

MALS

Master of Arts In Liberal Studies

Oakland University

Rochester, Michigan

S p e c t r u m

Fall 2010

Letter from the Director

Volume 6 Issue 1

Welcome to the 2010-2011 Academic Year!

I want to extend a warm welcome to all of you returning to the university this fall and especially to those who are new to OU and to the MALS program this year. I hope you have a great year ahead!

It is wonderful to be back on our bustling campus where fall classes are well underway. As some of you know, in the winter semester of 2010 I had the opportunity for a sabbatical leave which proved especially productive. I was able to revise and expand my book, *China Since 1949* (Pearson, 2002) adding new chapters which cover an extended range of topics and trace the on-going social and economic changes in China which, this past summer, became the world's second largest economy. After the manuscript was completed, I traveled to Hong Kong, one of China's special administrative regions, and Taiwan where a multitude of changes reflect the island's rapid economic advances.

In my absence, Professor Stacy Hahn, of the Modern Languages and Literatures Department, served as the acting MALS director, and I thank her for all her work on behalf of the program. In the winter semester, she will be teaching the MALS core seminar in the humanities, LBS 502: French Culture through Cinema. She will also lead the proposed MALS trip to Paris, France, during winter break 2011. (Please see details



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on her course on page 5, and, on the trip, page 9 of this newsletter). If you are interested in joining us for this 8-9 day visit to one of the world's great cities, please contact the MALS program secretary, Graciela Osterberg, at 248-370-2154.

I am also delighted to note that the number of students enrolling in LBS 600, the final requirement for the MALS degree, has been increasing; four people are currently working on their final projects and two people recently finished their work. The newsletter will be featuring some of our newest graduates, and in this issue you can read about Jane Hellman's recently completed project and her thoughts on the

process. (Please see the story on page 6)

Another noteworthy development is that next summer (2011) MALS will offer new course options that I would like to highlight here. One of these is a new online course, LBS 511: Communication Theory, taught by Professor Jennifer Heisler, chair of the Communications and Journalism Department. For students who may spend their summer away from the Oakland County area, this may be the perfect opportunity to continue their course work in the summer months. Another new option will be a course offered at Macomb Community College. This is also in the area of communications, LBS 511: Multicultural Communication, taught by Professor Kellie Hay, in the evenings on Mondays and Wednesdays. Both of these offerings strengthen and extend MALS options for students.

Another change this year is the move away from our conventional Open House. Instead, MALS is hosting "Dessert and Coffee" events in the Lake St. Clair Room (next to the Gold Rooms in the OC). The first of these, held on September 29, was a lively occasion with students and faculty enjoying each other's company and refreshments. If you were unable to make the first one, please join us for the next event, to be held on Monday, November 8, from 5 – 7:00 p.m., again in the Lake St. Clair Room.

I hope you all have a productive and enjoyable year ahead!

Warm wishes,
Linda Benson, Director, MALS



Front cover: Buddhist Temple on the outskirts of Taipei, Taiwan

Above: Linda Benson in Kowloon, Hong Kong

Right: Buddhist Temple interior, Taipei, Taiwan



Introducing... Laura Gononjian, the 2010-2011 MALS Graduate Assistant. Laura is in her second year of study with the program and anticipates completing her coursework at the end of the Fall 2012 semester. Laura was born and raised in Birmingham, MI and is a graduate of Albion College with majors in History and Music. She has traveled extensively and has lived in Chicago, Boston, New York and most recently returned from 7 years living in the Republic of Armenia. While in Armenia, Laura was the program director for a tree planting organization, which has planted over 1 million trees; the managing editor of an English language magazine; and worked as a consultant with governments and embassies.

In addition to her studies, Laura is a co-owner of Taste-Full Tours, a culinary tour company which introduces patrons to family owned food businesses and restaurants in southeastern Michigan.

For assistance with research questions, Laura can be found in Varner Hall 411 on Tuesday from 12:00—2:00 p.m. and Thursday 1:00—4:00 p.m. She may also be reached by e-mail at lgononi@oakland.edu

You are Cordially Invited

MALS Dessert & Coffee

Monday, November 8 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Lake St. Clair Room

(Next to the Gold Rooms)

Oakland Center

Please join us for this informal opportunity to meet with your fellow

MALS students, prospective students and professors.

Please R.S.V.P. to Graciela at 248-370-2154.

MALS BEYOND BORDERS



Cari Lambert is a MALS student currently living in Frankfurt, Germany where her husband has accepted a 1-2 year position in the automotive industry.

Cari graduated from Madonna University with a degree in Social Work and Sign Language Studies. Prior to beginning her course of study in MALS, Cari was employed as a social worker in the field of mental health, providing services to developmentally disabled and mentally ill individuals. She completed three courses in the MALS program and continued to work full-time

before her “sabbatical.”

SPECTRUM: Why did you choose the MALS program?

LAMBERT: I graduated with my undergraduate degree in the mid-90’s expecting fully to continue with my education immediately and obtain a Master’s Degree in Social Work. Once I began working in the field of social work I realized that a Master’s Degree in Social Work did not align with my career goals. Year after year passed. The desire to obtain a Master’s Degree never waned but a specific program never came into focus. I then learned of the MALS program and it seemed like a perfect fit. I was at a point in my career where I felt settled and was confident in my decision not to have pursued the MSW, to ‘learn for the sake of learning’ and to ‘expand my horizons.’ The MALS program offers the opportunity to do just that. The program is designed in such a way that a student can craft a degree based on his/her interests. It ensures that a student’s focus doesn’t become too narrow by offering an eclectic array of class choices within a multi-disciplinary framework.

SPECTRUM: What do you do on a daily basis in Frankfurt?

LAMBERT: I am asked this question all the time and always seem to have difficulty providing a sufficient answer. I have transitioned from working full-time and going to school part-time to not working or taking classes at all. I have found that I am continually busy, whether I’m taking care of our apartment, running my daily errands, exploring the city, traveling, or engaging in activities with the American Women’s Club. Photography is one of my hobbies and I have enjoyed the opportunity to spend quite a bit of time behind the lens of my camera. I’ve also begun to read much more than I ever have which has been very enjoyable.

(Continued on page 5)

Above: Obersalzburg (Hitler's Eagle's Nest) overlooking the Alps and Konigsee.

(Continued from page 4)

SPECTRUM: Describe what was the most difficult adjustment you have made living overseas?

The transition to moving/living overseas was much easier than either my husband or I anticipated. We have been here approximately four months and have found there are phases to the adjustment though. First, there is a honeymoon phase where everything is new, fun and exciting. Then you find that you're beginning to feel a little more settled, life is becoming comfortable, and a routine has become established. Life is still fun and exciting. The phase that we find ourselves in now is that life is still very enjoyable but the differences between life in America and life in Germany are no longer novelties but rather a reality that you must accept or continually struggle against. We have concluded there are pros and cons to living in both places and our efforts at the moment are to focus on the pros of Germany. The list is long but the pros that come to mind immediately include Germany's beautiful landscape, flowers in abundance sold very inexpensively, inexpensive quality wines, phenomenally disciplined drivers (we will only wish for German drivers on I-275 and I-696 when we return home!), and the many, many kind people who have gone out of their way to help expats like us. Of course, high on the list as well is Germany's location within Europe; centrally located it allows for ease of travel anywhere throughout Europe. In general, we have found that focusing on the positive (as with anything in life) makes our experience that much more enjoyable. Most importantly we have found that willingness to adapt as well as having a sense of humor is vital.

SPECTRUM: What do you miss most about living in the U.S.?

LAMBERT: Sheer convenience, air conditioning, and insecticides on produce (not necessarily always in that order!). Germany is a modern, first-world country but there are significant differences between it and the U.S. To address the issue of convenience, I decided I would rely on a bicycle and/or the public transportation system. In Frankfurt proper this is common practice. Not only is the public transportation system first rate but parking in Frankfurt is scarce and expensive. I underestimated the effects of this on me. Errands often take longer than I anticipate, I am continually exposed to the elements outdoors and am dependent upon the transportation system's schedule. What I purchase has to fit in the saddlebags on my bicycle (generally two grocery bags) or



In front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin.

it has to be light enough that I can carry it all the way home. To this point, life in Germany has forced me to become more organized as well as frugal. As it relates to air conditioning I think it probably speaks for itself. Most people in America enjoy the benefits of cool air on a hot, stifling day. In Germany there really is no reprieve from the heat. I tried to make the best of it and used this summer's heat as an opportunity to explore the many public pools that Frankfurt has to offer.

Congratulations Graduates!



Jane Hellman and Brenda Bujold recently completed their final projects, earning them their MALS degree. In this issue we are featuring an interview with Jane about her project entitled, “Personality Psychology and Russian Fiction: An Analysis of Tatyana Tolstaya’s Elderly Characters.” Brenda Bujold’s final project will be featured in our Winter 2011 issue.

What is your final project about?

As an interdisciplinary project my thesis includes the disciplines of psychology and literature. In particular, I focus on personality psychology and the process of aging by applying the six-foci theoretical framework regarding the development of personality to two elderly Russian women in short stories written by Tatyana Tolstaya. This involves explaining the various components within the framework and then correlating how they are manifested in the two characters.

What was the most challenging aspect of the project?

One of the greatest challenges (but also one of the most interesting aspects) was combining the two disciplines. Such a process requires the awareness of and adherence to the knowledge base of each discipline, but the endeavor also requires creativity in constructing a thesis that is inclusive but unique.

What did you learn, either about the subject or about yourself?

As an English major undergraduate I was always (and still am) impressed with how talented authors were able to understand and convey human behavior. This project has added to my knowledge about the specific elements of personality as put forth in a social science construct. Knowing these variables has aided in my awareness of how a writer creates realistic characters.

What advice do you have for your fellow MALS students as they think about and prepare for their final projects?

I would suggest that awareness of timing is critical. From proposal to completion the thesis-writing process is time-consuming, and one must also allow additional time for committee members to respond regarding suggested inclusions and revisions. If a student has an anticipated completion date, be prepared to extend that if necessary! It is also a challenge to balance the two disciplines, and to be certain that one discipline isn’t represented more than the other. This is where the committee members’ input was additionally so valuable.

Jane’s Committee Members were Prof. Deb McGinnis, Psychology, Chair; Prof. Jeff Insko, Department of English; and Prof. Tamara Jhashi, Department of Art and Art History.



REC CENTER

The OU Rec Center is open to any OU student who is enrolled in at least one on-campus class. The Rec Center includes workout facilities, weight room, gym, pool, hot tub, racquet ball and squash courts and free classes available daily. Specialty classes and monthly passes are also available. For more information go to www.oakland.edu/campusrec, or call 248-370-4732.



Oakland University Police Department

Safewalk Program—Do you need an escort when walking alone on campus at night? Feel free to call the OUPD and request a Student Cadet to walk with you.

Oakland University Emergency Notification System—Receive text messages in case of an on campus emergency. Sign up at www.police.oakland.edu/safety.

The OUPD is open 24 hours a day and may be contacted at 248-370-3331 or www.police.oakland.edu.

Campus Police can also help if you are locked out of your vehicle or need a jump start for your car. For emergencies call 911 or text 911@oakland.edu

Registration

Winter Registration for 2011 is still open.

See courses on pages 10 and 11 and register today!

Spectrum...pass it along!

Do you know someone who may be interested in the MALS program?

If so, please pass along this copy of the SPECTRUM or contact Linda Benson at benson@oakland.edu for additional copies and/or more information on MALS.

Interesting Story?

In this issue we published an interview with a MALS student currently living abroad.

Do you have an idea for a story you would like to read in Spectrum?

Contact Laura Gononian at lgononi@oakland.edu

Things You Should Know

PowerPoint got you stymied? Just can't figure out how to register for classes online? Need to borrow a camcorder or Tablet PC?

The Student Technology Center (44 Oakland Center stc@oakland.edu 248 370-4832) 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. Available services include:

Technology mentoring: Stop by and take advantage of walk-in mentoring during operating hours or make an appointment for more in depth one-on-one mentoring.

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

Haven't written a research paper in 10+ years? Oh, how the times have changed. Don't look for the old paper card catalogue in the library, now nearly everything is electronic.

Need help navigating this new world? The reference librarians at the **Kresge Library** are ready and willing to help. Contact the reference desk (248 370-4426) for a 30-45 minute one-on-one session with a librarian who will help you develop a research strategy to identify resources relevant to your topic/interests.

The reference desk also offers online chat via Instant Message at **kresgeref** on Yahoo Messenger, MSN Messenger, AIM, or google talk any time the Reference Desk is staffed. You may also e-mail reference questions to ref@oakland.edu



Need assistance in writing and editing a paper?

The Oakland University Writing Center (Joan Rosen Writing Studio 212 Kresge Library, 248-370-3120) is open to OU students, faculty, and staff in all disciplines at any stage of the writing process. The center provides writers with an interested and supportive audience of well-trained consultants who help both novice and expert develop ideas and revise drafts into polished products.

Winter break in Paris, Oui, Oui, Oui!!!

Join MALS students and faculty* on a
fantastic trip to Paris.

Dates: February 18—26, 2011^

Cost: \$2,500—\$3,000 per person**

Highlights: Seine River Cruise, Notre-Dame Cathedral, National Museum of Art, Place de la Bastille, Eiffel Tower, L'Arc de Triomphe, Jardin des Tuileries, Louvre Museum, Versailles, Musée D'Orsay, Sacré-Coeur Basilica, Montmartre, & a walking tour of historic art-house cinemas.

For more information, please contact Graciela Osterberg at 248-370-2154.

*Spouses and significant others are welcome.

^ tentative dates

**The final price is under negotiation. Price includes: Airfare, hotel, airport transfer to hotel, guide, daily breakfast and dinner, excursions and activities, public transport costs, taxes.

Winter Semester 2011 MALS Schedule of Classes

LBS 502 French Culture Through Film

(Core Seminar in the Humanities)

Monday 6:30-9:50 p.m. Professor Stacey Hahn

In this course we will examine French cinema both as an art and a manifestation of French culture. We will begin our investigation of French cinema by observing its history and development beginning with the silent film, then moving onto the classical era, war years, the New Wave movement and the realist films. We will examine various genres of films as well as important filmmakers who have left an indelible imprint on the history of filmmaking and whose films reflect the historical and political climate of their times.



LBS 511 Ethical Issues in Media

Monday and Wednesday 10:00—11:47 a.m. Professor Garry Gilbert

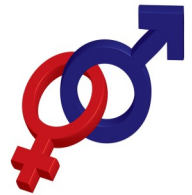
Ethical Issues in Media is a study of professional ethics with an emphasis on print journalism, though helpful and applicable to electronic journalism as well. The class is conducted in a discussion format where students analyze a series of factual problems that arise in daily media operations.



LBS 512 The Philosophy of Gender

Monday and Wednesday 3:30—5:17 p.m. Professor Phyllis Rooney

This course will explore philosophical issues relating to gender. Different approaches toward dealing with sexism will be examined, as part of an ongoing analysis of what constitutes human nature, freedom, equality and the relationship between the individual and the state.



LBS 511 The Rise of Electronic Media

Tuesday and Thursday 1:00—2:47 p.m. Professor Kathleen Battles

The Rise of Electronic Media examines the development of the technologies, institutions, regulations, cultural forms, and audiences of electronic media.

The class will consider the ways in which media was both shaped by and was a force in changing cultural and social conditions.



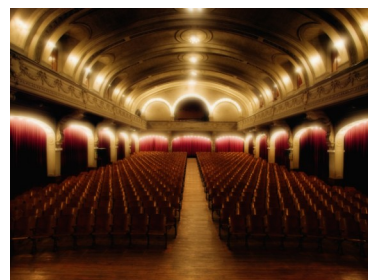
Winter Semester 2011 MALS Schedule of Classes

LBS 512 History of Musical Theatre

Tuesday and Thursday 10:00—11:47 a.m.

Professor Kerro Knox

Students will focus on dramatic themes, musical styles, dance innovations and the artistic elements of American Musical Theatre while exploring the artists, producers and audiences that reflected the changing viewpoints, beliefs, and lifestyles of the nation.



LBS 512 History of Photography 1914—Present

Wednesday 6:30—9:50 p.m.

Professor Claude Baillargeon

History of Photography 1914—Present examines the growth of still photography as a form of visual art and communication from the World War I to the present.

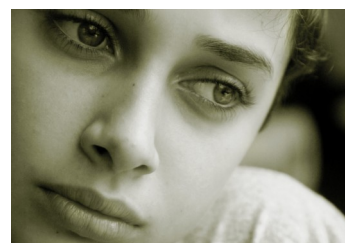


LBS 513 Juvenile Delinquency & Social Control

Tuesday 6:00—9:20 p.m.

Professor Amanda K. Burgess

This course provides an analysis of the institutions that influence delinquent behavior (e.g., families, peers, schools, neighborhoods, etc.), as well as the implications of these explanations for juvenile justice policy. Drawing upon current criminological and sociological research, this class offers an empirical and conceptual evaluation of both delinquency theory and juvenile justice.



LBS 511 Creative Nonfiction Workshop

Tuesday 6:00—9:20 p.m.

Professor Linda McCloskey

In this workshop students will read and study non-fiction essays and essayists. In addition, students will write personal essays on topics of their choice throughout the course. Class discussion of assigned readings is a large part of the course. Students will workshop with each other to fine tune their writing skills.



MALS

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

2010-2011 Academic Calendar

Fall 2010 (September 2-December 11)

Classes begin 7:30 a.m.	Thursday September 2
Labor Day holiday	Monday September 6
Thanksgiving recess begins 10 p.m.	Wednesday November 24
Classes resume 7:30 a.m.	Monday November 29
Classes end 10 p.m.	Saturday December 4
Study day	Sunday December 5
Exams begin 7:30 a.m.	Monday December 6
Exams end 10 p.m.	Saturday December 11
Fall Commencement	Sat, Sun December 11, 12

Need assistance with writing, computing, or brainstorming for a project?

Laura Gononian, MALS Graduate Assistant

411 Varner Hall 248-370-2154

lgononi@oakland.edu

**Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:00—2:00 p.m. & Thursday, 1:00—4:00 p.m.,
as well as by appointment**