critical, scholarly papers for their thesis project while others produce a non-traditional or creative thesis accompanied by a critical piece of writing.

## 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 Assistant Instructional Professors who oversee the progress of 10-12 MAPH students. Each student is assigned a preceptor for duration of their time in the program. 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 graduate-level courses in the autumn, 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 Arts & 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> (<http://humanities.uchicago.edu/students/admissions/>).

Questions pertaining to admissions and aid should be directed to [ahd-admissions@uchicago.edu](mailto:ahd-admissions@uchicago.edu).

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](mailto:maph.uchicago.edu) (<http://maph.uchicago.edu/>)  
[ma-humanities@uchicago.edu](mailto: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 Preceptors 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.

Instructor(s): Strang, Hilary Bayne, Rowan Carloy, Chris Chia, Darrel Hutchison, Bill Kunjummen, Sarah Malinowska, Agnes Schweiger, Tristan Tusler, Megan

Note(s): Required for MAPH students. Others by consent only. Register by Preceptor Section.

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 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 30400. Thesis Writing Workshop B. 100 Units.**

MAPH students complete their MA thesis.

Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter

#### **MAPH 30677. Topics in EALC: Race, Media, and Translingual Practice. 100 Units.**

In this class, we will discuss the role that comparison plays as a key method for studying East Asian cultures. We will explore ways of making comparison and reflect on our own habits of comparative thinking. What is comparable and what is not? How can comparison reveal otherwise hidden connections? How might comparison inflict violence on the subjects that we study? How can we compare responsibly, sensitively, and creatively? We will focus on three themes: race, media, and language. We will explore how their interconnections present new opportunities and challenges for comparative thinking when studying Japan, Korea, and China from a global perspective. In lieu of a final paper, each student will develop a critical reflection journal responding to these questions by examining selected cases in a medium of choice (such as handwritten pages, podcast, short film, blog, poetry). All classes will be divided into seminar sessions and workshop sessions. In a seminar session, we will discuss a selection of literary materials, films, and recent theoretical texts produced in interdisciplinary fields including cultural studies, media studies, and postcolonial studies in East Asian contexts in the premodern and modern eras. In a workshop session, we will discuss new portions of students' journal-in-progress (which will be circulated beforehand). The goal is to help each student develop and modify their own approach to drawing insightful comparison.

Instructor(s): Y. Zheng Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 10677, EALC 30677

#### **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): Benjamin Callard 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 32301. Digital Geographies of Climate Justice. 100 Units.**

Struggles for climate and environmental justice are increasingly mediated by digital technologies and geospatial data, especially in the Global South. In Amazonia, for example, the plight of indigenous groups bearing the brunt of ecological dispossession and political violence by deforestation is frequently represented through remotely-sensed data showing time-series of canopy loss; in turn, these data are often prompted, groundtruthed, and mobilized by indigenous communities and affiliated activists in legal and political campaigns. In parallel, across the world ocean, countries across the Global South- from Papua New Guinea and Ecuador to Ghana- are partnering with watch-dog organizations using satellite imagery and GPS data to track illegal fishing and human rights abuses at sea, acting as an auxiliary ecological police force to identify and provide data to prosecute offending vessels. The proliferation of these digital geographic technologies and techniques pose a number of complex questions. Drawing on contemporary cases, experimental projects in "forensic" approaches to activism, and recent work in critical geography, aesthetics, STS, and political theory, this seminar will attempt to map out these digital geographies of climate justice as they emerge. The course will also involve introduction to entry-level remote sensing + GIS workflows (no prior experience required) in a pair of intensive workshops led by guest lecturers/practitioners.

Instructor(s): Alexander Arroyo Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Undergraduate/Graduate Course - only open to 3rd and 4th year undergraduate students. This course counts toward the 4th year ENST capstone requirement.

Equivalent Course(s): CEGU 32301, GLST 29301, CEGU 22301

**MAPH 32526. Aby Warburg and the Memory of Images. 100 Units.**

Trained as an art historian with an expertise in Renaissance art, Warburg morphed into a historian of images (i.e., Bildwissenschaft) and - more broadly - into a historian of culture. We will trace Warburg's cultural historical method as it develops primarily from philology, but also art history, anthropology, the comparative study of religions, and evolutionary biology. How does Warburg read culture? What is his methodological approach for examining a wide variety of cultural artifacts ranging from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Poliziano's poetry, and Dürer's etchings to postal stamps and news photographs? How can these artifacts be vehicles for cultural memory? And how does the transmission of cultural memory in artworks manifest itself in different media such as literary texts, religious processions, astrological treatises, photography, and painting? Moreover, how does Warburg's work help us contextualize and historicize "interdisciplinarity" today? This course explores Aby Warburg in the context of other thinkers of the time including Sigmund Freud, Walter Benjamin, Alois Riegl, and others. Readings and discussions in English. Undergraduates and MAPH students welcome.

Instructor(s): Margareta Ingrid Christian Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 32526, ARTV 32526, GRMN 32526

**MAPH 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 32840, PHIL 22840

**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): ARTH 39900, CMST 40000, ENGL 48000

**MAPH 33235. European Crime Fiction and Film. 100 Units.**

This course introduces students to the genre of crime fiction (and film) in a European and interdisciplinary context. We will start by examining the beginning of the genre in the 18th century alongside: the history of the police in Germany, France, and Britain; the development of public administration; and that of the modern state. We will trace the figure of the detective, the criminal, the victim; the relationship between crime fiction and the urban environment or society more broadly ("police" comes from the Greek polis=city); the history of policing practices; changing concepts of justice and guilt; the status of clues, indices, evidence. We will also consider the parallels between practices of reading and detecting and we will engage with some theoretical and philosophical writings on the genre (e.g., Siegfried Kracauer, Ernst Bloch, Michel Foucault) before ending with a consideration

of the history of true crime. Other materials include Hoffmann, Poe, Browning, Conan Doyle, Simenon, Christie, alongside films such as: *M* (Fritz Lang); *The Third Man* (Carol Reed); *The Smiling Madame Beudet* (Germaine Dulac), *Outrage* (Ida Lupino); *Die Reise nach Lyon* (Blind Spot) (Claudia von Alemann); *Anatomy of a Fall* (Justine Triet). Readings and discussions in English. All students welcome.

Instructor(s): Margareta Ingrid Christian Terms Offered: Spring  
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 33235, GRMN 23235, ENGL 23235, FNDL 23235, CMLT 23235, GRMN 33235, CMLT 33235

**MAPH 33310. Modern Ukraine Through Culture. 100 Units.**

The 2022 escalation of Russia's war on Ukraine to a full-scale invasion was a wakeup call which exposed how little had been known about Ukraine globally. While for many in the world Ukraine's ongoing resistance has been a surprise, for those familiar with Ukraine's history in the 20th and 21st century, the resistance is rooted in Ukraine's longer culture of civic mobilization and Ukraine's complex relationship with Russia. In this course, we revisit major political and cultural events of the 20th and 21st centuries that have shaped today's Ukraine: the revolutionary period of 1917-1921 to the Chernobyl nuclear catastrophe, to the Orange and Maidan revolutions. One third of the course focuses on Russia's war on Ukraine starting with the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas. While addressing major historical turning points, the course engages literary texts (poems, novels, memoirs), films (feature, short, documentary), and other forms of cultural production (visual artwork, music, multimodal digital projects), testimonies and historical debates. No prior knowledge of Ukraine or knowledge of Ukrainian language is required. The assignments include a choice between a traditional paper or a critical-creative project (video essay, poster, other creative forms).

Instructor(s): Darya Tsybalyuk Terms Offered: Winter  
Equivalent Course(s): REES 33310, REES 23310, GLST 23310, HIST 23618, HIST 33618

**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): Daniel Morgan Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 is required. Course is required for 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): ENGL 29300, ENGL 48700, CMST 48500, MADD 18500, CMST 28500, CMLT 22400, ARTH 28500, ARTH 38500, ARTV 20002, CMLT 32400

**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): James Lastra 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): CMST 28600, REES 25005, ENGL 29600, ARTH 28600, CMST 48600, ARTH 38600, REES 45005, ARTV 20003, ENGL 48900, CMLT 32500, MADD 18600, CMLT 22500

**MAPH 34325. Religion and politics in a post-secular age. 100 Units.**

The confluence and discord between religious freedom, religious institutions, and the state drives many contemporary human rights challenges. This course examines the impact of religion and secularism on global topics from constitutionalism to nationalism to development. It will also consider the impact of religion and religiosity on multiple policy domains, including social issues, the welfare state, and foreign policy. Course discussions will include multiple traditions, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and atheism. Our overall goal is to improve students' ability to recognize the historic and cultural contexts at work in debates about religion, secularism, and political issues. Students will analyze and discuss academic work studying the impact of religious belief on policy preferences and of state policies on religious behavior. They will also apply the course material to contemporary issues in (religious and secularism) politics.

Instructor(s): Hannah Ridge, Pozen Center for Human Rights Social Science Teaching Fellow Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 28025, HMRT 34325, HMRT 24325

**MAPH 34425. Invasion Culture: Russia through its Wars. 100 Units.**

This course looks at contemporary culture through Russia's invasions, from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Broadly, this course explores how war shapes cultural life. How

do the policies and strategies of war, and the art and literature of wartime, convey ideas about power and the state, traditional vs. modern values, civilizational mission vs. cultural pluralism? Beyond Russian literature and film, we consider voices from Afghanistan, the Caucasus, Chechnya, Syria, Belarus, and Ukraine, asking, How are Russia's wars fought and resisted in the domain of culture?

Instructor(s): Ania Aizman Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 34009, CMLT 24425, REES 24425, REES 34425, GLST 24424, HIST 24009

#### **MAPH 34516. 1990s Videogame History. 100 Units.**

This course will trace developments in the videogame medium and videogame cultures in the final decade of the 20th century, discuss the unique possibilities and difficulties arising from the study of recent history, and put these discussions into practice through research-based assignments. Questions that will guide our study include: 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?

Instructor(s): Chris Carloy Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): CMST 27867, CMST 37867, MADD 15416

#### **MAPH 34819. Maniacs, Specters, Automata: The Tales of E.T.A. Hoffmann. 100 Units.**

In this seminar, we will read stories by one of the most prominent representatives of Romanticism, the German writer, composer, and painter E.T.A. Hoffmann who wrote "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King" on which Tchaikovsky would later base his ballet. His stories of bizarre yet psychologically compelling characters will introduce us to the "dark side" of Romanticism as well as to its fantastical aspects. Students will read Hoffmann's extraordinary stories, develop skills of literary analysis, and engage in historical inquiry by tracing the way in which Hoffmann's texts engage with the context of their time, in particular with the history of medicine (mesmerism, early psychiatry), alchemy, and law (Hoffmann worked as a legal official). Readings and discussions in English. (Original texts will be made available for those who read German).

Instructor(s): Margareta Ingrid Christian Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 24819, GRMN 34819, GRMN 24819

#### **MAPH 35603. Narratives of Power. 100 Units.**

For the past four years we've been transfixed by the news-but also by the way the news has been reported. Longstanding practices have been questioned or abandoned as our media have grappled with how to cover a changing political landscape. A similar situation unfolded in late and post-Soviet Russia, where it seemed that newspapers and TVs were not only reporting, but also carrying out, a regime change. This course will examine media regimes in both the U.S. and Russia (and the U.S.S.R.), with careful attention to historical and theoretical frameworks that will help us better understand current media events. On the Russian side we will explore how political and cultural regimes have systematically exploited the gap between experience and representation to create their own mediated worlds-from the tight censorship of the imperial and Soviet periods to the propaganda of the Soviet period and the recent use of media simulacra for strategic geopolitical advantage. We will compare this tradition with that of the United States, where freedom of expression has been privileged, but has also been shaped and distorted by the economic and cultural markets that constitute our media.

Instructor(s): William Nickell Terms Offered: TBD

Note(s): A companion to Media and Power in the Age of Putin and Trump, this course covers different material and does not require the former as a prerequisite. Together the courses consider how form and content shape the spread of information.

Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 35603, PARR 25600, CMLT 25603, SIGN 26029, REES 35603, REES 25603

#### **MAPH 35712. Photography and Political Ecology. 100 Units.**

This seminar explores the role of photographic imagery in the global environmental movement from the 1960s through the present. We will investigate the uses of photography in shaping, documenting, and disseminating narratives surrounding ecological crises, activism, and public policy. Through a survey of photographic works in a variety of formats and media, we will explore how visual culture has shaped ecological thought and international politics over the last half-century, starting with the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Adopting an interdisciplinary human-centered framework, this course foregrounds questions of environmental justice, sustainability, and the impacts of colonialism on landscapes and communities, offering insight into the role of photographic media as a catalyst for societal change.

Instructor(s): C. Fuldner Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 35712, ARTH 25712

#### **MAPH 36704. Art and World Making in the 1890s. 100 Units.**

While the final decade of the nineteenth century is often heralded as the cradle of artistic modernism, this seminar will take a more expansive view of artistic practices in the larger world of the 1890s. We will consider the ways in which painters, designers, architects, and art theorists developed a range of formal and innovative techniques to engage and represent a new global order beset by nationalist and populist fervor, unbounded

scientific discovery, new forms of labor and social belonging, legal definitions of personhood and property, and the combined force of global conquest and attempts to resist it. Following a case-study approach grounded in Europe yet reaching out to its entanglement with the wider world (including West Africa, North America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia), students will dive deeply into artists', designers', and architects' bids to meaningfully represent experience of this extraordinary period while also reflecting on remarkable parallels with our own moment of global transformation. Participants need not be specialists in the period to enroll, but should be broadly interested in dissecting the ways in which art could meaningfully represent larger social, political, and conceptual concerns, often in unexpected ways. Assignments will include short writing assignments that engage objects from university archives, local collections, and a traveling exhibition.

Instructor(s): A. Fraser Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Consent Only. This course fulfills the following requirements in the ARTH major and minor: European and American post-1800

Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 36704, ARTH 26704

#### **MAPH 37010. Dead and Undead in Polish Culture. 100 Units.**

What makes Polish culture distinctive? How do ideas about death, ghosts, and the undead help express Polish identity? This course explores these questions by examining how Polish writers have used supernatural and symbolic figures to respond to historical change, political struggle, and cultural memory. Through readings from different periods—beginning with Romanticism and continuing to contemporary literature—students will discover how Polish culture has been shaped by shifting borders, occupations, and social transformations. The course focuses on how the motif of the dead and undead appears in different genres, including poetry, short stories, fantasy, and magical realism. Works by authors such as Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Bruno Schulz, Stefan Grabiński, Andrzej Sapkowski, and Olga Tokarczuk show how these themes help create imaginative worlds that reflect both Polish experience and universal human concerns. Class activities include guided discussions, selected film screenings, and explorations of folklore and popular culture, allowing students to connect literary themes to visual media and contemporary cultural expressions. All required readings are available in English translation; students fluent in Polish are welcome to read selected texts in the original language. No prior knowledge of Polish language or culture is required.

Instructor(s): Izolda Wolski-Moskoff Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): REES 37010, REES 27010

#### **MAPH 37817. Sonic the Hedgehog. 100 Units.**

In this course, we will use a single franchise - Sonic the Hedgehog - as an access point to study media history, aesthetics, social and cultural practice, and the relationships between games, film, and other artforms. Originally released in 1991 for Sega's Genesis console, the Sonic series has spawned over three decades of games, cartoons, manga, novels, films, music, board games, action figures, fan art, cosplay, and merchandizing. Both the volume and the variety of these texts allow the Sonic corpus to be a focal point for questions with broader stakes for the study of games and media in general. Some of the questions we will be considering in this course include: What has been the relationship between particular videogame characters and franchises and the business practices and strategies of entertainment industries? What form does stardom take in the world of digital games, and is it an appropriate concept to apply to a mascot like Sonic? How have established game franchises responded to major technological and aesthetic shifts in the medium? How might we understand the concept and practice of adaptation as applied to the digital games, and what does it reveal about the medium specificity of and the relationship between games, film, comics, novels, and other forms? What can a game franchise that has taken a wide variety of generic forms (platforming, racing, fighting, and pinball, to name just a few) tell us about how genre works as concept and system in digital games?

Instructor(s): Chris Carloy Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): MADD 17817, CMST 27817, CMST 37817

#### **MAPH 38626. Literature as Therapy: The Poetry of Rilke. 100 Units.**

Lady Gaga has a Rilke quote tattooed on her arm; Jimin of the band BTS showed off a temporary tattoo of a Rilke poem in 2023; Gwyneth Paltrow cited Rilke when asked what gave her "spiritual sustenance"; Oprah Winfrey's website features the volume Rilke on Love and Other Difficulties on her website. This list could go on and on. Rilke's writing is famous for its lyrical intensity. The pathos of his poetic language appears to "move" and "touch" readers in an unparalleled way. Soldiers going to fight in WWII carried volumes of Rilke's poetry in their knapsacks and letters of fallen soldiers contained quotes from his verse ("Who talks of victory? To endure is all.") Editions of his writings, such as Rilke for the Stressed, Words of Consolation, Letters on Loss, Grief, and Transformation attest to Rilke being viewed as someone who can provide The Poet's Guide to Life. This course introduces students to Rilke's poetry and correspondence as well as excerpts from his writings on art to critically examine his language's ability to express our innermost feelings and to offer solace. Along the way, we will also situate his work in the context of "modernism," and we will consider it in the framework of bibliotherapy (reading therapy, poetry therapy). Readings and discussions in English. All students welcome!

Instructor(s): Ingrid Christian Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 28626, FNDL 28626, GRMN 38626

#### **MAPH 39800. Approaches To Art History. 100 Units.**

This seminar will examine a range of methodological approaches to doing the work of art history. Through close reading of key texts, we will interrogate how various authors have constructed novel ways of seeing and understanding visual and material objects. Crucially, this course doesn't assume "theory" or "methodology"

to be a set of texts we use to explicate or read works of art in specific ways. Rather, we investigate how each of our authors forges new concepts in response to an object's specific exigencies. Students need not self-identify as art historians to enroll in this seminar-it will be helpful for all students who want to think deeply and in self-reflexive ways about their own approaches to visual and material objects (still or moving images, sculpture, performance, architecture, etc.), particularly if those objects feel genre-bending, difficult to theorize, or recalcitrant in any way.

Instructor(s): E. Warren Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open to MAPH students concentrating in Art History. Others by consent only.

Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 39800

**MAPH 39900. Independent Study: MAPH. 100 Units.**

Independent reading and research course; regular meetings with a faculty supervisor required.

**MAPH 39943. Diasporic Narratives and Memories. 100 Units.**

Of the many migrant communities in Chicago, Belarusians are the only group that does not yet have its own museum. Our course takes this lack as an opportunity to provide training for students to create a grassroots community-driven initiative that empirically develops a conceptual foundation for a new type of multi-ethnic museum of emigration, one informed by the experiences of community members themselves and their relationship to the artifacts that define their identities and memories. This course allows students to actively participate in a museum creation project which takes as its point of departure not a nation-state narrative, but the everyday life of a multi-ethnic community with the goal of informing research, policy, and public discourse about emigration. We center our course around the material heritage of Belarussia and its dispersal in emigration. We analyze how a diasporic museum's main role is to collect, protect and curate the material legacy of the Belarussian community to ensure its future stability. The course participants collaborate with the Chicago Studies Program, the NGO Belarusians in Chicago, and the Chicago History Museum to study the role of artifacts in museums. The students conduct the field work about multi-ethnic Belarusian emigration to include experiences of Belarusian Jews, Belarusian Russians, Belarusian Lithuanians, Belarusian Tatars, and other groups from Belarus.

Instructor(s): Olga Solovieva and Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Not offered in 2026-2027

Equivalent Course(s): REES 29950, CMLT 29943, CHST 29943, BPPO 29943, KNOW 29943, HIPS 26943

**MAPH 40464. The Lives of Others. 100 Units.**

How much can you ever really know someone else?#In this course, we take up the inscrutability of others through a range of narratives about - politically, socially, and geographically - distant others from the early 20th century. Texts include fiction, documentary film, and critical theory around transnationalism, contact zones and ethnography).##Some of these texts meditate on the general problem of living with others. Others take on the limits of empathy, access, and friendship whether explicitly or in their formal arrangement. Specifically, we focus on works that engage with an ethics or "work on the self" as a preliminary to having knowledge of others.##We will be guided by primary readings that likely include Claude Levi-Strauss, Kazuo Ishiguro, Werner Herzog, Maggie Nelson, Amitav Ghosh, and J.M. Coetzee. (Fiction, Literary/Critical theory; 20th/21st)

Instructor(s): Darrel Chia Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 20464, ENGL 40464

**MAPH 41213. Literature and Philosophy: Knowing, Being, Feeling. 100 Units.**

Modern theories of the subject - theories that answer the questions of what we are, how we are, and how we relate to others - have their roots in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Philosophers of the era, finding themselves free to diverge from classical accounts of the human and its world, pursued anew such questions as: What is the mind and how does it come by its ideas? How do we attain a sense of self? Are we fundamentally social creatures, or does the social (at best) represent a restriction on our animal drives and passions? Literature, meanwhile, examined these questions in its own distinct manner, and in doing so witnessed what many scholars recognize as the birth of the novel - a genre for which accounts of the subject are of central importance. This interdisciplinary course will read widely in Early Modern and "Enlightenment" literature and philosophy to better understand the roots of contemporary accounts of the subject and the social. Philosophical readings will include texts by John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith, Mary Astell, Thomas Reid, Marya Schechtman, and Stephen Darwall. Literary readings will include Richard Steele, Alexander Pope, Horace Walpole, Eliza Haywood, John Cleland, Ignatius Sancho, Laurence Sterne, and Jane Austen. (A)

Instructor(s): Andrew Pitel; Tristan Schweiger Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open to undergraduate and MA students, and all others with consent.

Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21213, PHIL 41213, ENGL 41213, ENGL 21213

**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 41310, GNSE 41300, GNSE 21310, ENGL 21310

**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 41710. Rocks, plants, ecologies: science fiction and the more-than-human. 100 Units.**

Science fictional worlds are full of entities more familiar and perhaps less noticeable than the aliens that are often thought to typify the genre. Rock formations, plants, metallic seams, plastics, crystalline structures, nuclear waste and oozing seepages are among the entities that allow SF to form estranging questions about what it means to be in relation to others, what it means to live in and through an environment, and what it means to form relations of sustenance and communal possibility with those who do not or cannot return human care and recognition. Such questions about are urgent ones for thinking about climate catastrophe, capital, settler colonialism and endemic pandemics, as well as for thinking substantively about resistance and what life and livable worlds beyond the bleak horizons of the present could be. This class will engage science fiction (authors may include Ursula Le Guin, Vonda McIntyre, Nalo Hopkinson, Jeff Vandermeer and more) and environmental and social theory of various kind (authors may include Elizabeth Povinelli, Andreas Malm, Eduardo Kohn, James C. Scott, David Graeber, and more)

Instructor(s): Hilary Strang Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21710, CEGU 21710, ENGL 41710

**MAPH 41720. Science fiction against the state. 100 Units.**

This course reads science fiction and other texts (including theory, essays and zines) that imagine what it might mean to live against, beyond or without the state, and thus beyond or against the law, the police and capitalism. We will engage with these other worlds in an attempt to formulate our own visions of other possible forms of communal life and relation. We will pay particular attention to questions of liberatory struggle; borders, policing and imprisonment; race, gender, family and social reproduction; and environment and ecological relations. We'll also spend some time thinking about actually existing forms of living against the state (including encampments, blockades, autonomous zones). SF authors may include Ursula Le Guin, Samuel Delany, Tade Thompson, Octavia Butler, and ME O'Brien and Eman Abdelhadi. Other authors may include Saidiya Hartman, Fredy Perlman, James Scott, Orisanmi Burton, Joy James and David Graeber.

Instructor(s): Hilary Strang Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 21720, GNSE 41720, ENGL 41720, ENGL 21720

**MAPH 41730. Rewild, repair, restore! Science fictions of life-making in the aftermath. 100 Units.**

Science fiction has long imagined human relations persisting and transforming on the ruined earth. Indeed, science fiction imaginaries offered horizons for human, and more-than-human, environmental and social restoration long before most cultural forms began to grapple with what we sometimes still call "climate change." This class reads science fiction (mostly American, from the 1960s-2020s), alongside environmental and social theory to begin to ask what it might take to live toward and in conditions of repair, and what repair and restoration seem to mean in our current moment. We will be particularly interested in where and how environmental restoration intersects with conceptions of social repair, collective life-building and liberation. What might repair require in scenes not only of environmental devastation, but of state violence, settler colonialism, racial capitalism and the uneven distribution of dispossession and loss? If restoration is a process and not a destination, what might the daily life under conditions of repair be? What possibilities for transformed collective life and relations might be opened up by processes of repair? What might not be repairable, or when and where might repair need to stop? We'll engage these questions and more by thinking and imagining with environmental theory, theories of settler colonialism and racial capital, feminist theories of reproduction, communication theory and science fiction.

Instructor(s): Hilary Strang Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21730, CEGU 21730, ENGL 41730, CEGU 41730

**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 who attempt to answer this question, including James Griffin, Charles Beitz, Joseph Raz, Jiewuh Song, Pablo Gilabert, 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)

Instructor(s): Ben Laurence, Pozen Center for Human Rights Instructional Professor  
 Terms Offered: Autumn  
 Equivalent Course(s): INRE 31602, PHIL 31002, HIST 39319, HIST 29319, DEMS 21002, PHIL 21002, HMRT 31002, HMRT 21002

**MAPH 42021. Music, Colonialism, and Nationalism. 100 Units.**

In this seminar we examine and disentangle the triangulated historical and cultural spaces that form through the complex interaction of the three larger subject areas: music, colonialism, and nationalism. Colonial encounter because audible to the extreme when sound is unleashed as the language of control and resistance by the colonizer and colonized alike. Music, as the amalgam of sonic difference, opens the metaphorical and material spaces in which the struggle for power is also articulated as the aesthetic expression of sovereignty. Song sounds linguistic and geographic borderlands, transforming them into the contested boundaries of nations both in ascendancy and in decline. In the course of the seminar, we seek the ways in which music and sound articulate the counterpoint between colonialism and nationalism, yielding one of the most forceful narratives for understanding the history of the present. We shall draw upon diverse resources and approaches throughout the seminar. We shall devote attention to specific repertoires and genres that have the power to represent the colonial and national interests. In addition to reading critically important works on colonialism and nationalism, we shall also listen widely and to different types of sound material, ethnographic and commercial, classical and popular, in literature and in film. It will be our goal to bear witness to the shape of the music-colonialism-triangle in as many shapes as possible.

Instructor(s): Phil Bohlman  
 Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Students from many departments and centers are welcome in this seminar. Extensive analytical work with music is not required.

Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 42021, MUSI 42021

**MAPH 42920. Coming of Age: Reading and Writing Autobiographical Memoirs. 100 Units.**

This course seeks to study the mixed literary history of coming-of-age narratives, beginning with 19th-century autobiography and the Bildungsroman through to modern memoir, in order to inform the writing of our own coming-of-age narratives. The analytical and creative habits of mind will be closely linked as we learn about how childhood, adolescence, and development, along with ideas around education and trauma, took on new significance in the nineteenth century, setting generic terms that have been continually mobilized, revised and reimagined in the coming-of-age memoirs of the twentieth century and beyond. Readings by Mary Prince, John Stuart Mill, Charles Dickens, George Orwell, Kathryn Harrison, Jamaica Kincaid, and Alison Bechdel, among others. This course will be of particular interest to those working on autobiographical narrative and will ask you to deepen your understanding of the past and present of this ever-developing form through critical and creative responses and projects.

Instructor(s): Elaine Hadley and William Boast  
 Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 22920, CRWR 40500, CRWR 20500, ENGL 42920

**MAPH 44422. Sounding Viral - Metaphor, Media, Aesthetics. 100 Units.**

Earworms, hooks, catchy tunes, sticky sounds. Far predating Old Town Road or Gangnam Style, music has been conceived of as an infectious cultural force-but the 21st-century regime of ubiquitous digital and social media platforms has amplified and accelerated the potential for music-gone-viral. In this seminar we will grapple with a range of questions that interrogate specific digital assemblages, as well as longer histories and broader concepts of sonic contagion. What does virality sound like? Look like? Feel like? What are the aesthetics of the viral? What does digital viral circulation have to do with "real" biological contagion, in its patterns and mechanisms of infection and social spread? How does digital virality happen? What are its media, social, structural preconditions? (How) is it musical? In seeking to answer these questions, and in surveying what it might mean to engage in a musicology of the digital age more broadly, we will read across disciplines including musicology and popular music studies, sound studies, philosophy and critical theory, media and platform studies. The quarter will begin with an investigation of keywords and more "canonical" texts, and will proceed through case studies and practical (auto)ethnographic engagements with contemporary digital sonic culture.

Instructor(s): Paula Harper  
 Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 44422

**MAPH 47200. Spinoza's Ethics. 100 Units.**

An in-depth study of Benedict Spinoza's major work, the *Ethics*, supplemented by an investigation of some of his early writings and letters. Focus is on Spinoza's geometric method, the meaning of and arguments for his substance monism, his doctrine of parallelism, and his account of the good life.

Instructor(s): Andrew Pitel  
 Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Open to undergraduate and MA students, and all others with consent.

Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 27200, PHIL 47200

