

Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) 662

Mourning and Trauma: Theoretical and Historical Debates (Revision 2)

Delivery Mode: Grouped Study [↗](#)

Credits: 3

Area of Study: Arts

Prerequisites: None

Precluded: None

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences [↗](#)

Status: Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) [↗](#)
for the current revision [✕](#)

Notes: Students in Group Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the Moodle site for the most up-to-date details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

➤ Overview

Overview

Loss is an integral element of life itself. All of us have loved and lost, and have been required, in some fashion, to mourn those lost loves. Thus students will come to this course with an already existing existential background of loss upon which to draw. In this course we will critically examine that existential background of loss in relation to key debates in theory and culture on mourning and trauma.

There has been a vigorous debate within cultural studies literature over the status of mourning and trauma in contemporary society. The debate surrounds our understanding of loss. If loss is ontological, in the sense that absence and lack are fundamental to existence itself, then how do we make sense of this ontological loss in relation to the particular losses of individuals in their lives? And if loss is often experienced as trauma, how do we understand the subject's relationship to traumatic loss? What is the connection between an ontological demand for mourning traumatic loss and a process of mourning tied to particular traumatic life events?

➤ Objectives

Objectives


This course provides students with the opportunity to

1. develop a critical understanding of concepts and debates in mourning and trauma theory
2. understand the relations between structural and historical approaches to mourning and trauma
3. recognize individual and collective experiences of loss and trauma as historically and contextually located

➤ Evaluation



Evaluation

To receive credit for this course, students must participate in the online activities, successfully complete the assignments, and achieve a final mark of at least 60 per cent. Students should be familiar with the Master of Arts—Interdisciplinary Studies [grading system](#) . Please note that it is students' responsibility to maintain their program status. Any student who receives a grade of "F" in one course, or a grade of "C" in more than one course, may be required to withdraw from the program.

The following table summarizes the evaluation activities and the credit weights associated with them.

Activity	Weight
Online Participation	20%
Essay 1	40%
Essay 2	40%
Total	100%

Materials

Materials

Santner, Eric L. (1990). *Stranded objects: Mourning, memory, and film in postwar Germany*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.  (Print)

Morrison, Toni. (2000). *The Bluest Eye*. New York: Plume.  (Print)

Aubrey, Sarah, John Cameron, and Sidney Kimmel (Producers), Gillespie, Craig (Director). (2007). *Lars and the Real Girl [Motion picture]*. USA/Canada:




Independent.  (Audio/Video)

The course materials for *MAIS 662: Mourning and Trauma: Theoretical and Historical Debates* include the items listed below. If you find that any items are missing from your course package, please contact the Course Materials Production department at Athabasca University as soon as possible. You may call Athabasca University, toll free, from anywhere in Canada or the United States at 1-800-788-9041 and ask to speak to someone in Course Materials Production (ext. 6366). Students in the Edmonton and Calgary dialling areas are asked to call the Learning Centres to connect with the automated attendant, and then dial the four-digit extension. You may send e-mail to cmat@athabascau.ca, or write to Course Materials Production at Tim Byrne Centre, 4001 Hwy 2 South, Athabasca AB T9S 1A4.





Athabasca University Online Materials

Course Home Page: You will find Course Information (including the Assignment File and other pertinent information) at the top of the course home page. You will also find your Study Guide presented unit by unit online. You will find your assignments and links to submit your work to your professor on the course home page.

Athabasca University Library: Students are encouraged to browse the Library's Web site to review the Library collection of journal databases, electronic journals, and digital reference tools: <http://library.athabascau.ca> .

Important Links

Important Links

- > [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- > [Focus Area](#) 
- > [Courses](#) 
- > [Fees and Funding](#) 



Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized-study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 2, May 1, 2012

Updated October 13, 2021, by Student & Academic Services

View [previous revision](#) 

