

# MALS

Master of Arts  
In Liberal Studies

S p e c t r u m

Oakland University  
Rochester, Michigan

Fall 2011  
Volume 7 Issue 1

## Letter from the Director

To those of you returning to class this fall, welcome back! And to our new MALS students joining us for the first time, welcome to one of OU's most innovative and creative graduate programs. I hope you all will have a year filled with new ideas, broader perspectives and intellectual challenges of the most intriguing kind.

As many of you know, this academic year will be my last at Oakland as I will retire from the university in 2012. A new MALS director will be selected in the winter semester, and you will have an opportunity to meet him or her at our spring celebration in April. I am confident that the new director will enjoy working with all of you as much as I have.

I will leave further reflections on MALS and retirement for the next newsletter, but I know already that I will miss all of you who have been so engaged in the program and whose ideas and enthusiasm have made working with MALS students such a great pleasure.

This year has begun well for the program. One of our students, Susan Walsh, will have an article published in the *Oakland Journal* this fall. Its title celebrates the fact that it is a truly interdisciplinary study: "Man, Metal and Metaphor: The meaning of metal to the early medieval warrior culture in Northwestern Europe interpreted through a reading of Beowulf." Her goal was

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“to analyze Beowulf focusing on two of the poem’s shining stars (Fe) and (Au), iron and gold; to show that these metals played identical roles culturally and literarily; and to demonstrate how understanding the culture’s relationship with metal leads to a new interpretation of the poem’s conclusion.” In the process of writing her paper, she drew upon the disciplines of literature, history, and archaeology as well as chemistry. The paper was

originally written for the MALS core seminar, Metals and Man (LBS 504) taught by Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Brieger. Congratulations to Sue on a wonderful piece of writing!

Another aspect of the program’s good start is that the number of students taking courses this fall is up. As a result, many of you are now busy with course work. In addition, several MALS students are writing their project proposals or have nearly finished their final projects, so we anticipate a new crop of MA graduates in the academic year of 2011-2012.

It has been a good year for me so far, as well, in that the second edition of my text on modern China appeared this summer. More recently, I published an article on Uyghur women’s place in the history of modern China in the European journal *Archiv Orientalni: Quarterly Journal of African and Asian Studies*. The year ahead will be busy, too, as I will participate in two up-coming conferences, one in Toronto, Canada and another in Edinburgh, Scotland. Like many other professors, for me retirement will not mean an end to research or conference attendance to meet with colleagues in my field of study. But it will mean more time for academic work and, equally important, more time with my husband and family. These are things I look forward to with great anticipation.

As the semester moves ahead, I wish you all stimulating hours in the classroom and continued enjoyment of the immense satisfaction that comes with intellectual growth.

Warm wishes,

Linda Benson



## Oakland University Art Gallery



For more than 40 years, the Oakland University Art Gallery (OUAG) has delivered diverse, museum-quality art to metro Detroit audiences. From September to May, the OUAG presents six different exhibitions – from cutting-edge contemporary art to projects exploring historical and global themes. The gallery also presents lectures, performances, tours, special events and more.

Oakland University Art Gallery is part of the Department of Art and Art History, College of Arts and Sciences and our mission is aligned with the academic identity of the department. Emphasizing excellence, Oakland University Art Gallery is dedicated to the enrichment of the individual through the intellectual and emotional enjoyment of the visual arts.

Hours: September through May. Tuesday—Sunday: Noon to 5pm

Location: 208 Wilson Hall. 248.370.3005

The OUAG is closed Mondays and holidays.  
All exhibitions are free of charge.

The current exhibition in the gallery is:

**Multiplicity, Connection & Divergence:  
African Art from the John F. Korachis Collection**

**September 10 - November 20, 2011**





## Final Project Seminar

Do you have 20 credits or more completed in the MALS program? Then it is time to start thinking seriously about your Final Project, the last step in completing your MALS degree.

A proposal must be submitted and approved by the MALS Executive Committee before you may register for your Final Project (LBS 600).

In order to assist you, a Final Project Seminar will be held, Wednesday, October 19, 2011 from 5:00—6:30pm in Lake Superior Room A (on the lower level of the OC).

This seminar is open to any student in the MALS program. Please R.S.V.P. to Graciela at 248.370.2154 or Osterber@oakland.edu if you are planning on attending.

## Did you know?

- Pawley Hall has a drop box for library books
- OU has a Career Services Center
- OU matriculated 50 students in its Medical School this fall
- OU has a fencing club
- Kresge Library is home to more than 747,000 volumes, 1.1 million microfiche and more than 100 computers
- OU offers 134 baccalaureate degree programs and 124 graduate degree and certificate programs
- Student to faculty ratio is 19-1
- 94% of the faculty holds a Doctoral Degree

## KUDOS

### Congratulations to Dr. Linda Benson!



Dr. Linda Benson, Director of the MALS Program and Professor Modern China, has recently published the Second and Revised edition of her book *China Since 1949*.

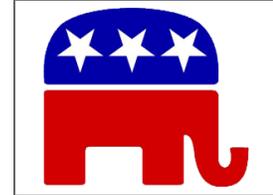
Professor Benson has also penned:

*China's Last Nomads: The History and Culture of China's Kazaks,*  
and, *The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Republican National Debate at OU

Oakland University will host a national Republican presidential debate on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 in the O'rena. This debate will be broadcast on CNBC from 8pm-10pm and will also be streamed live on CNBC.com. The debate is co-sponsored by CNBC and the Michigan Republican Party.



### OU Fall Speaker Series

#### **“The Complexities of Service Learning: When Service Learning Does(n’t) Work”**

Four years ago, the OU communication program made explicit its commitment to prepare students for ethical and context-sensitive communication by extending service learning (SL) from the capstone to its introductory courses. This lecture will focus on the results of a survey conducted by the professors Heisler and Talbert.

**November 11, 2011    Heritage Room—OC    Noon—1:00pm**

*-Prof. Jennifer Heisler, Associate Professor of Communication, has taught several MALS courses, most recently Communication Theory in Summer 2011.*

### Need a Science Credit??

#### **Fundamentals of Organic Farming in the Urban Setting**

LBS 514 Summer 2012 Tuesday/Thursday 8am-10am

The course will be held on campus at the Oakland University farm.  
The course is 4 credits and the Lab/Field Experience 1 credit.



## GRADUATION AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP

### Don't forget to apply for graduation!

Graduate students receiving degrees at the master's level need to apply for graduation one semester or session prior to the semester or session of intended graduation. Please go to: [https://www2.oakland.edu/grad/web/secure/app4deg/app\\_grad.cfm](https://www2.oakland.edu/grad/web/secure/app4deg/app_grad.cfm) to complete the application process.

The next opportunities to apply are:

April Graduation—Last Friday in January

June Graduation—Last Friday in January

August Graduation—Last Friday in June

December Graduation—Last Friday in September

## MALS GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP

The Graduate Assistant is a candidate for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, dividing her/his time between eight credits of course work and fifteen to twenty hours of supervised activity for the MALS program. S/he is assigned each semester to assist the MALS Director in any activities relevant to the teaching, administration and scholarship of the MALS program and to the Graduate Assistant's growth in these areas. Contact the MALS Director, Professor Linda Benson at (248) 370-2539 or email [benson@oakland.edu](mailto:benson@oakland.edu). Watch for the application deadline and full announcement in the Spring 2012 issue of *Spectrum*.

### Follow Oakland University Online



or at [www.oakland.edu](http://www.oakland.edu)

## ***HAVE YOU WRITTEN A GREAT PAPER , ESSAY OR POEM?***

### ***Do You Dream of Being Published?***

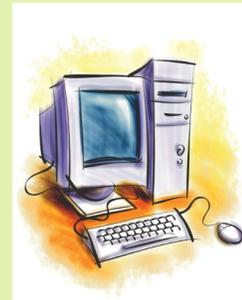
***Confluence: The Journal of Graduate Liberal Studies*** is an interdisciplinary journal devoted to the publication of scholarly and creative works by students, faculty, and alumni of graduate liberal studies (GLS) programs. It is published biannually in the fall and spring.

*Confluence* welcomes manuscripts from students, faculty, and graduates of GLS programs, including essays, research papers, short stories, poetry, and other creative works. For more information contact Ken Smith, Editor at [Ksmith@iusb.edu](mailto:Ksmith@iusb.edu) or visit the *Confluence* at: [www.confluence.ou.edu](http://www.confluence.ou.edu)

**OAKLAND JOURNAL**, a publication of Oakland University, provides an open forum for students, faculty and staff to be exposed to the work of their colleagues and peers, and to demonstrate to students the importance of writing. It is also a wonderful forum for students to achieve their first publication. For more information about the journal, please visit: [ww2.oakland.edu/oujournal/](http://ww2.oakland.edu/oujournal/) Submissions should be sent to the Managing Editors at [wynn@oakland.edu](mailto:wynn@oakland.edu) or [ptmitzel@oakland.edu](mailto:ptmitzel@oakland.edu).

## **Student Technology Center**

The STC is the headquarters for the promotion, instruction and support of technology literacy. From beginners looking to learn the basics to experts seeking to hone their skills, the STC's training, education and hands-on learning experiences offers on-campus services to meet OU students' ever-increasing technology needs. Core services are as follows:



**Technology mentoring:** Stop by and take advantage of STC's walk-in mentoring during operating hours or make an appointment for more in depth one-on-one mentoring. The STC supports a wide range of software products, and can assist in learning or using the most current programs.

**Free equipment loans:** The HD camcorder loan program, digital camera loan program and laptop loan program allow currently registered students to rent out the equipment free of charge. Cameras and camcorders are loaned out for 48hrs and Tablet PC's for two weeks

By aiding students in their academic and personal pursuits, the services available through the STC build and enhance technological skills that lead to success – in the classroom, workplace and life.

**Fall/Winter Hours:** 9am - 9pm Monday - Thursday 9am - 5pm Friday . You may contact the STC at (248) 370-4TEC (4832) , by e-mail at [stc@oakland.edu](mailto:stc@oakland.edu), or in person at 44 Oakland Center.



## Dr. Amanda Burgess-Proctor

Amanda Burgess-Proctor is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology. She received her Ph.D. in Criminal Justice from Michigan State University. Her primary research interests include feminist criminology, criminological theory, intimate partner violence, and intersections of race, class, and gender. She has published articles in *Feminist Criminology*, *Violence Against Women*, *Violence & Victims*, and *Women & Criminal Justice*.

### What is your academic background?

I did my undergraduate work at Grand Valley State University, where I double-majored in criminal justice and psychology and my graduate work at Michigan State University. Both my Master's degree and Ph.D. are from the School of Criminal Justice at MSU. (Go Green!)

### What lead you to Sociology?

I'm actually a criminologist by training, albeit one with a very sociological perspective. Crime is a social problem, so it only makes sense to study it using a sociological lens.

### What is it about the study of Sociology that is particularly interesting to you?

I have had a life-long interest in the study of crime. In fact, I'm probably in the minority in that I never changed my major in college -- I always knew I wanted to pursue a career related to criminal justice. I often joke that there's good job security in criminology because there will always be crime for criminologists to study, but what makes me so passionate about the field is educating the general public about the realities of crime causation and crime control policy.

### What courses have you taught that were of most interest to you?

Of course I enjoy all of the courses I teach, but I have special fondness for my drug policy course, SOC 300 Alcohol, Drugs, & Society.

### Do you have any hobbies either related to your field of study or outside of it?

Outside of work, my family (my husband and three young daughters) occupies most of my free time! Some of my hobbies include running, singing, and listening to music.

### How long have you been teaching at Oakland?

This is my third year at OU. Prior to that I spent a year in a research position at the Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University.

### Did you teach prior to Oakland?

I taught courses as a graduate student, but OU is my first tenure-track position.

## Winter 2012 MALS Courses

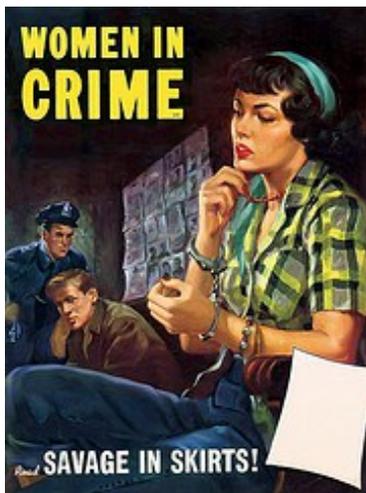
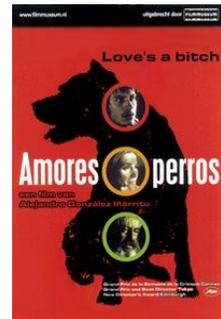
### CORE Seminar in Language & Literature - LBS 501

#### Latin American Film and Literature: Differing Faces of Violence in Contemporary Latin America

Monday 6:30pm—9:50pm

Professor Aldona Pobutsky, Modern Languages and Literatures Department

This interdisciplinary course examines the multifold aspects of violence as depicted in various novels, dramas, documentaries, short stories and film across Latin America. It explores state violence towards 'others,' be they political dissidents in Chile or Argentina during the Dirty War era or Hispanic immigrants who attempt to cross the U.S-Mexican border illegally. It tackles social issues of poverty and narcotrafficking in Brazil and Colombia and their traumatic effect on the marginal Latin American subjects from humble origins. It also explores violence of patriarchal cultural economies that have historically permeated larger social structures, leading to women's subjugation.



NEW ADDITION!!

### Women, Crime & Justice

LBS 513 Tuesday/Thursday 10:00am—11:47am

Amanda Burgess-Proctor, Sociology &  
Anthropology

Various issues related to women's experiences with the criminal justice system as offenders, victims and practitioners will be explored. We will draw upon feminist criminological scholarship to examine topics including the historical place of women in the study of crime, the contrasting explanations of men's and women's criminality, the relationship between women's victimization experiences and offending behaviors, and the role of women in traditionally male-dominated criminal justice careers.

## Chinese Art

LBS 512

Tuesday/Thursday 3:00pm—4:47pm

Professor Shuishan Yu



This course will focus on the development of architecture, sculpture, painting and other art forms (bronze, ceramic, lacquer ware, jade) in China from prehistory to modern times.



## Ancient Greece & Rome



LBS 512 Professor Jace Crouch

Thursday 6:30pm—9:50pm

This course provides an historic overview of the various intellectual, political, and cultural legacies of ancient Greece and Rome, from the Homeric period to the collapse of the Roman Empire.



## Peoples and Cultures of Mexico & Central America

Wednesday 5:30pm—8:50pm LBS 513 Professor Henri Gooren

This course will examine the peoples and cultures of *Mesoamerica*: Mexico and Central America, their history of conquest and resistance, their cultures, their economies, their religions, and the contemporary situation of both the indigenous population and the mestizos. Rich ethnographic case studies from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica will be explored and explained – including the recent Zapatista guerrilla uprising in Chiapas, Mexico.

## WATER

**Celebrating the Liberal Arts, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, is a College of Arts and Sciences series established to highlight the ways in which the diversity of the liberal arts can inform a single topic or idea. During the 2011-2012 academic year we will explore a wide variety of issues related to the theme Water.**

**Water is essential to the survival of human life. At times it acts as a network that links people and places and at others it is a divisive force. Water can be the source of geographic and political borders and tensions, is often essential in the expansion of trade, and serves as a purifier in most religious traditions. Water has also been a source of inspiration in the performing and fine arts, and a critical element in defining the culture of various groups of people. In its various forms water permeates social, political, geographical, economic, biological, and religious affairs, among others.**

**Water touches our lives in one form or another in ways that relate to virtually every discipline contained with the College of Arts and Sciences. The purpose of this series is to explore the significance and relationship of water within and across various disciplines.**

### The Politics of Water

LBS 513

Tuesday/Thursday 10:00am—11:47am

Professor Pat Piskulich



Population growth, overuse, and global warming are placing unprecedented strain on the planet's water resources. That water is a public good not circumscribed by political boundaries complicates politics and policymaking substantially. Closest to home, for example, conflicts over rights to and protection of the Great Lakes have local, state, national, and international dimensions. Whether technology can limit scarcity is also worth exploring. But it is not at all farfetched to imagine a world in which hydro politics is every bit as significant as petro politics.

# MALS

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

## IMPORTANT DATES

### 2011

November 23 Thanksgiving Recess Begins 10:00pm

November 28 Classes Resume 7:30am

December 3 Fall 2011 Classes End 10:00pm

December 5—10 Final Exams

December 23—January 2 Holiday Recess

### 2012

January 4 Winter Classes Begin 7:30am

January 27 Deadline to file application for April 2012 graduation

February 20—26 Winter Break Begins February 18, 10:00pm

February 27 Classes Resume 7:30am



**MALS** Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

Linda Benson Ph.D., Director

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