

MARYLHURST UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

• MASTER OF ARTS IN  
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES





## JOIN A SCHOLARLY COMMUNITY

- **Examine** a range of subjects while focusing on a concentrated area of study.  
**Experience** intellectual growth and enhanced professional competence.  
**Engage** with a supportive community of teachers in a highly interactive learning environment.

A rich, relevant education that extends outside the bounds of a single academic discipline—that is the beauty of Marylhurst's Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS).

In the MAIS program, students explore the influence that distinct areas of intellectual inquiry have on specific fields of concentrated study. Instructors facilitate small, seminar-style classes where students and faculty participate in a collaborative process that brings individual topics into focus across disciplinary lines. The interdisciplinary curriculum instills an attitude of inquiry, discernment and openness that is essential for meaningful and productive living in a rapidly changing world. Students develop the art of disciplined, life-long learning and a thorough knowledge of the theories and scholarly methods used in the process of structuring an academic thesis around a unique body of knowledge.

Above: MAIS Chair, Debrah Bokowski and Kermit Pace  
Thesis - *Exploitation of Black Male Student Athletes by Division One Universities*

Cover: 2006 MAIS Graduates, from left to right  
Jan Borr, Thesis - *Exceptionalism and American Millenarian Movements*  
Susan Madison, Thesis - *The Prophetic Voice of Ingmar Bergman's "The Seventh Seal": Breaking the Seal, Breaking the Silence*  
Jack Davis, Thesis - *Nursery Employers and the Hispanic Labor Force: Interdependence, Responsibility and Opportunity*

## CONCENTRATION

Students specialize their advanced studies in one of four concentrations to increase professional enrichment, intellectual growth, leadership abilities and career advancement.

### **Gerontology**

As a holistic study of adult development in the context of an aging society, the Gerontology concentration combines rigorous scholarly inquiry in theory and research with the opportunity to explore aging in creative, new ways. Grounded in a liberal arts tradition that addresses the issues of humankind, the concentration integrates the mind-body-spirit connection and recognizes the complex contexts in which individuals travel through life.

Graduates enter a variety of professional settings that work with aging adults including advanced research, delivery of services, policy improvement and program development. Those with prior professional training such as nursing, social work or counseling may increase their career options with advanced studies in gerontology.

### **Organizational Communication**

A concentration in Organizational Communication emphasizes the role of the communicator as a leader—one who has the vision to sustain an organization through change and who has the ethical foundation to support individuals as vital participants during the process. Advanced seminars analyze complex organizational systems and teach students the process of creating positive solutions to issues such as gender, cultural differences and group conflict.

Graduates become communicators, facilitators, strategists and leaders who bring long-term stability to organizations in a number of areas including small business, non-profit, education, civic activism, politics, government, the arts, corporate careers and consulting.

### **Spiritual Traditions & Ethics**

The Spiritual Traditions & Ethics concentration facilitates the exploration of ethical thought and action while learning about the roots of spirituality. Special attention is given to the origins, growth, literature, art, theologies, ethical systems and oral traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. The cultural and scriptural core of the world's spiritual traditions is studied through interdisciplinary approaches such as historical context, sociological theory and anthropological findings.

Graduates find meaning in life and service when applying the scriptural, psychological and philosophical roots of human spirituality in areas such as religious education, corporate ethics, spiritual direction, social service, cultural development, community outreach, healthcare and counseling.

### **Liberal Arts**

The Liberal Arts concentration provides a platform for students to pursue an individualized intellectual path. Many specialize their studies to enhance their current profession with fresh perspectives. Others, anticipating a change in direction, broaden their knowledge in a new area of study. Students can combine MAIS courses with additional graduate-level classes to create a customized degree plan.

From the private sector to public service, graduates use their advanced proficiency in communications, intellectual confidence, critical thinking and analytical ability to open doors with current employers, to provide a competitive advantage with potential new employers and to create opportunities that enhance their personal and professional lives.

# MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES – 48 QUARTER CREDITS	
<b>Foundation Courses</b>	<b>12 credits</b>
Introduction to Scholarly Inquiry Choose three of the following: Community: Theory & Practice Science & Public Policy Leadership Art & Cultural Transformation Ways of Knowing Enduring Questions Social Justice	
<b>CONCENTRATION SEMINARS</b>	<b>18 credits</b>
<b>Gerontology*</b> Choose six of the following or any class with the GER prefix: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Aging Embodiment in Later Life Psychosocial Aspects of Aging Theorizing & Researching in Gerontology Social Systems in Later Life Gerontology: Synthesis & Action Women’s Issues in Aging Communication & Aging	
<b>Organizational Communication</b> Choose six of the following or any class with the INC prefix: Diversity in Organizations Paradigms & Process for Transformation Organizational Systems & Function Power & Conflict Organizational Change Organizational Behavior Learning Organizations	
<b>Spiritual Traditions &amp; Ethics</b> Choose six of the following or any class with the INE prefix: Foundations of Spiritual Traditions Sacred Literature 1 Sacred Literature 2 Development of Spiritual Traditions Eastern & Western Spirituality Origins of Ethical Thinking Studies in Applied Ethics Hermeneutics	
<b>Liberal Arts</b> In collaboration with an academic advisor, students select six classes from MAIS foundation, concentration or elective courses to gain a scholarly perspective in a specialized area of study.	
<b>Electives</b>	<b>9 credits</b>
Choose from MAIS seminars or other graduate offerings. (Up to 6 elective credits may be transferred from another graduate program.)	
<b>Research Methods &amp; Thesis</b>	<b>9 credits</b>
Research Methods & Thesis 1 Research Methods & Thesis 2 Research Methods & Thesis 3	

\* Professionals who want additional training can earn a Certificate in Gerontology by completing the 18-credit Gerontology Concentration plus a 3-credit internship.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Cover letter and personal statement of goals
- Application and fee to University
- Application to the MAIS program
- Two letters of reference
- Official transcript from school granting bachelor’s degree and any other graduate work
- Writing sample
- Personal interview with final candidates

Please refer to the current catalog for complete information.



“Participating in Marylhurst University’s MAIS program gave me the opportunity to fulfill a life-long dream of earning a master’s degree. Along the way, I received much more than a diploma. I was able to make intellectual connections, a real thrill for a seasoned learner like myself. I interacted with talented and encouraging professors who displayed an eagerness to teach and who challenged me with the writings of fine minds from many disciplines. I felt privileged to interact with bright and engaged fellow students whose unique experiences made for stimulating classroom discussion. Ultimately, I am most grateful for the opportunity to perform the original study that became the foundation for my thesis.”

SHARON STERN, MA 2006

*Thesis - Kollel Women's Voices: An Exploration of Work/Family Balance Within the Ultra-Orthodox Learning Community*



“After working in the high-tech industry for several years, I wanted to further my education, but taking the traditional MBA path just felt like more of what I was already doing. In Marylhurst’s MAIS program I focused my studies on the factors that influence the performance of virtual teams when made up of diverse cultures. Recently I accepted a new position at the Intel Corporation. My new manager said that my MAIS degree was a factor in his decision to hire me. My thesis on building effective virtual teams opened the door to my participation on a committee to improve virtual team performance. My experience at Marylhurst was one of the most rewarding experiences in my life, both personally and professionally.”

DEBBIE TOWNSEND, MA 2006

*Thesis - Combining Forces: Addressing the Challenges of Building a Global Virtual Team from the United States and India*



“I had a wonderful experience in Marylhurst’s MAIS program. Throughout my studies, I refined my professional skills, as well as my writing and critical thinking. The unique MAIS curriculum provided a platform to hone my craft and a rare opportunity for self-reflection that has added an undeniable richness to my life. The program’s standard of academic excellence gave me confidence and new tools to use in my rigorous pursuit of knowledge. Writing my thesis was a challenging and worthwhile process that allowed me to combine an interest in organizational culture with a marketing perspective and create a document that has relevance in the field and that I am proud of.”

DOUG ADLER, MA 2005

*Thesis - The Relationship between an Organization's Image and its Culture: Analogies, Comparisons and Ramifications of Congruities and Incongruities*

## OUTSTANDING FACULTY

In addition to holding advanced degrees from prestigious colleges and universities, MAIS faculty are noted for a range of professional accomplishments and academic credentials as well as a commitment to student growth. The MAIS learning environment is communal and collaborative, drawing on the diverse experiences of each instructor.



**Jennifer Sasser, Ph.D.**  
Gerontology Instructor

*Jennifer is chairperson for Marylhurst's Department of Human Sciences where she designed the graduate and undergraduate certificate programs in Gerontology. Her interdisciplinary graduate studies in the Human Sciences specialized in adult development*

*and aging. She has conducted research and given seminars on creativity in later life, women's embodiment in later life, sexuality and aging, optimal development and aging, and adult learning and educational gerontology. She serves on the Board of Directors for the Oregon Gerontological Association.*



**Iris A. Savich, M.A.**  
Organizational Communication Instructor

*Iris is a national trainer and conference presenter who has extensive experience in training and development. Since 1989 her consulting firm, TAP Unlimited Corporation, has specialized in management and supervisory training courses. Adjunct at*

*Marylhurst University, PSU and PCC, she was the recipient of Portland Community College's Outstanding Instructor Award (1996) and Faculty Member of the Year (2000). Bilingual in German and English, she has lived, studied and traveled extensively abroad.*



**Debrah Bokowski, Ph.D.**  
Chair, MAIS  
Liberal Arts Instructor

*Debrah has been the chairperson of the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies program since 2000. She has a master's degree in philosophy and a doctorate in political science. Her area of research has been women and politics. She*

*regularly teaches the program's introductory course, a thesis cohort, Social Justice and electives such as Religion and Politics. She is a member of the board of the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs.*



**David Scott Arnold, Ph.D.**  
Spiritual Traditions & Ethics Instructor

*David Scott Arnold teaches humanities courses grounded in the interdiscipline of religion and literature. His seminars range from Homer to Woolf, from symbolic anthropology to William James's pragmatism. He has presented papers on Dostoevsky, the Bible, Iris Murdoch, Ken Kesey, Ingmar Bergman and T.S. Eliot at international conferences in Oxford,*

*Glasgow, York, Durham and Stirling, Scotland. He lives in Corvallis where he teaches an undergraduate course at Oregon State University every quarter titled *Quests for Meaning*.*

**Marylhurst University—  
just 10 minutes south of Portland, Oregon.**

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Marylhurst University is a liberal arts university located south of Portland between Lake Oswego and West Linn. Founded in 1893, Oregon's oldest Catholic university welcomes students of all faiths and backgrounds. Marylhurst University is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies program is a full member of the Association for Graduate Liberal Studies Programs (AGLSP), a national organization that oversees the development and implementation of graduate programs in the liberal arts.