College of Liberal Arts

Faculty

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Coordinator for the Minor in
Social Justice and Citizenship
Chair of the Department

Program Overview

The Bishop's College of Liberal Arts offers a dynamic, interdisciplinary major for particularly motivated students interested in the intensive study of the great themes and texts of Western civilization. The heart of the program can be found in the Liberal Arts Foundation Courses (LIB 210–218), each of which engages, in an interdisciplinary and historical way, with a key theme in the history of the human condition. Students enrolled in Liberal Arts are welcomed into Bishop’s with an introductory seminar (LIB 100) and culminate their experience with a final year seminar (LIB 300) or any LIB 300-level course. Liberal Arts majors also complete a series of requirements from other departments (see below), for a total of 63 credits. Students in the Liberal Arts Program are encouraged to complete a second Major in a discipline of their choice. Many courses may be counted towards the requirements of both Majors. The Liberal Arts Program also offers an Honours degree, which requires the completion of a comprehensive research thesis.

Programs

Liberal Arts Honours Degree
(69 credits)

Liberal Arts students may opt to complete an Honours Degree. In addition to fulfilling the normal requirements for a Major (see below), an Honours student must register in the fall of his or her final year for LIB 400 (fall) and LIB 401 (winter), the requirement of which is to write a supervised, interdisciplinary Honours thesis. In keeping with Divisional regulations, at least a 70% average, calculated on the best 60 credits in the program, would be necessary for graduation with an Honours degree.

1. First Year Seminar Course
LIB 100  Encountering Western Culture  3-3-1
By means of a study of classic texts in the Western cultural tradition, this class develops foundational skills in interdisciplinary education, reading, writing, conversation and seminar presentation.

2. Other First Year Requirements
• All Liberal Arts Majors must take CLA 100 or CLA 101 along with LIB 100, a Liberal Arts Foundation Course, and two electives in their first semester at Bishop’s.
• All Liberal Arts Majors must take an Introduction to Philosophy and an Introduction to Religion, Society and Culture course, as well as a Liberal Arts Foundation Course and two electives in their second semester at Bishop’s.
• All Liberal Arts Majors must take FIH 101 or FIH 102 and HIS 104 in their first or second year at Bishop’s. These courses help students get a sense of the broad scope of Western history (as opposed to more specialized historical topics).

3. Liberal Arts Foundation Courses
Normally Liberal Arts students are enrolled in one Liberal Arts Foundation Course in each semester of their degree. Majors must complete at least four Foundation Course credits. Each course has a “culture” or “social change” component that requires students to attend and discuss a selection of plays, musical performances, art exhibitions, social justice events, or lectures each semester.

LIB 210  Eros, Love and Desire
LIB 211  Empire and Its Enemies
LIB 212  In Search of Justice
LIB 213  The Use and Abuse of Beauty
LIB 214  Ecological Crisis and the Struggle for Environmental Justice
LIB 215  Ecstasy and Excess
LIB 216/ RSC 208  The Divine and Ultimate Concern
LIB 217  Space, Place & the Human Experience
LIB 218  The History and Philosophy of Science

4. Graduating Year Seminar
LIB 300  Interdisciplinary Seminar  3-3-0
A team-taught seminar which will explore a selected theme of interdisciplinary interest.

Liberal Arts Major (63 credits)  MAJLIB

Required Courses

1. First Year Seminar Course
First year Liberal Arts majors enroll in this course in their first semester at Bishop’s, or the first time it is offered after they become a Liberal Arts Major.

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4. Graduating Year Seminar
LIB 300  Interdisciplinary Seminar  3-3-0
A team-taught seminar which will explore a selected theme of interdisciplinary interest.

Prerequisite: LIB 400
5. Language Requirement
Liberal Arts Majors are required to take three courses in any single language (ancient or modern) and must have begun their language requirements by their second year.

6. Social Sciences Requirement
Any two Social Science courses (6 credits).

7. Natural Sciences/Mathematics Requirement
At least one course (3 credits) from Natural Sciences or Mathematics.

8. Humanities Breadth/Depth Requirements
Liberal Arts Majors are required to take 6 credits from two of the following three departments: Drama, English, Music. Liberal Arts Majors are also required to take three 300-level courses in the Humanities (including LIB capstone course).

List of Courses

Liberal Arts Foundation Courses

LIB 210 Eros, Love and Desire 3-3-0
When Plato wrote that eros is “giving birth in beauty,” he sparked a debate that has lasted millennia. Does the erotic lead us upwards toward wisdom, truth, and love of thy neighbour? Or is eros the chaotic, anti-social, and even destructive force of Dionysian rapture? This course will explore these and other classic theories of eros, love and desire.

LIB 211 Empire and its Enemies 3-3-0
“The sun never sets in my empire,” said Spanish King Carlos I in the 16th century—a phrase adopted by the British to signal not only the planetary breadth of their imperial achievement, but also the divine, solar blessing conferred on their conquests by God. What is this imperial aspiration, the desire to dominate? Why is Western history in a sense the history of empires constructed and empires resisted and destroyed? This course will trace the imperial aspiration and its enemies from the Roman city-state to the British nation-state to the eclipse of the state altogether by the modern capitalist corporation. It will analyze the various forms and modes of dominance and resistance up to and including the non-state actors of today.

LIB 212 In Search of Justice 3-3-0
“Let justice roll down like water, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.” So cried the prophet Amos, echoed thousands of years later when Martin Luther King insisted that “Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice!” This course will explore the changing and always contested meaning of justice in its many forms in Western history. Is justice little more than the ancient Greek claim that one should “do good to one’s friends, and harm to one’s enemies”? Or is there a universal form of justice that recognizes civil rights and social justice for the poor, women, racial and ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, and other marginalized peoples?

LIB 213 The Use and Abuse of Beauty 3-3-0
French writer Stendhal said in the 19th century that “beauty is the promise of happiness” and, upon seeing the beauty of Florence, he wondrously proclaimed, “I was in a sort of ecstasy… absorbed in the contemplation of sublime beauty … Everything spoke so vividly to my soul.” Yet only decades later his compatriot, poet Arthur Rimbaud, claimed that he wanted to “abuse” beauty, for he found it “bitter.” Dadaist and surrealist artist Tristan Tzara went even further, “I have a mad and starry desire to assassinate beauty…” Does Tzara signal not only a mad and starry desire to assassinate beauty…? This course will explore the fate of the beautiful, from the Greeks to 21st century life.

LIB 214 Ecological Crisis and the Struggle for Environmental Justice 3-3-0
Global warming, mass extinction and runaway pollution by toxic waste, plastics and other contaminants are only the most widely publicized aspects of what scientists agree is an ecological crisis that affects everyone and everything on the Earth. Paradoxically, nature and wilderness are not only necessary conditions for human well-being, but also have been amongst the greatest sources of our spiritual and artistic inspiration for centuries. Given that new generations will play a decisive role in addressing this crisis, this course will explore international dimensions of the historical, philosophical and cultural background of various forms of the human relationship with Nature, as well as examine some of the theories (agro-ecology, eco-feminism, deep ecology, emergence, etc.) and kinds of social movement organizing (Greenpeace, 350.org, Leap, etc.) that reply to the ecological crisis. The course will also introduce certain aspects of the experience and struggle of Indigenous peoples (e.g. Idle No More, Dakota Access, socio-environmental rights in Brazil, etc.), including of the Abenaki First Nation, upon whose unceded land Bishop’s University is built.

LIB 215 Ecstasy and Excess 3-3-0
“Joy is the most comprehensive mind…and it is from the summits of joy alone that each one will see the path to take.” American philosopher Alphonso Lingis claims here that humanity is the “ecstatic” species. In Greek the ek-static means “to the very condition that each one will see the path to take.” American philosopher Alphonso Lingis claims here that humanity is the “ecstatic” species. In Greek the ek-static means literally to be outside, even beyond oneself—to transcend what and who one is. In the last few hundred years, artists, writers, philosophers, and others have claimed that ecstasy and excess are not merely temporary states, but the very condition of human life. This course will explore a variety of theories, from the biological to the philosophical and the virtual, inspired by the idea that there is no “human nature” that we can’t exceed.

LIB 216 The Divine and Ultimate Concern 3-3-0
The divine is that about which we are “ultimately concerned”—so said theologian Paul Tillich of Union Seminary in New York. Is this just a last-ditch attempt to salvage faith and spirituality in the midst of charges that religion is, at best, an “opiate of the masses” (Marx) and, at worst, “pathetically infantile” (Freud)? Or again, is the role of religion being taken over by its long time sister in spirit—art? This course will explore the troubled and passionate place of religious experience and the aesthetic in Western civilization.

LIB 217 Towards Spatial Justice 3-3-0
Building a just society is not only an ideological concern. Our bodies, our landscapes, and our built environments all participate in the production of just and unjust spaces. Inclusion and exclusion, belonging and exile, power and disenfranchisement, home and homelessness: all of these modes of being play out on the canvas of our place and our body. In this course, we will examine cultural and social theories of placemaking and investigate the powerful relationship between our politics and our places, with a view to understanding how we can build justice into our environments.

LIB 218 The History and Philosophy of Science 3-3-0
Modern science has given us an unprecedented understanding of Nature - and with it, the power to transform our natural environment irrevocably. This interdisciplinary course will explore some key themes in the history and philosophy of science: the origins and evolution of Modern science; its roots in pre-Modern philosophy of Nature; its flowering in the Scientific Revolution; the Modern era, in which science ad scientific method is often taken for granted as the authoritative paradigm for all knowledge; the enormous contribution of science to society, economy and culture; and as well some important criticisms of the extent and character of scientific exploration of nature and human beings.

Liberal Arts Thematic Seminar Courses

These courses are in-depth, interdisciplinary seminar courses on topics relevant to the program of study of Liberal Arts majors. Instructors and topics are determined each year.

LIB 222 Citizenship and Democratic Practice I 3-3-0
Students learn not only the role and importance of civil society organizations, such as social movements, community groups, NGOs, churches and so on, but also commit themselves to an ongoing supervised internship in one or more of these organizations in Lennoxville, Sherbrooke, the wider Eastern Townships or indeed in other parts of Canada or the world. At least one or both of these internship courses (depending on the demands of each internship) is required for the Minor in Social Justice and Citizenship.
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"As the Twentieth century draws to a close, no one knows quite what to expect, if anything, of the future. There is a strong need for magic, for a place that is outside of time, for a postponement of reality. For Venice." —Gore Vidal

Once the crossroad of western and eastern civilizations, over the centuries Venice has been seen as the symbol of freedom and cosmopolitanism, but also as the city where artistic and cultural production can thrive. Venice surreal setting and the lusciousness of its artifacts have become emblematic of the cultural production of Western civilization, creating a unique landscape of unsurpassed aesthetic richness. It is in this exceptional urban scenery, that blends together water, art and culture, that this five-week course will take place. This language and culture course will provide students with a basic knowledge of Italian and familiarize them with the history and culture of one of the few cities that can fulfill our "need for magic," the "Serenissima." This course will be taught in English. Students who wish to count the course for Italian credit will submit their assignments in Italian and participate in certain additional activities in Italian.

This interdisciplinary course will explore (re)writings of German history by intellectuals and artists associated to Germany’s capital, (re)writings which expose the flaws and fallacies of a nation’s narrative. We will focus on the Weimar Republic, The Cold War and its aftermaths. Starting with a brief overview of Georg Simmel’s sociological depiction of the metropolis, we will then look at how works from Weimar Berlin revealed not only the instability of the nation’s founding myths but also the conflicts and contradictions which plagued the Weimar Republic (in literature, Benjamin, Brecht, Döblin; in visual arts, Dix, Grosz, Kirchner). We will then turn to the Cold War and its aftermaths, to examine how memory gets (de)constructed in literary texts and songs (Brussig, Grünbein, Bargeld), films (Wings of Desire, Berlin is in Germany), and architecture (Jewish Museum, Holocaust Memorial, documentary Berlin Babylon).

No prerequisite

In this course, we will examine how intellectuals and artists associated to Austria’s capital have been, ever since the advent of Freudian psychoanalysis, enlightened witnesses to their nation’s identity construction. Our interdisciplinary approach will enable us to investigate our topic from a variety of angles, focusing on two witnesses to their nation’s identity construction. Our interdisciplinary approach will enable us to see just how modern Goethe's Faust is – in its (for the time) subversive depictions of God, the devil, the quest for knowledge and the pleasures of the flesh. We will also examine how the story of Faust never ceased to inspire artists who created countless variations on the theme – from Gounod’s opera to Murnau’s expressionist film, from Mann’s novel Doktor Faustus to Kurosawa’s film Ikiru, to name but a few.

The aim of this interdisciplinary course is twofold: to introduce students to the emergence and evolution of ecological thought in German culture from the Middle Ages to the present, and to reflect on the resonance of such thought in 21st century’s most pressing preoccupation: the destruction of our planet and the extinction of species. Particular attention will be given to the spiritual, artistic, and literary expression of humans’ relationship to nature. Among the famous thinkers and artists whose works will be studied are Hildegard von Bingen, Alexander von Humboldt, Joseph Beuys, W. G. Sebald.

This is an intensive spring course that takes place primarily in Brazil. It consists of the study of Brazilian social movements, politics and culture in general and, in particular, the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (Movimento de Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra do Brasil, or MST). The course will include
students of and meetings with Brazilian social movements, labour unions, political parties, universities and other actors on the political scene in Brazil. The period in Brazil would be preceded and followed by research and essay assignments. The language of instruction is English, and all meetings in Brazil are translated.

LIB 371 New Orleans: Art, Activism and Culture before and after Katrina 3-3-0
Students in this course prepare for a March study trip to New Orleans by researching the history, politics and culture of this extraordinary city. There will be a particular focus on the aftermath of the Hurricane Katrina disaster, including activist and social movement organizing in response to the destruction of whole neighborhoods. On the basis of their research and experiences in New Orleans, each student will write and submit a comprehensive research paper at the end of the semester.

LIB 384 / ITA 385 Dante’s Divine Comedy 3-3-1
According to Dante Alighieri, none of us can save the wound in our souls without undertaking our own pilgrimage to hell, without purging our sins, and without letting go of ourselves so as to experience ecstatic union with the foundations of all reality. This is perhaps what James Joyce meant when he said that Dante is his “spiritual food” and that reading Dante is like “looking at the sun.” This course will unfold some of the philosophical, poetic, religious, political and historical richness of Dante’s allegorical masterpiece and lead each student on a personal journey through Inferno, Purgatorio and Paradiso.

LIB 386 Montaigne’s Essays and Early Modern Humanities 3-3-0
This course is an exploration of Michel Montaigne’s Essays, published in three volumes between 1580-1588. Framed by his celebrated phrase “What do I know?” (Que sais-je?), these writings examine the human condition with the fresh outlook of early modern skepticism. As Montaigne searches for moral examples that can assist us in the conduct of our lives, he gives surprising new inflexions to traditional wisdom on topics such as love, friendship, education, conversation, health, and dying.

LIB 387 Exuberant Beauty: The Poetry, Visual Art and Philosophy of William Blake 3-3-0
For William Blake beauty is not the delicate, the calm or the harmonious, but the exuberant. For Blake the pathway to wisdom is not prudence or fear, but excess. This extraordinary poet, visual artist and philosopher created a new world of culture in which humans are fulfilled only in the creative imagination. His poetry, engravings and paintings are unique and brilliant and his philosophy stakes revolutionary claims that are usually credited to later thinkers like Hegel and Nietzsche. In this course we will study Blake’s works with an eye to understanding his philosophical originality. We will follow the great literary critic Northrop Frye’s advice to “Read Blake or go to hell.”

Liberal Arts Independent Studies

LIB 230 Independent Study I 3-3-0
Students pursue a course of directed, independent study on an interdisciplinary theme under the supervision of a faculty member.

LIB 231 Independent Study II 3-3-0
Students pursue a course of directed, independent study on an interdisciplinary theme under the supervision of a faculty member.

LIB 232 Independent Study III 3-3-0
Students pursue a course of directed, independent study on an interdisciplinary theme under the supervision of a faculty member.

LIB 233 Independent Study IV 3-3-0
Students pursue a course of directed, independent study on an interdisciplinary theme under the supervision of a faculty member.

Minor in Social Justice and Citizenship (24 credits)

A healthy democracy requires that its citizens have the insight and skills to freely govern themselves. The university is therefore a vital institution to democracy. Accordingly, Bishop’s University is committed to help its students learn “to practice the respectful and informed dialogue that sustains democracy [and] to exercise the rights and responsibilities of good citizenship.”

While each department and program in the university implements this principle in its own way, the Minor in Social Justice and Citizenship takes this goal as its explicit aim. Each student enrolled in this minor completes eight courses (24 credits) made up of a mandatory theory course (LIB 212 or LIB 217), an internship of either one or two semesters (LIB 222 and LIB 223) and a further five or six courses chosen from the elective list below. In LIB 212, “In Search of Justice,” students seek to understand the nature of human freedom, the institutions and cultural practices that seek to cultivate it, and the forms of power and manipulation that threaten and undermine it. In LIB 217, “Space, Place, and the Human Experience,” students explore questions of social justice inside a spatial framework, in an attempt to understand how place making and spatial structures play into the formation of society & culture. In LIB 222 and LIB 223, “Citizenship and Democratic Practice,” students not only learn about the agents of democratic practice in civil society (individuals, artistic and cultural communities, social movements, NGOs, churches, etc) but are also required to participate in supervised internships in local and regional community and civil society organizations. Students in the Minor are also encouraged to do at least one of the international courses affiliated with the Minor: LIB 370 Social Movements and Social Change in Brazil, LIB 371 New Orleans: Art, Activism and Culture before and after Katrina, and SLP 399 Praxis Malawi.
Elective Course List for the Social Justice Minor:

Students must take any five or six courses from this list, albeit no more than three from any one department (depending on their internship).

- CLA 325 The Classic Tradition;
- CLA/HIS 201 Ancient Slavery and its Legacy
- CLA/POL 223 Democracy in the Ancient World
- EDU 305 Multicultural Education
- ENG 239 Feminist Literary Theory
- ENG 342 Romanticism and Revolution
- ESG 224 Human Impact on the Environment
- ESG 248 Geography of Food
- ESG 266 Environmental Policy
- ESG 268 Global Environmental Change
- ESG 350 Environmental Justice
- ESG 366 Ethical Perspectives on Environmental Problems
- HIS 108 A Global History of Indigenous Peoples
- HIS 217 The United States Since 1945
- HIS 269 First Nations/Settler Relations in Canada
- LIB 211 Empire and Its Enemies
- LIB 214 Human Will and Nature
- LIB 370 Social Movements and Social Change In Brazil
- LIB 371 New Orleans: Art, Activism and Culture before and after Katrina
- PHI 100 On the Way to the Good Life
- PHI 104 The Hopes and Conflicts of Social and Political Life
- PHI 349 Topics in Feminist Philosophy
- PHI 324 The Philosophy and Politics of Karl Marx
- PHI 240 Topics in Ethics
- PHI 342 Seminar in Social and Political Philosophy
- PHI 366 Critical Theory
- RSC 200 Politics and Religion
- SOC 207 Sociology of Indigenous-Settler Relations
- SOC 208 Criminology
- SOC 235 Women and Penal System
- SOC 250 Social movements
- SOC 260 Community
- SOC 292 Social Policy
- SOC 298 Social Problems
- SOC 309 Advanced Seminar in Global Colonization and Decolonization
- SOC 340 Women: Theory and Ideology
- SOC 396 Post-Colonial Theory
- WOM 101 Introduction to Women’s Studies
- WOM 201 Women and Feminism in Canada
- WOM 305 Women and Feminism: Selected Topics
- SLP 399 Situated Learning and Praxis (Praxis Malawi)

Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Faculty

**Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures**

**German Studies**

Sophie Boyer, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (McGill), Professor

**Hispanic Studies**

Gilberto D’Escoubet, B.A., M.A. (U de Montréal), Senior Instructor

Jordan Tronsgard, B.A., M.A. (Calgary), Ph.D. (Ottawa), Professor

Chair of the Department

Program Overview

The Department of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures offers an Honours program in Hispanic Studies, Majors in Modern Languages and Hispanic Studies, International Major in German, as well as Concentrations/Minors in German Studies, Hispanic Studies, and Japanese Studies (International Concentration).

Major in Modern Languages

(60 credits)

This major is equally divided between two language Concentrations (30/30), which will be specified on the student’s final transcript. The languages available for Concentrations are German, Japanese, and Spanish, as well as English Language Studies or French (offered by the Département des études françaises et québécoises). Students may choose one of their Concentrations in English or French, but completing Concentrations in English and French is not permitted for the Major in Modern Languages. The requirements and courses for the Concentrations within the Major in Modern Languages are listed under each specific language.

* Please note:

1) MLA 101 is a graduation requirement for all Majors in the MLA department and will normally be taken in the first year of studies. The following students are exempt from this requirement: Students with an Honours in Hispanic Studies, students taking the Major in Hispanic Studies on a part-time basis, students with more than one major. Other students may request an exemption if there is not sufficient space in their curricula.

2) Students registered in the Major in Modern Languages must declare their two languages by the end of their first year.