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AMST 7000: AMERICAN STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP

Dr. LeeAnn Lands, Tuesdays, 6:30 - 9:15 p.m.

This course explores a variety of themes, theoretical influences, and methodological approaches current in American Studies. Through close reading and discussion of secondary sources, we'll examine the various myths about America and the impact of these myths on individuals and the larger society; explore and interpret the ways in which race, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, religion, and gender shape American culture; and read and interpret scholarship in the field of American Studies, with attention to the globalization of American culture. We'll also become familiar with the basic conceptual building blocks in the field, and examine the historical development of the field (or discipline!) of American Studies



LeeAnn Lands, PhD

Dr. LeeAnn Lands Named Interim Director of MAST Program

Dr. LeeAnn Lands, associate professor of History and American Studies was named Interim Director of the Master of Arts in American Studies (MAST) Program by Dr. Richard Vengroff, Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kennesaw State University. "Dr. Lands will bring her innovative ideas and tremendous energy to this vital, interdisciplinary Masters Program in American Studies," said Dean Vengroff. "Under her leadership we expect it to become one of the leading programs of its type."



Lands' book, *The Culture of Property: Race, Class and Housing Landscapes in Atlanta, 1880-1950* will be published this year by UGA Press. She was, with her students and Melissa Massey, the winner of the Georgia Board of Regents prize for Excellence in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning for the Summer Hill Project. Lands is a KSU representative to *Imaging America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life*, a member of the Board of Directors of the Urban History Association, and a Councilor for the Arts and Humanities for the Council on Undergraduate Research.

AMST 7310: REGIONAL STUDIES: LITERATURE OF THE AMERICAN WEST: CROSSING BORDERS

Dr. Linda Niemann, Mondays, 6:30 - 9:15 p.m.

This course will enable students to become better informed about border issues that have a national impact, such as immigration, the drug wars, English-only laws, education, and national identity. We will also examine the literary possibilities of a merger of Native American, Mexican and Anglo deep history and traditional stories. We will use an interdisciplinary approach that contextualizes the West in terms of geography, social history, politics, visual culture, tourism, and the cultural production of myths. The three major novels by Native American, Anglo, and Hispanic authors all cross the border. We will view films which establish and deconstruct myths of the West and which reveal counter-histories of the region. We will take a field trip that demonstrates how museums, national parks, and retail stores are themselves borderlands. This class will function as a graduate seminar. Each student will develop a presentation that will be peer-reviewed and revised into a final paper by the end of the semester. You may view the texts through any lens you choose and utilize any disciplinary approach. I will encourage you to submit this to a national conference.



Linda Niemann, PhD

New MAST Program Administrator: Cherie Miller



Since moving from Chicago to Atlanta in 2001, I've spend most of my time at Kennesaw State! First I achieved my BS in Communications-Media Studies in 2004. I enjoyed getting to know the campus in my position as News Editor for *The Sentinel*. After graduation I vowed to never attempt school again, and accepted a job at Kennesaw State with the Small Business Development Center, but soon found myself drawn into a graduate program. In 2007 I graduated with my MA in Professional Writing.

AMST 7430: IDENTITIES AND SOCIAL GROUPS

Dr. Nina Morgan, Thursdays, 6:30 - 9:15 p.m.

This course examines the social construction of individual identities and social groups in American culture. Students survey and critique a range of texts expressing and representing a formation of identity constructions around such categories as race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, class, and sexuality. Students consider the various social forces that shape (and sometimes resist) diverse views of American identity both within and outside of the U.S. Students also explore approaches for achieving positive and constructive intercultural and interpersonal relations in daily life.

Nina Morgan, PhD



Do you believe in the work of the American Studies program, faculty and students?

Show us us your *love* by donating to the MA in American Studies Foundation Account which is used for public and educational programs, student and faculty development. The AMST Foundation account is used for "extras" in the program, such as attendance at American Studies conferences, special speakers, etc.

Donate online here: <http://www.kennesaw.edu/giving/waystogive.shtml>

Or send your donation directly to: The MA in American Studies Program
Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, #2208, Kennesaw, GA 30144

Spotlight on Faculty GRA Projects

Bunce Island Exhibit - Dr. Dan Paracka

The Bunce Island Exhibit enhances Georgia's middle and high school American and World History curriculum through a traveling exhibit of 20 door-sized panels and a film containing images and text connecting Bunce Island in Sierra Leone's history, the African Diaspora, and its connections to coastal Georgia. The GRA will contribute to:

- Development of a database of teachers/schools participating in the project.
- Compilation of mailing addresses for schools to schedule future exhibitions.
- Creation of a website to supplement the physical exhibit and film.
- Collection and organization of lesson plans and curricular materials used by schools who've hosted the exhibit.
- Coordination of an exhibit schedule and the management of movement of the exhibit to host schools.

Edgar Allan Poe and Twentieth Century Spanish American Fiction - Dr. Emron Esplin

This project offers a comparative analysis of Edgar Allan Poe's affinities and influence with twentieth-century Spanish American writers. Following an inter-American studies approach the project contributes to a larger, book-length endeavor that requires extensive research throughout Argentina, Mexico, and Texas.

The GRA student will

- Research *The International Poe Bibliography* and the internet to search for relevant titles of books influenced by Poe released within the last three years.
- Run a citation check and copy edit the extended versions of papers submitted to conferences.
- Learn how a faculty member designs and conducts a major research project that includes several research trips, archival study, comparative literary analysis, and close reading. Also included is an inside view of conference presentations, plenary addresses, and published articles.

The Education of Mayan Families in Canton, GA - Dr. Alan LeBaron

The core of this project is the goal of discovering the reasons behind poor academic performance by Maya students which is part of the KSU Maya Heritage Community Project created in 2002. The period of research will be followed by a program of action to promote Maya success in the Canton schools. The GRA will contribute to:

- Become familiar with Maya immigration issues in Georgia.
- Participate in research that will be included in a book of essays entitled *Education of Maya Families* to promote meaningful change and to become a model for a larger program addressing immigration issues in schools.
- Teaching involved in special tutoring of the Mayan children, cooperating with the returning Peace Corps students currently involved with the KSU Maya Heritage Community Project.

The Oakland Cemetery (African-American section) - Dr. Catherine Lewis

The goal of the Oakland Cemetery project is to discover and interpret African American life in a cross-disciplinary manner and to bring history to a broad and diverse public through multiple delivery methods, such as onsite exhibits, the web, and via cell phone audio tours. This GRA will contribute to:

- Discover new technologies for cellphone-based audio tours of the African American portion of the Oakland Cemetery, plus draft an audio tour script.
- Research and curate a 10-panel exhibition on the history of Oakland Cemetery.
- Assist in drafting text for a 10-panel exhibit and which will also appear on the Foundation's website.
- Select photographs and artifacts for inclusion in the exhibition.
- Review the Georgia Performance Standards as they relate to K-12 curriculum to research and write three lesson plans for the Oakland Cemetery Foundation for use by schools to promote engage in a dialogue about African American life in the South.



The MA in American Studies Program

Crossing boundaries, Building community, Engaging culture

Save the Date: Graduate Schools Open House + MAST Open House

Who? American Studies faculty, Fall 2009 or Spring 2010 MAST students.

Why? To allow the faculty and students to get to know each other, build community, and just plain have fun!

When?

Graduate Open House: Saturday, August 1, 2009 - 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - in the Student Center, University Rooms A-D (lower level). This is designed to orient you to the campus - get your parking pass, learn about the library, etc.

MAST Open House: Saturday, August 1, 2009 - 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. - design to introduce you to the MAST faculty, to review Fall courses, discuss experiential learning component of the program and to learn strategies for success in grad school.

Where? Kennesaw State University, Social Science Bldg. Room 5074

RSVP to: Cherie Miller, 678-797-2504 or cmille72@kennesaw.edu

Graduate Study Abroad Project with Dr. Linda Niemann (Summer 2009)

This summer we are going to Quito, Ecuador since Mexico was declared off limits by the State Department. Students going to Ecuador for 4 weeks will study Spanish, earn 6 units of credit, and live in a homestay situation. On weekends they will take fieldtrips to an indigenous crafts market, a cloud forest, a hot springs, and explore the colonial city of Quito.

Next summer we will resume our program in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico. San Cristobal is surrounded by traditional Maya villages and is the gateway to many Mayan archeological sites which we will visit on fieldtrips. In San Cristobal, students live with host families and take Spanish courses at the Instituto Jovel. This program includes a three-day excursion to Agua Azul, Misol-Ha and the Mayan Ruins. San Cristobal is the former colonial capital of Chiapas, perched in the mountains and surrounded by traditional Mayan villages where the old ways are preserved.

For information on Summer 2010 study abroad projects watch:
<http://amst.hss.kennesaw.edu>

June/July

2009

Mastapalooza 1

Study Abroad 1

Fall Courses 2

MAST Staff 3

GRA Faculty Projects 4

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