

**MLAR 7245 Medieval New Orleans (3 Credit Hours)**

By way of numerous Power Point tours of on and off campus sites and materials, as well as our reading of a popular American novel, Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, this course will consider the influence of medieval culture and ideas on New Orleans and, to some extent, Southern culture in general, especially during the post-Civil War period and Reconstruction. For instance, we will discuss medieval architectural styles preserved in Tulane and other local buildings (Richardsonian Romanesque and Gothic Revival), experience medieval music by New Orleans' *Musica da Camera* (a special guest performance), and explore real medieval manuscript materials from the Tulane Rare Books Room in Jones Hall. We will also talk about medieval influences on such pre-Lenten festivals as Mardi Gras and on such regional foods as gumbo and turducken. Class will conclude with our viewing of a musical film version of *Connecticut Yankee*, which suggests how Hollywood adapted medieval experience to bring it in line with certain nineteenth-century attitudes toward the Middle Ages. Three written assignments: a midterm (essay format), short critical paper (5 typed pp.), and a final examination (on course terminology). Required Text: Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, ed. by MLAR Justin Kaplan (New York: Penguin, 1972).

**MLAR 7247 Shakespeare (3 Credit Hours)**

What makes Shakespeare a great writer and why are some of his plays and poems judged to be greater than others in terms of their literary merits? We will take up this twofold question by way of a discussion of some of Shakespeare's "greatest hits," examples derived from each of his major literary genres.

**MLAR 7250 Verbal and Visual Rhetoric (3 Credit Hours)**

This course will focus on theories and practices of verbal discourse in comparison with visual imagery and technology. While concentrating on rhetorics of western cultures, some comparison will be made with rhetorical discourse and imagery in other cultures. The course will examine topics such as the interfaces of religion and politics, mass media and persuasive campaign, or the role of values in institutional leadership and issue campaigns.

**MLAR 7280 Philosophy of Religion (3 Credit Hours)**

This course examines various attempts to understand the nature and importance of religious experience and religious beliefs from a naturalistic perspective. We will discuss the ontological, epistemic, and axiological significance of claims about the nature of religious experience and religious beliefs in an attempt to situate these phenomena in a broader naturalistic understanding of the self and the world. After a consideration of the varieties of religious experience as exemplified in the work of William James, we will review arguments by Pascal Boyer and Daniel Dennett to the effect that the origin, development, and diversity of religious belief and religious experience are all phenomena that are scientifically explainable within the naturalistic frameworks of evolutionary biology and cognitive psychology.

**MLAR 7400 Gender, Culture and Families (3 Credit Hours)**

Research suggests that gender and family are inseparable concepts. Family carries particular gender role expectations at both the "ideal" and the "practice" level. However, we rarely think about what family is or how gender plays into family—we simply take gendered family roles for granted. Yet where do our ideas about family and gender come from? This class will explore our perceptions of the gender-family nexus, and the changes that have occurred over the last half century or so, from the perspective of popular culture.

**MLAR 7451 Religions of the World (3 Credit Hours)**

This course will examine the teachings of several major religious traditions—including Hinduism and Buddhism as well as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—through selected readings from their sacred scriptures.

**MLAR 7500 Independent Study (3 Credit Hours)**

For specific topics, see Schedule of Classes.

**MLAR 7550 Holocaust in Film & Literature (3 Credit Hours)**

This course will consider the Holocaust, the attempted genocide of European Jewry by the Nazis during World War II, and the diverse ways that the events related to it are portrayed and understood by diverse audiences. The course is divided into thematic sections that highlight the different issues motivating the authors and creators of relevant texts and films.

**MLAR 7940 MLA Transfer Credit (3 Credit Hours)**

MLA Transfer Credit.

**MLAR 7950 Capstone Portfolio (3 Credit Hours)**

The Capstone Portfolio will enable students to integrate the knowledge gained from three courses in the MLA program, while participating in a reflective writing seminar. Building on a portfolio of three previously completed papers/projects, the seminar will culminate in a paper or a creative project (e.g., artwork, website, podcast, etc.) accompanied by a shorter academic narrative. Students will explore topics such as metaphor in narrative writing; reflective and reflexive inquiry; and credibility and knowledge in reflective writing practice.