

Department: MAST

Course No.: 1200

Title: Introduction to Maritime Culture

Credits: 3

Contact: Mary K Bercaw Edwards

Content Area: CA1

REGIONAL CAMPUS AVAILABILITY:

This course will be offered at the Avery Point Campus in support of the Maritime, Coastal, and American Studies programs. It could be taught at any campus by historians or literature scholars with expertise in the maritime world.

Catalog Copy: MAST 1200. Introduction to Maritime Culture

Either semester. Three credits.

A study of history and literature to understand the international maritime culture that links peoples, nations, economies, environments, and cultural aesthetics.

RATIONALE FOR ACTION REQUESTED

Connecticut is a coastal state and a general education course at the 1000 level that looks at the oceans from an interdisciplinary humanities perspective will equip students with an understanding of how the ocean has been, and remains, the site of an international, cosmopolitan maritime culture; how the ocean links economies and cultures; and how the ocean inspires human imagination. Interdisciplinary, ocean-focused majors at the Avery Point campus, Maritime Studies and Coastal Studies, would be enhanced by the availability of such a course. The course could profitably be taught at any or all of the campuses, given the political, economic, environmental, and cultural importance of the ocean.

This course does not overlap with Introduction to Maritime Studies, MAST 1101. The proposed course covers only humanities and is designed as a general education course, while MAST 1101 covers a broad range of humanities and social science disciplines that comprise the field and major of Maritime Studies (including History, English, Political Science, Geography, Economics, and Anthropology). MAST 1101 is designed to acquaint majors with the range of disciplinary perspectives relevant to study of the ocean and prepare students for the major by introducing them to the many different roles the oceans play in our world (highway, source of food, arena for warfare, and stage for discover and the exertion of power). Subsequent courses in the major build on the content of MAST 1101, and the content of the proposed course (MAST 1200) would be insufficient preparation for the major. The proposed course focuses on maritime culture, which reveals the oceans as a place that links peoples and places; a site for the formation of an international, cosmopolitan maritime culture; and a source of inspiration for human imagination.

The proposed course is also distinct from INTD 1660W Ports of Passage. That course, which fulfills content area 4, focuses on ports exclusively, concentrating on ports as settings of

philosophical and commercial exchange. It does not cover maritime culture, although (depending on the instructor) it might perhaps touch briefly on maritime culture.

Course Information:

a.) This course will explore maritime history with attention to the international linkages afforded by the ocean, the distinctive cosmopolitan maritime culture created at sea, and the literature that resulted as humans interacted with the ocean. It will equip students with an understanding of how the ocean has been, and remains, the site of an international, cosmopolitan maritime culture; how the ocean links economies and cultures; and how the ocean inspires human imagination. Through this course, students will consider the ocean itself as a natural environment whose fate is entwined with that of the human actors we will study.

b.) Exam formats: midterm and final exams: 40% short answer; 60% essay

Weekly reading assignments: 50-70 pages of reading, including a mixture of primary documents, literature, and secondary material; the course will be centered around discussion of assigned readings.

Nature and scope of writing assignments:

in-class response paper such as relating sea music to themes previously covered in class; short research paper such as an investigation of the definition, etymology, and lore of a maritime term; an aesthetic response such as a poem, dramatic production, or personal essay.

c.) Major themes, issues, topics, etc., to be covered: the following themes will be woven throughout the topic areas covered in the course:

- technology and effects of technological change
- nautical language, archetypes, and superstition
- social history: the role of class, race, and gender in maritime history
- naval strategy, policy, and action
- exploration and imperialism
- the balance of recreation and work
- the experience of seafarers
- coming of age, or the exploration of the individual
- the imagination
- ethics of survival.

Meets Goals of Gen Ed:

The proposed course introduces students to maritime culture, an important bridge between peoples and societies in both economic and symbolic and intellectual terms. The sea connects all places. Maritime culture is forged from elements and languages drawn from all parts of the world into a distinct and recognizable set of traditions. Both in the past and continuing today, maritime culture becomes an arena in which knowledge is exchanged and new knowledge is produced. The encounter with the sea uncovers the simultaneous diversity and universality of the human experience.

CA1 Criteria:

The course is equal parts Literature and History, which is the appropriate way to study maritime culture. It will involve the students in historical and critical analyses of maritime culture as a product of seagoing and of encountering other cultures and peoples. It will engage students in aesthetic analyses of the human encounter with the sea. It will investigate symbolic

representations of the sea itself and also how people are changed by contact with the ocean. During the course, students will develop a familiarity with and appreciation of historical documents as well as art forms such as maritime novels and poetry, scrimshaw, and sea music. A General Education, Content Area One course that focuses on maritime culture is particularly appropriate for the University of Connecticut, which is a public university in a coastal state.

SYLLABUS:

Online URL: ([https://web2.uconn.edu/senateform/request/course_uploads/meb03006-1253046551-MAST 1200 syllabus.doc](https://web2.uconn.edu/senateform/request/course_uploads/meb03006-1253046551-MAST_1200_syllabus.doc))