

# MASTER OF LIBERAL ARTS

## Master of Liberal Arts (<https://advanced.jhu.edu/academics/graduate/master-of-liberal-arts/>)

For self-motivated learners with inquisitive minds and an interest in thinking across disciplinary boundaries, the Master of Liberal Arts program is a graduate liberal arts program that offers a diverse range of interdisciplinary courses designed and taught by faculty that build upon a foundation in the history of ideas while also incorporating contemporary topics, sources, and approaches to research, analysis, and discourse.

Established in 1962, the Johns Hopkins MLA program has gained national recognition for the quality of its teaching and for its rigorous interdisciplinary liberal arts education. The program is designed to serve independent thinkers from a variety of academic, professional, and personal backgrounds. Our program thrives on the curiosity, passion, and diversity of its students. The MLA is a unique non-traditional graduate degree. Whereas most graduate programs ask students to become more and more specialized, the MLA expects students to both broaden and deepen their educational experience. MLA students interact with professors and one another in a stimulating learning environment, both on the ground at the Homewood campus and online in an asynchronous format compatible with all work schedules and time zones.

In consultation with their academic advisor, candidates for the MLA degree enroll in topic-based interdisciplinary courses that draw from a wide range of subjects, including history, philosophy, religion, literature, music, art history, African-American studies, environmental studies, digital humanities, critical theory, psychology, and sociology. Given the breadth and flexibility of our program, the MLA is able to meet the different goals and expectations of our students. Our students represent the full range of professions and are at all stages of their careers.

## Admissions Criteria for all Advanced Academic Programs (<https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/advanced-academic-programs/enrollment-services/admission/>)

### PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the materials and credentials required for all programs, the Master of Liberal Arts program also requires applicants to submit a:

- **Resume**
- **Statement of Purpose:** Two- to three-page statement of purpose that allows assessment of the applicant's academic, professional, and personal goals. Here are three ideas for how applicants may frame the essay:
  - Rather than having students concentrate their studies in a specific discipline, the MLA program offers courses in which students analyze complex topics from interdisciplinary perspectives. Please explain how that approach to studying the liberal arts coincides with your own academic, professional, and/or personal goals.
  - Through their coursework and capstone projects, students in the MLA program are given multiple opportunities to conduct

independent research that engages scholarship across several fields of study. Please describe an academic research project you have completed in the past and how that experience will inform your future research efforts.

- Many courses within the MLA program ask students to consider issues of social justice and explore their ethical implications for us individually and collectively. Please share an example of an issue of social justice you have studied in the past, explain why that issue captured your interest, and discuss how that work informs your current academic, professional, and/or personal goals.

## Program Requirements

Master of Liberal Arts program students must complete:

- One customizable core course
- Eight electives; any core courses taken after the first one may count as electives toward the degree
- One core culminating experience (capstone) course

| Code  | Title   | Credits |
|---|---|---------|
| <b>Core Courses - Customizable</b>          |   |         |
| Choose at least one of the following:       |   |         |
| AS.450.600                                  | MLA Core: Interdisciplinary Graduate Research Methods                                     |         |
| AS.450.627                                  | MLA Core: Critical Theory   |         |
| AS.450.638                                  | MLA Core: What is History?  |         |
| AS.450.738                                  | MLA Core: Why Read the Classics?  |         |
| AS.450.772                                  | MLA Core: Ways of Knowing: Historical and Epistemological Foundations of the Liberal Arts |         |
| <b>Core Course - Culminating Experience</b> |   |         |
| Choose one of the following:                |   |         |
| AS.450.820                                  | MLA Capstone: Portfolio   |         |
| AS.450.830                                  | MLA Capstone: Graduate Project  |         |
| AS.450.850                                  | MLA Capstone: Internship  |         |
| <b>Electives</b>                            |   |         |
| Select eight of the following:              |   |         |
| AS.450.605                                  | Art Since 1960  |         |
| AS.450.607                                  | Through a Glass, Darkly: American Film Noir   |         |
| AS.450.608                                  | Renaissance Women: Portraits, Patrons, and Painters                                       |         |
| AS.450.611                                  | Social History of Medicine  |         |
| AS.450.612                                  | Tough Neighborhood: A History of U.S.-Central American Relations                          |         |
| AS.450.613                                  | British Victorian Women   |         |
| AS.450.617                                  | The Constitution and the Criminal Justice System  |         |
| AS.450.618                                  | Going Underground: Subculture and Social Justice in Self-Publishing                       |         |
| AS.450.620                                  | Gender and Media  |         |
| AS.450.622                                  | The Shape of Things: Embodiment and Sexuality in American Culture                         |         |
| AS.450.630                                  | Intimacies of East/West: Hegemony, Representation, & Literature                           |         |
| AS.450.631                                  | Western Theatre History: The Dynamic Interplay of Social, Economic and Cultural Forces    |         |
| AS.450.634                                  | Italian Renaissance Art and Thought   |         |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| AS.450.642 | Yesterday's Tomorrows: Utopian and Dystopian Futures in Science Fiction Literature                       |
| AS.450.643 | Leadership and the Classics  |
| AS.450.646 | Religion of Politics, Politics of Religion   |
| AS.450.648 | Fakes, Lies, and Forgeries: A History of "Fake News" from The Flood to the Apocalypse                    |
| AS.450.650 | Nazi Germany and the Holocaust   |
| AS.450.651 | Western Political Philosophy   |
| AS.450.652 | Modern Black Political Thought   |
| AS.450.654 | "When the lamps went out": WWI as history, memory and commemoration                                      |
| AS.450.667 | The Bildungsroman as Literary Form-Chronicling Personal Growth in Countries and Cultures                 |
| AS.450.669 | Family in Cross-Cultural Perspective   |
| AS.450.673 | Monstrosity & Metamorphosis: Imagining Animals in Early Art & Literature                                 |
| AS.450.675 | Literary Analysis of the Hebrew Bible  |
| AS.450.678 | Religions of the Emerging World  |
| AS.450.689 | Introduction to Digital Humanities in the Liberal Arts   |
| AS.450.694 | Philosophy of Beauty   |
| AS.450.695 | American Political Theory and Practice   |
| AS.450.697 | All in the Family: Power, Scandal, and Fall  |
| AS.450.699 | Great Books in Great Contexts  |
| AS.450.700 | "The Souls of Black Folk": Evolving Conceptions of Leadership in African American Literature and Culture |
| AS.450.710 | The Mind of Leonardo Da Vinci  |
| AS.450.717 | School and Society: Education Reimagined, Possibilities Disclosed  |
| AS.450.724 | Science Fiction Film in the 20th Century   |
| AS.450.736 | Medieval England: From Beowulf to the Battle of Bosworth   |
| AS.450.739 | Race and Jazz  |
| AS.450.741 | Apocalyptic in the Bible, Religion, and Popular Culture  |
| AS.450.745 | Aristotle and Hobbes: Physics, Psychology, Ethics and Politics   |
| AS.450.746 | Deep Ecology: Environmental Ethic  |
| AS.450.748 | The Black Politics of Michael Jackson  |
| AS.450.749 | Exploring the Liberal Arts: On-Site Seminar  |
| AS.450.762 | Race and Ethnicity in the United States  |
| AS.450.766 | Deconstructing Capitalism  |
| AS.450.771 | Black Queer History  |
| AS.450.774 | Existentialism: Philosophy and Social Critique   |
| AS.450.781 | The Global Cold War  |
| AS.450.790 | Six Degrees of Miles Davis   |
| AS.450.801 | MLA Independent Study  |

- **Analyze** complex topics from interdisciplinary perspectives.
- **Conduct** original research that is creative, critical, and well-informed.
- **Raise** vital questions in response to social and ethical issues, interrogating dominant narratives and systems of power.
- **Communicate** ideas in ways that are accessible to diverse audiences and contexts.
- **Articulate** how their MLA studies have enhanced, extended, or challenged their knowledge and skills and will inform their future endeavors.

## Learning Outcomes

Graduates who earn the MLA degree should develop the ability to:

- **Situate** different methods of inquiry within the liberal arts, building upon a foundation in the history of ideas and enduring humanistic questions.