Instructors:
Haruko Momma (lecturer)
Jonathan James (preceptor)
Gerald Song (preceptor)

Offices:
Momma: 13 University Place, Room 221; (212) 998-8813
James: 13 University Place, Room B-05; (212) 992-8293,
Song: 13 University Place, Room B-06; (212) 992-8294

E-mail:
Momma: hal.momma@nyu.edu
James: jrj260@nyu.edu
Song: gbs245@nyu.edu

Class Hours and locations:
Lectures, Momma: Mon & Wed, 9:30 – 10:45 a.m.; Silver 520
Discussion section 020, Song: Thursday, 8:00 – 9:15 a.m.; TISC LC4
Discussion section 021, Song: Thursday, 9:30 – 10:45 a.m.; WAVE 435
Discussion section 022, James: Thursday, 3:30 – 4:45 p.m.; WAVE 370
Discussion section 023, James: Thursday, 4:55 – 6:10 p.m.; 194 M, 301

Office Hours:
Momma: Monday 4:30 p.m.—6 p.m. and Wednesday 11 a.m.—12:30 p.m.
James: Tuesdays 10 a.m.—11:30 a.m.
Song: Monday, 11:15 a.m.—12:45 p.m.

Course Description:

We use language every day, and yet we do not seem to know exactly how it works. Communicating with others through language sometimes feels like playing a game. But does this mean we have only one language game to play, or that we follow only one set of rules all the time? Just like Alice, who was constantly frustrated by the logic of the inhabitants of Wonderland, we are often baffled by difficulties in communicating even the simplest idea. This course, then, will explore issues on language that may be raised by reading literary and philosophical texts written by “language-conscious” authors: for example,

- Is language the only way to communicate? (signs and symbols)
- Do we know anything about the origin of language? (starting with the Bible)
• Do grammar and rhetoric help us communicate well or persuade others?
• Do etymology and the history of English tell us anything new about the language we know already? (how to use the Oxford English Dictionary, among others)
• Do our minds work exactly the same way regardless of the language we speak? (Chomsky vs. the “Sapir-Whorf hypothesis”)
• How do we do things with words? (speech-act theory)

Here are some of the texts we are going to read in the course: Lewis Carroll, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*; Plato; *Cratylus*; Aristotle, *Poetics* and other writings; Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Beowulf*; Chaucer, *The House of Fame*; Herman Melville, *Bartleby, the Scrivener*; Borges, “The Library of Babel”; Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*.

**Course Evaluation:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation:*</td>
<td>20% (10% and 10%, respectively)</td>
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<tr>
<td>First essay:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Midterm exam:</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second essay:</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam:</td>
<td>25%</td>
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*Attendance is mandatory; in case of illness or family emergency, please contact your preceptor prior to class. Chronic lateness may affect your grade.

**Required books (available at NYU Bookstore):**


Herman Melville, *Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall-Street* (Random House, 2010)

**Other required texts available online**

Plato, *Cratylus*, translated by Benjamin Jowett
Chaucer, *The House of Fame*
http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~amtower/HOUSE.HTM

Borges, “The Library of Babel”

Aristotle, *Poetics*
http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/poetics.html

Nabokov, “Signs and Symbols”
http://www.angelynngrant.com/nabokov.html

**Recommended Books (available at NYU Bookstore):**

Plato, *Cratylus*, translated by Benjamin Jowett (BiblioBazaar, 2007)


**Other required and recommended reading**

*Available on the course Blackboard site*

**Tentative Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01/24</td>
<td>Introduction; language as game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/26</td>
<td>Carroll, <em>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</em>, <em>OED</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>01/31</td>
<td>Carroll, <em>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</em>; short essay topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/02</td>
<td>Carroll, <em>Alice’s Adventures under Gground</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>02/07</td>
<td>Plato, <em>Cratylus</em>; on signs</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/09</td>
<td>Plato, <em>Cratylus</em>; on etymology</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/14</td>
<td>Chaucer, <em>The House of Fame</em>; on narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/16</td>
<td>Chaucer, <em>The House of Fame</em>; on rhetoric</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/17-8</td>
<td>Essay due in discussion session</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/21</td>
<td>President’s Day, no class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/23</td>
<td>Borges, “The Library of Babel”; on the origin of language; <em>mid-term info</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
02/28 Aristotle, *Poetics* and other writing; on mimesis
03/02 Aristotle, *Poetics* and other writing; on logic
03/07 Shakespeare, *Hamlet*; on grammar
03/09 Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, review
03/14 *Spring break, no class*
03/16 *Spring break, no class*
03/21 Midterm exam
03/23 Nabokov, “Signs and Symbols”; on suffering language; *long essay topic*
03/28 Melville, *Bartleby, the Scrivener*
03/30 Melville, *Bartleby, the Scrivener*
04/04 Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*; Sapier-Whorf hypothesis
04/06 Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*
04/11 *Beowulf*
04/13 *Beowulf*
04/18 A good deal of poetry; Chomsky and the sentence
04/20 … and some more poetry
04/21-2 *essay due in discussion class*
04/25 Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*; sociolinguistics
04/27 Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
05/02 Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*; looking back
05/04 Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*; looking forward
05/09 Review
05/11 Final exam (8 a.m.—9:50 a.m.)
Statement on Academic Integrity
Morse Academic Plan, College of Arts and Science

As a student at New York University, you have been admitted to a community of scholars who value free and open inquiry. Our work depends on honest assessment of ideas and their sources; and we expect you, as a member of our community, likewise to maintain the highest integrity in your academic work. Because of the central importance of these values to our intellectual life together, those who fail to maintain them will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University.

Plagiarism consists in presenting ideas and words without acknowledging their source and is an offense against academic integrity. Any of the following acts constitutes a crime of plagiarism.

- Using a phrase, sentence, or passage from another person’s work without quotation marks and attribution of the source.
- Paraphrasing words or ideas from another’s work without attribution.
- Reporting as your own research or knowledge any data or facts gathered or reported by another person.
- Submitting in your own name papers or reports completed by another.
- Submitting your own original work toward requirements in more than one class without the prior permission of the instructors.

Other offenses against academic integrity include the following.

- Collaborating with other students on assignments without the express permission of the instructor.
- Giving your work to another student to submit as his or her own.
- Copying answers from other students during examinations.
- Using notes or other sources to answer exam questions without the instructor’s permission.
- Secreting or destroying library or reference materials.
- Submitting as your own work a paper or results of research that you have purchased from a commercial firm or another person.

Particular emphasis is placed on the use of papers and other materials to be found on the World-Wide Web, whether purchased or freely available. In addition to having access to the same search engines as students, faculty also have at their disposal a number of special websites devoted to detecting plagiarism from the web.

Plagiarism and other cases of academic fraud are matters of fact, not intention. It is therefore crucial that you be diligent in assuring the integrity of your work.

- Use quotation marks to set off words that are not your own.
- Learn to use proper forms of attribution for source materials.
- Do your own original work in each class, without collaboration, unless otherwise instructed.
- Don’t use published sources, the work of others, or material from the web without attribution.
- For further information, consult the Bulletin of the College of Arts and Science, the CAS Academic Handbook, and the Student’s Guide to NYU.

revised 11/2005
Academic Guidelines for Students
Morse Academic Plan, College of Arts and Science

To help foster common academic expectations among students and instructors, the following guidelines for MAP courses are offered to students. While these represent minimum expectations across the curriculum, individual faculty members may set additional course requirements. Students should therefore consult the course syllabus for details of policies in each class.

Attendance
Inasmuch as students have voluntarily sought admission to the University, they are expected to attend all class meetings, including all lectures and all meetings of associated recitation, workshop, or laboratory sections. Students may be excused for documented medical or personal emergency and will receive reasonable accommodation for the observance of religious holidays. In these cases, they should contact their instructors in advance or, in cases of emergency, as soon as is practicable. Students are responsible for making up any material or assignments they miss.

Classroom Decorum
The classroom is a space for free and open inquiry and for the critical evaluation of ideas, and it should be free of personal prejudice. Students and instructors alike have an obligation to all members of the class to create an educational atmosphere of mutual trust and respect in which differences of opinion can be subjected to deliberate and reasonable examination without animus.

As a matter of courtesy to their fellow students and instructors, students should arrive at class promptly, prepared and ready to participate. Students are reminded particularly to shut off all cellular telephones and pagers and, except in cases of emergency, to remain in the classroom for the duration of the lecture or section meeting. If it is necessary to leave or enter a room once class has begun, students should do so quietly and with as little disruption as possible. Under University policy, disruptive classroom behavior may be subject to faculty review and disciplinary sanction.

Completion of Assignments
Students are expected to submit course work on time and to retain copies of their work until a final grade has been received for the course. Instructors are not obliged to accept late work and may assign a failing or reduced grade to such assignments.

Students who encounter sudden and incapacitating illness or an other comparably grave circumstance that prevents them from completing the final examination or assignment in a course may request a temporary mark of Incomplete from the course instructor. To receive an Incomplete, students must have completed all other requirements for the course, including satisfactory attendance, and there must be a strong likelihood they will pass the course when all work is completed.

Questions and Concerns
Up-to-date course information is available on the MAP website: www.nyu.edu/cas/map. Questions, concerns, comments, and feedback may be directed to the following members of the MAP staff, located in 903 Silver Center, 212-998-8119. Complaints will remain confidential.

- Director: Prof. Joy Connolly
- Associate Director for the FCC: Prof. Vincent Renzi
- Associate Director for the FSI: Prof. Trace Jordan
- Department Administrator: Ms Janet Lebeda
- morse.plan@nyu.edu
- map.fcc@nyu.edu
- map.fsi@nyu.edu
- morse.plan@nyu.edu

revised 1/2010
Why MAP?
A Guide for Students

What is the MAP?
The Morse Academic Plan is the group of core courses that every student must complete in order to earn a degree from the College of Arts and Science. *It represents the considered judgment of the faculty about what every College graduate should know as a part of his or her liberal arts education.* In other undergraduate divisions at NYU, faculty of those schools have adopted parts of the MAP to provide a core experience in the liberal arts for their students as well. Because it is shared by students across different schools, majors, and programs, the MAP is also sometimes called the *general education curriculum.*

What's "liberal" about the liberal arts?
"Liberal" comes from the Latin word *liber,* meaning "free." In ancient Greece and Rome, *liberal* education was the pursuit of *free* men, that is, those with the means and leisure to be able to devote themselves to learning, rather than to labor.

Today when we speak of "liberal education," we mean an education in the "liberal arts," an education for men and women that frees intellectual capacities and the imagination through the study of human endeavor on a broad scale, from music, art, and philosophy, to encounters with nature and with cultures of other times and places.

What are the "liberal arts"?
Sometimes also called the "arts and sciences" or "liberal arts and sciences," in the medieval university curriculum they were seven in number: grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music.

Today, the liberal arts encompass all the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences—*all those areas of inquiry that are pursued for the sake of expanding human knowledge, rather than as training for a particular profession.*

(over)
What’s the practical value of liberal education?

Education in the liberal arts builds your critical, analytic, and communications skills, giving you the preparation you need to flourish in the world of work and to become a productive member of society.

More than this, however, education in the liberal arts is preparation for life as a responsible, actively engaged citizen, equipping you with the open-mindedness and soundness of judgment necessary to reason, act, and lead. Indeed, this University—and the whole enterprise of higher education in the United States—was founded on the belief that college graduates have a special opportunity and responsibility to contribute to the common good.

What are the faculty’s specific goals for the MAP?

In designing the MAP, the faculty sought to ensure that students would expand their capacity to communicate effectively, by improving their writing and gaining proficiency in a foreign language. This is why every undergraduate must complete Writing the Essay or its equivalent, and why the University maintains extensive opportunities for language study both in New York and at the global sites, as well as the non-credit Speaking Freely program.

The faculty also wanted to provide every student with opportunities to build his or her quantitative skills and to study the natural sciences. These studies give you the knowledge you need to be an independent-minded citizen in a world increasingly shaped by science and technology, where urgent questions of policy require prudent, well-informed judgments. We aim, too, to foster your appreciation of mathematics and the sciences as liberal pursuits.

We likewise believe that students should gain knowledge of the social sciences, which study how humans communicate, organize their communities, worship, use language, and engage in trade and diplomacy. Because the fine and performing arts connect us in unexpected ways, give pleasure, and reveal new perspectives on the world, the MAP also includes courses in Expressive Culture.

Finally, students should come to think of themselves as citizens of a larger world by gaining the ability to comprehend how people remote from themselves understand, experience, and imagine their lives. They should also come to know themselves better by engaging critically with the significant ideas that have shaped contemporary culture. For these reasons, all students in the MAP complete a course in Cultures and Contexts and a course in Texts and Ideas.

Does all this mean that you will take a few courses outside your main interests and comfort zone? That is our intention: Stretching the mind and rethinking old assumptions and beliefs are important preparation for your future. The MAP represents our commitment as a faculty to assuring you an undergraduate education that will equip you for success in your later careers and prepare you for a life of thinking critically and creatively about who you are, who you want to be, and how to better the world we live in.

September, 2010