

WILLIAMS-MYSTIC: The Ocean and Coastal Studies Semester of Williams College and Mystic Seaport Museum

Executive Director: Thomas Van Winkle

- Lisa A. Gilbert, Professor of Geosciences and Marine Sciences at Williams-Mystic; affiliated with: Geosciences Department
- Catherine Robinson Hall, Associate Professor at Williams-Mystic; affiliated with: Maritime Studies Program
- Tim J. Pusack, Assistant Professor at Williams-Mystic
- Ned G. Schaumberg, Assistant Professor at Williams-Mystic
- Sofia E. Zepeda, Assistant Professor at Williams-Mystic; affiliated with: History Department

The Williams-Mystic Semester offers students a unique opportunity to explore the ocean, travel the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf coasts, and conduct original active research of their own design in the humanities and sciences. Williams-Mystic is considered the coastal and ocean studies campus of Williams College. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors of all majors welcome to apply. A term at Williams-Mystic includes credit for one semester plus one Winter Study requirement, as well as writing skills course credit and physical education credit. Four Williams courses are offered as an interdisciplinary curriculum in the semester-long program based at Mystic Seaport, in Mystic, Connecticut: Americans and the Maritime Environment, Literature of the Oceans, Marine Policy, and either Marine Ecology or Oceanographic Processes. Travel includes an offshore voyage on the open ocean sailing aboard a tall ship, a seminar along the Pacific Coast, and a Louisiana field seminar, all of which are cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary exercises. Students live in historic, cooperative, co-ed houses at Mystic Seaport, the world's largest maritime museum, and have full access to world-class maritime collections, a maritime library, a state-of-the-art Marine Sciences teaching and research center, and diverse coastal habitats (where field research can be undertaken in a wide variety of environments, ranging from tide pools and salt marshes to sandy beaches and estuaries). Students also participate in maritime skills under professional instruction, with choices such as ship carving, music of the sea, shipsmithing, or small boat handling and sailing. Williams-Mystic seeks candidates who are willing to try new things and work in a compelling academic environment. No sailing experience necessary. Participation in Williams-Mystic can also be used in partial fulfillment of the Maritime Studies Concentration at Williams. Admission is competitive, and interested students should email wmadmissions@williams.edu, call [860-572-5359](tel:860-572-5359), or visit the [Williams-Mystic site](#).

ENVI 263 (S) The Global Ocean: An Interdisciplinary Introduction

Cross-listings: MAST 263 ENVI 263

Secondary Cross-listing

Though it covers most of the planet, the ocean's importance to everyday life is easy to overlook. Its roles as a cultural symbol, resource, highway, and climate regulator make it essential to life around the world. This interdisciplinary course, team-taught by the faculty of the Williams-Mystic Program, will examine key issues in each of the world's oceans while introducing students to the ways these issues connect multiple disciplines and transcend physical, political, and imaginary ocean boundaries. By drawing on the expertise of the five professors -- from humanities, social sciences, and sciences -- this course facilitates the critical study of the ocean from an interdisciplinary perspective and helps them consider their own role in the shifting relationship between humanity and the ocean. This seminar-style course will meet twice a week online, with students assessed by their participation, response papers, and final project, while helping them apply interdisciplinary skills to pressing sustainability issues connecting the environment and society.

Class Format: Remote, including Zoom seminar meetings twice a week

Requirements/Evaluation: Five 2-page papers, participation, and a 6-8 page final paper

Prerequisites: none, open to all students

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: 1. first years, 2. sophomores, 3. MAST concentrators

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

MAST 263 (D2) ENVI 263 (D2)

Attributes: ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

Spring 2021

SEM Section: R1 MR 1:30 pm - 2:45 pm Catherine Robinson Hall, Tim J. Pusack, Lisa A. Gilbert, Sofia E. Zepeda, Ned G. Schaumberg, ngs3

ENVI 266 (S) Reading Water (WS)

Cross-listings: ENVI 266 MAST 266

Secondary Cross-listing

Water has such profound and far-reaching influence on individuals, societies, and the planet that it simultaneously risks going overlooked and appearing clichéd. Human beings are made of it and need it to live, yet will die if immersed in it. It is venerated by cultures around the world, yet most people either cannot access clean water, or don't know where their clean water is piped in from. It covers the earth's surface, and has shaped it over eons, yet scientists are still not sure how it came to be here in the first place. This wide-ranging influence also presents challenges for traditional academic structures; thinking about water demands crossing times, spaces, and disciplines. This course will explore the wide-ranging and diverse ways water impacts individuals, cultures, and the environments they call home by drawing on a range of content: hydrology, literature, political theory, storytelling, geography, and more. To do this, we will also develop and examine methods of critically reading as "non-experts"--reading scientific articles as rhetorical objects and reading for scientific principles in literature, for instance--to explore what interdisciplinary thinking opens up (and inhibits), and thus how to effectively engage with and create interdisciplinary work. The goal here is not to define water's cultural or scientific importance, or to determine which disciplines "best" combine to explain water, or to come up with humanities-based solutions to "the water crisis." Rather, these texts, and the water that flows through them will help us explore the opportunities and limits of human perceptions of the other-than-human world. It will help us consider the extent to which those perceptions both shape, and are shaped by, a seemingly simple molecule. And it will help us imagine epistemologies and ontologies that account for the ways water simultaneously flows through us, around us, and through the deep geological history of the planet. Course Texts: Tristan Gooley -- *How to Read Water* (selections) Vandana Shiva -- *Water Wars* (selections) Luna Leopold -- *Water, Rivers, and Creeks* (selections) Richard White -- *The Organic Machine* Linda Hogan -- *Solar Storms* Marc Reisner -- *Cadillac Desert* Jesmyn Ward -- *Salvage the Bones* John McPhee -- "Atchafalaya" Emmi Itäranta -- *Memory of Water* Brenda Hillman -- "The Hydrology of California"

Class Format: This class will be remote, meeting synchronously. The class will be primarily discussion-based, and will ask students to lead and structure discussions. Students will have questions, reflections, and insights prepared before class, and use those to drive our in-class activities.

Requirements/Evaluation: 100pg of reading a week, give or take. Approx 20-25 pages of written work throughout the semester.

Prerequisites: None

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Preference to majors, and then to sophomores and juniors, respectively.

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ENVI 266 (D1) MAST 266 (D1)

Writing Skills Notes: Students will write four papers of increasing complexity that will require workshopping and drafts. Each of these papers will receive forward-looking writing feedback from me. The first paper centers on paragraph-level stylistic choices, the second on argument/evidence connections, the third on genre, and the final paper synthesizes these writing skills. In addition, students' final grades will allow for revision of earlier papers to encourage and assess growth of writing skills.

Spring 2021

SEM Section: R1 MR 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm Ned G. Schaumberg

ENVI 268 (S) Debating Ocean Biodiversity at the Intersection of Science and Policy

Cross-listings: ENVI 268 MAST 268

Secondary Cross-listing

Biodiversity in the ocean is facing an onslaught of challenges, both directly and indirectly. It is likely that we are undergoing a sixth mass extinction event, where diversity of life on earth is stunningly at risk. Fortunately, however, we are also finding innovative ways to solve issues and attempt to stave off these dramatic changes to our ecosystems. These solutions potentially have both positive and negative effects. Difficult tradeoffs must be weighed and decisions must be made as people wrestle with known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns. In this class, we will explore five issues that relate to biodiversity in the ocean. You will have the opportunity to investigate one side of an issue, to collect supporting information, and to advocate for your position all while learning about current biodiversity issues in the ocean. You will be challenged to weigh conflicting evidence to find a positive outcome. Throughout the class you will practice critical thinking, evaluation, and synthesizing skills as you work with multiple viewpoints. Class time will include lecture, in-class group work, and student-led debates of timely, controversial issues. You will be assessed on summaries of information, reflections on topics, and a final project on an issue of your choice relating to ocean biodiversity.

Class Format: Remote, including Zoom seminar meetings twice a week

Requirements/Evaluation: Five 2-page papers, participation, and a 6-8 page final paper

Prerequisites: none, open to all students

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: 1. first years, 2. sophomores, 3. MAST concentrators

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ENVI 268 (D2) MAST 268 (D2)

Attributes: ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives MAST Interdepartmental Electives

Spring 2021

SEM Section: R1 MW 10:00 am - 11:15 am Catherine Robinson Hall, Tim J. Pusack

MAST 263 (S) The Global Ocean: An Interdisciplinary Introduction

Cross-listings: MAST 263 ENVI 263

Primary Cross-listing

Though it covers most of the planet, the ocean's importance to everyday life is easy to overlook. Its roles as a cultural symbol, resource, highway, and climate regulator make it essential to life around the world. This interdisciplinary course, team-taught by the faculty of the Williams-Mystic Program, will examine key issues in each of the world's oceans while introducing students to the ways these issues connect multiple disciplines and transcend physical, political, and imaginary ocean boundaries. By drawing on the expertise of the five professors -- from humanities, social sciences, and sciences -- this course facilitates the critical study of the ocean from an interdisciplinary perspective and helps them consider their own role in the shifting relationship between humanity and the ocean. This seminar-style course will meet twice a week online, with students assessed by their participation, response papers, and final project, while helping them apply interdisciplinary skills to pressing sustainability issues connecting the environment and society.

Class Format: Remote, including Zoom seminar meetings twice a week

Requirements/Evaluation: Five 2-page papers, participation, and a 6-8 page final paper

Prerequisites: none, open to all students

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: 1. first years, 2. sophomores, 3. MAST concentrators

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

MAST 263 (D2) ENVI 263 (D2)

Attributes: ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

Spring 2021

SEM Section: R1 MR 1:30 pm - 2:45 pm Catherine Robinson Hall, Tim J. Pusack, Lisa A. Gilbert, Sofia E. Zepeda, Ned G. Schaumberg, ngs3

MAST 266 (S) Reading Water (WS)

Cross-listings: ENVI 266 MAST 266

Primary Cross-listing

Water has such profound and far-reaching influence on individuals, societies, and the planet that it simultaneously risks going overlooked and appearing clichéd. Human beings are made of it and need it to live, yet will die if immersed in it. It is venerated by cultures around the world, yet most people either cannot access clean water, or don't know where their clean water is piped in from. It covers the earth's surface, and has shaped it over eons, yet scientists are still not sure how it came to be here in the first place. This wide-ranging influence also presents challenges for traditional academic structures; thinking about water demands crossing times, spaces, and disciplines. This course will explore the wide-ranging and diverse ways water impacts individuals, cultures, and the environments they call home by drawing on a range of content: hydrology, literature, political theory, storytelling, geography, and more. To do this, we will also develop and examine methods of critically reading as "non-experts"--reading scientific articles as rhetorical objects and reading for scientific principles in literature, for instance--to explore what interdisciplinary thinking opens up (and inhibits), and thus how to effectively engage with and create interdisciplinary work. The goal here is not to define water's cultural or scientific importance, or to determine which disciplines "best" combine to explain water, or to come up with humanities-based solutions to "the water crisis." Rather, these texts, and the water that flows through them will help us explore the opportunities and limits of human perceptions of the other-than-human world. It will help us consider the extent to which those perceptions both shape, and are shaped by, a seemingly simple molecule. And it will help us imagine epistemologies and ontologies that account for the ways water simultaneously flows through us, around us, and through the deep geological history of the planet. Course Texts: Tristan Gooley -- *How to Read Water* (selections) Vandana Shiva -- *Water Wars* (selections) Luna Leopold -- *Water, Rivers, and Creeks* (selections) Richard White -- *The Organic Machine* Linda Hogan -- *Solar Storms* Marc Reisner -- *Cadillac Desert* Jesmyn Ward -- *Salvage the Bones* John McPhee -- "Atchafalaya" Emmi Itäranta -- *Memory of Water* Brenda Hillman -- "The Hydrology of California"

Class Format: This class will be remote, meeting synchronously. The class will be primarily discussion-based, and will ask students to lead and structure discussions. Students will have questions, reflections, and insights prepared before class, and use those to drive our in-class activities.

Requirements/Evaluation: 100pg of reading a week, give or take. Approx 20-25 pages of written work throughout the semester.

Prerequisites: None

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Preference to majors, and then to sophomores and juniors, respectively.

Expected Class Size: 20

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D1) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ENVI 266 (D1) MAST 266 (D1)

Writing Skills Notes: Students will write four papers of increasing complexity that will require workshopping and drafts. Each of these papers will receive forward-looking writing feedback from me. The first paper centers on paragraph-level stylistic choices, the second on argument/evidence connections, the third on genre, and the final paper synthesizes these writing skills. In addition, students' final grades will allow for revision of earlier papers to encourage and assess growth of writing skills.

Spring 2021

SEM Section: R1 MR 3:15 pm - 4:30 pm Ned G. Schaumberg

MAST 268 (S) Debating Ocean Biodiversity at the Intersection of Science and Policy

Cross-listings: ENVI 268 MAST 268

Primary Cross-listing

Biodiversity in the ocean is facing an onslaught of challenges, both directly and indirectly. It is likely that we are undergoing a sixth mass extinction event, where diversity of life on earth is stunningly at risk. Fortunately, however, we are also finding innovative ways to solve issues and attempt to stave off these dramatic changes to our ecosystems. These solutions potentially have both positive and negative effects. Difficult tradeoffs must be weighed and decisions must be made as people wrestle with known knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns. In this class, we will explore five issues that relate to biodiversity in the ocean. You will have the opportunity to investigate one side of an issue, to collect supporting information, and to advocate for your position all while learning about current biodiversity issues in the ocean. You will be challenged to weigh conflicting evidence to find a positive outcome. Throughout the class you will practice critical thinking, evaluation, and synthesizing skills as you work with multiple viewpoints. Class time will include lecture, in-class group work, and student-led debates of timely, controversial issues. You will be assessed on summaries of information, reflections on topics, and a final project on an issue of your choice relating to ocean biodiversity.

Class Format: Remote, including Zoom seminar meetings twice a week

Requirements/Evaluation: Five 2-page papers, participation, and a 6-8 page final paper

Prerequisites: none, open to all students

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: 1. first years, 2. sophomores, 3. MAST concentrators

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ENVI 268 (D2) MAST 268 (D2)

Attributes: ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives MAST Interdepartmental Electives

Spring 2021

SEM Section: R1 MW 10:00 am - 11:15 am Catherine Robinson Hall, Tim J. Pusack