

050:283:D1 Topics in American Studies  
[agillespie@amst.rutgers.edu](mailto:agillespie@amst.rutgers.edu)

Professor Angus Kress Gillespie  
Ruth Adams 001, Douglass Campus

E-mail:

Office Phone 732.932.1630  
Cell Phone 201.704.8621

**MARITIME ADVENTURE**  
**Summer Session 2006**  
**Rutgers—The State University**  
**Fridays 8:30 am to 5:00 pm**

Introduction to the Course

Throughout history, the sea has been of supreme global importance. Worldwide, it has provided transportation for people, goods, and ideas. Its resources have been harvested to feed nations; it has regulated the climates of the earth; and it has been a battlefield for many wars.

The history of America cannot be separated from its maritime heritage, yet most Americans are unaware of the important ways in which our seas and inland waterways have shaped our culture. Our course attempts to correct this blind spot by providing a brief introduction to maritime activities in American culture.

Oceans and rivers have a great effect on the whole of New Jersey. Ninety percent of the state's boundaries are water, with the Hudson River on the northeast, the ocean for 120 miles on the east and the Delaware River on the west. New Brunswick's location is remarkably convenient for exploring some of the typical maritime facilities of the Mid-Atlantic in a series of one-day outings.

Organization of the Course

We meet on four Fridays for at least eight hours each time. There is one full day of in-class work and orientation on Friday June 30, followed by three all-day field trips on July 7, July 14, and July 21 to commercial, industrial, and military seaports in New Jersey. We try to book our tours primarily to places not normally available to the general public. Our last day will end at Ruth Adams 001 with a final quiz based on the book, class presentations, and the field trips.

There are substantial costs associated with the course. Each of you has already paid \$90 (in addition to tuition) in order to gain admission to the course. Your fee covers bus transportation, guide services, taxes, and tips. Fees are nonrefundable.

Though this course is ideal for American Studies majors, we welcome any undergraduate with a strong academic record and a personal interest in the sea. No previous maritime experience is required.

Obviously, since we meet on only four occasions, attendance is mandatory. We shall embark on our three field trips rain or shine. You may wish to consider bringing an UMBRELLA. We have found that it may start out as bright sunny day in the morning, but come later afternoon there may be a lashing rain, making you wish you had an umbrella. These trips cannot be rescheduled. Note that all three trips depart from the parking lot behind the Douglass College Center that is located at the intersection of George Street and Nichol Avenue. Note that the entrance to the parking lot is by means of Lipman Drive. Please try to report 15 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time.

The field trips are the key to this course that is based on experiential education. We expect that you will actively participate in these events and activities. Penalties for missed trips, **WHATEVER THE REASON**, are substantial and are automatically applied without exception. If you miss one trip, your grade for the course will be lowered one full letter grade. If you miss two trips, your grade will be an "F".

All trips are planned so that we arrive back at Douglass Campus of Rutgers in New Brunswick at 5:00 pm, but this arrival time is **NOT GUARANTEED** and may run later, so you should make your personal plans accordingly. We strongly recommend against making any firm plans for early evenings on trip days.

We do quite a bit of walking on hot summer days in locations with very little shade, so you should dress appropriately and wear comfortable shoes. Some of our destinations are heavily air-conditioned indoors, so you may wish to bring some kind of jacket or SWEATER. You may wish to bring sun block, bottled water, and money for lunch and souvenirs. You are encouraged to bring camera and film since all trips have a number of splendid photo opportunities.

### Field Trip Advisory

The heart of Maritime Adventure rests with the field trips, which are designed to provide you with worthwhile educational experiences. The professor has the responsibility to schedule the trips and to plan their routing, pacing, and sequencing. In this course, you as a student have certain responsibilities also. You should arrive at campus prior to the departure of the van at the scheduled time. It is important that you stay with the group and not wander off.

Although every attempt will be made to take attendance at departure times, making the van on time is your responsibility. Unlike grammar school trips, we will not hold the van for stragglers. If you wander off from the group and fail to pay attention to the departure schedule, you run the risk of being left behind. Please do not let this happen to you!

## Calendar of Events

Friday June 30, 2006

**CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION**  
8:30 am Ruth Adams 001, Douglass.  
The Concept of Maritime Adventure.  
Release forms signed.  
Address labels for papers completed.  
Lectures, videos, class discussion.  
Lunch on your own 12:00 to 1:00.  
Snack bar, Douglass Student Center.  
Trip Orientations. This is a full day  
of class ending at 5:00 pm.  
Attendance taken at beginning and  
end of the day. No early dismissals.  
Absentees dropped from the course.

Friday July 7, 2006

**COAST GUARD STUDY VISIT**  
Report at 8:30 for 8:45 departure.  
One-page précis & case study due.  
Guided Tour USCG Sector New York  
Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island  
Case study presentations by class.  
Classroom lectures and exercises.

Friday July 14, 2006

**NAVY STUDY VISIT**  
Report at 8:30 for 8:45 departure.  
Case study on logistic support due.  
Tour Naval Weapons Station, Colts Neck.  
Case study presentations by class.  
Classroom lectures and exercises.

Friday July 21, 2006

**STUDY OF MARITIME COMMERCE**  
Port of Elizabeth and Newark, NJ  
Report at 8:30 for 8:45 departure.  
Term project and case study due.  
No delays, no excuses, no extensions.  
Tour of Seaman's Church Institute.  
Tour of Port Authority Marine Terminals  
Final Quiz upon return to Rutgers.  
Course evaluations completed.

## Required Reading

We have assigned one book for this course. The book is The Perfect Storm by Sebastian Junger (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997). It is about the loss of an American fishing boat in a storm off the coast of Nova Scotia in 1997. Concept of the Course

## Structure of the Course

The structure of the Rutgers Summer Session offers us a unique opportunity for an interdisciplinary course based on cooperative learning. As a learner you will have the chance to be involved actively in the process, to make use of your own experience, and to assume responsibility for your own learning.

Our course is based on at least two alternative ideas in teaching. First, we are using the idea of "Nearby History" to use local resources to learn about New Jersey, the sea, and history. Second, we are using the idea of "Field Studies" to free us from the rigidity of classroom instruction.

There is one short objective quiz on the last day based on the assigned text and various handouts as well as the knowledge you acquire on the trips themselves, but most of your grade is to be determined by a project described below.

## Grading Policy

To receive full credit for this course a student must attend the first full day of classroom instruction and participate in all three field trips. However, completion of these requirements does not by itself entitle the student to academic credit. To earn academic credit, one must also write three suitable case studies, submitted on time, as well as take the final quiz at the scheduled time.

First Case Study	20%
Second Case Study	20%
Third Case Study	20%
Final Quiz	40%

Reductions in your grade may be made for 1) significant tardiness or early departures, 2) gross and repeated grammatical and/or spelling mistakes on your case studies, 3) lack of participation in classroom or field trip discussions.

The Final Quiz is given at the conclusion of the last field trip. It consists of a number of multiple-choice questions based on the classroom lectures, class discussions, readings, videos, handouts, field trips, lectures by guest speakers and tour guides, plus your own observations. Attendance at the final quiz is mandatory and required. This

obligation must have top priority if you expect to receive credit for the course. Be sure to arrange your work schedule and your personal schedule accordingly. If you do not take the quiz, you will not get credit for the course.

The quiz will be given at the scheduled time only. There are no alternative dates or makeups of any kind whatsoever. You may not phone in sick. You may be excused only for illness that requires hospitalization or a documented death in your immediate family. Unless there is a drastic emergency of this nature that can be substantiated and documented, we expect you to attend and take the quiz on schedule.

In the belief that proper crib preparation is indistinguishable from studying, we have institutionalized and legalized the crib sheet for the final quiz in this course. You are allowed to use a legal crib sheet. Our purpose is to reduce exam anxiety and to encourage good study habits. The rules are as follows:

- @ Both sides of a single 8 1/2" X 11" piece of paper may be used. That's the same size as the pages of this syllabus.
- @ Cribs must be written by hand--not typed--and signed.
- @ The crib sheet is to be turned in with the exam, and it will not be returned to you.

### Case Studies

You will be given three case studies, each relating to one of our field trips. In a typical case study, you will be given a written summary of a real-world problem faced by maritime management executives. In this training module, we will ask you to play the role of a key decision-maker within a maritime organization. You will then read about the case and come up with possible solutions to the problem. For example, you may help an organization figure out why they are losing money, or why their clients do not like their services, or why it takes so long to get the information they need.

In advance of each field trip, you will receive a written case study that lays out a problem confronted by the management of the organization that we are about to visit. Prior to the trip, you should read the case study carefully, take notes, and try to form a tentative response. While visiting the site, take full advantage of the opportunity to make your own observations and to ask questions. Following the trip, you will have 72 hours to submit a "point paper," which is a synopsis of a problem. (Be sure to keep a copy for yourself.) The point paper should be sent to me by e-mail no later than 6:00 pm on the Monday following the trip. It is strictly limited to one page of text and may have an additional page with a graph or table. The basic format is as follows: Problem, Background, Alternatives, and Recommendations. These short papers will be graded and returned to you, either directly or by U.S. Mail, with the following simplified system:

- = Excellent. Your paper has unusual insight with extra care and attention. Displays industriousness & conscientiousness.
- = Good. Your paper has presented all the necessary information and is well written.
- = Satisfactory. Your paper has covered the required material though with some shortcomings in either style or substance.

### The Optional Paper

For those ambitious students who seek "extra credit," we invite you to make your own maritime "adventure". No one has to participate. The kind of "adventure" I have in mind cannot be found in books. What you need to do is to find a person whose livelihood is (or was) derived from the sea. Then interview this person, and write up your findings in an interesting essay of 5 to 7 pages (plus title and bibliography pages), no shorter and no longer. With about 250 words per page, in 11 or 12-point font size, this means an essay of about 1250 words to 1750 words. Print size should be no larger than 12 point with one-inch margins on all sides of every page. Though you may derive inspiration and ideas from our field trips, this project is to be done on your own time quite apart from our field trips together.

Where do you find such a person? Fortunately, in New Jersey it's relatively easy. Some occupational categories are obvious--such as those serving in the Navy, the Coast Guard, or the Merchant Marine. We also think of those working in any aspect of the fishing or shipping industries. Other equally suitable choices are less obvious--such as the proprietor of a seafood restaurant, owner of a bait shop, or maker of salt-water taffy. If you are stuck for lack of a resource person, you may wish to consult Robert Santelli's Guide to the Jersey Shore that should provide literally hundreds of leads, many with address and phone numbers.

### Term Paper Proposal

The choice of subject is up to you. Whatever your choice, if you choose to do the optional paper, I want you to give me next week on July 7 WITHOUT FAIL a one hundred and fifty word discussion of the person you plan to interview (typed on a single piece of plain sheet of 8 1/2" X 11" white paper). Although this particular maritime "adventure" should not be an undertaking of a particularly hazardous nature, it should be an adventure in the sense of being an unusual and challenging experience.

Since you have only three weeks to complete this assignment, it would be best if you could decide on a topic right away. This way you can turn in a first-class piece of work, rather than a patchwork assemblage of pseudo-research done the night before the

class ends. Don't put this off! Since you are dependent on making an appointment with someone, allow some extra time in case your interviewee breaks an appointment or asks for a delay. You have only three weeks to figure out your topic, arrange for an interview, conduct the interview, and then turn that material into a suitable paper. The time to start is now.

Try to go beyond a simple statement such as, "I will interview someone who works on a tanker. You need to go further and ask yourself, "What's the big idea?" Otherwise your paper will just be a tour through the miscellaneous. A purely expository and descriptive essay, one simply about "Tankers," for instance, really has no idea at all. It is all subject, all tankers, instead of being based on an idea about tankers. When you have found something to say about tankers, you have found your underlying idea. The aboutness puts an argumentative edge on the subject. You now have something to argue about: not just "Tankers," but perhaps "The kind of person who becomes the captain of a tanker tends to have a controlling personality."

Now you have an argument on your hands. You have something to prove. You have a thesis. For example, see the model project proposal below, based on an actual student proposal (only the names have been changed to protect privacy) from a previous class.

### Term Project Techniques

How do you get such a person to talk to you? Again, it's relatively easy. As a college student you can always blame the problem on your professor: "I'm sorry to bother you, but I have this homework assignment from school." Most potential informants will take pity on you and help you out. Before you go and interview someone, you may wish to read one of the recommended books on the interview process. This book has practical suggestions on getting interviews, doing research, using the tape recorder, and writing up the results.

Now as for when these projects are due. I must have your projects on FRIDAY, July 21, at 8:45 am without fail. I will collect them before we depart on our last trip. Since the assignment is entirely optional, there will be no need for extensions. If you do not have the paper, you will not be penalized in any way. Writing this paper will only help your final grade and cannot harm you at all. I will return your paper to you via U.S. Mail with my comments as soon as I have read it. I will also inform you of your final grade at that time.

For best results, your paper should consist of more than just an interview with the familiar question-answer format. Many beginning interviewers think that once the interview is down on tape, the rest is easy. All you have to do is to put the Q's and A's in front of the dialogue, right? Wrong. It is better not to use the Q and A format. Instead, write the piece as a narrative spiced with quotes. If you need help, please ask. Since we meet only once a week, the most efficient way is by e-mail.

If you use word-processing equipment, make sure you have back-up copies of everything as you go along. There will be no extensions because of "computer problems." If you have justification, please turn it off, so that the right margin is ragged. Make sure that your paper is paginated, in other words, that you number pages.

Papers must be typewritten on standard 8 1/2" X 11" paper. Print size no larger than 12 point is required. (Times New Roman is the preferred font.) There should be one-inch margins on all sides of every page. Projects will be evaluated on their individual merit; there will be no automatic conferring of grades simply because papers were "completed."

The cover must contain the title of your report, your name, the name of this course, the instructor's name, and the date. For a sample title page, see the last page of this syllabus. Please, no binders. Just staple the pages together.

One style note that comes up often in these papers--remember to italicize (indicated by underscoring if you do not have italics) names of ships. Here's an example: "The SS Lurline will sail at four o'clock." Or even better: "The SS *Lurline* will sail at four o'clock." Finally, your paper should contain appropriate footnotes and bibliography.

Successful papers will earn bonus points to be applied to the score on the final quiz, after the regular grades are computed. "A" papers get 9 points; "B" papers get 7 points; and "C" papers get 5 points. When bonus points are applied to the final exam, it can make the difference of an entire letter grade. Remember it is up to you. No one has to do the assignment. However, those who carry it out should find the experience rewarding.

#### Alternate Term Paper Topic

If you simply cannot come up with someone to interview, you may do a "Book and Movie Review and Comparison" instead. Pick a topic that has been treated both in film and book, such as "The Perfect Storm" or "The Caine Mutiny." Write a paper comparing the two medium's common story, and compare the story's treatment in each. Include both a substantive comparison (what parts of the story did each medium emphasize, or tell best?) and an artistic comparison (what literary or cinematic techniques were employed, and how did they affect the telling and impact of the story?).

### Summer Session Advisory

It is characteristic of summer session work that it is very intense. Unfortunately, this intense work is being carried out at the very time that many others are enjoying baseball, lazy afternoons, and weekends at the shore. However, you should bear in mind that you and you alone are responsible for keeping up with the assigned work in this course. We strongly recommend against taking this course if you are also attempting to work at a full-time job. Most people simply cannot handle this kind of workload and stress.

In any event, when our course ends with the final quiz, work for this course is complete. Therefore, please be advised that once the course has ended, there will be absolutely, positively no further opportunities for "make up" exams or "extra credit" work to improve your grade. Such after-the-fact activities are manifestly unfair to everyone else in the class who has done the work all along. The time to work on this course is now, not after the class is over.

## SAMPLE TERM PAPER PROPOSAL:

Jean Lewis Smith '07  
Term Paper Proposal  
July 7, 2006

### LIQUID NATURAL GAS (LNG) TANKER CAPTAIN, RETIRED David Jones of Branchburg, New Jersey

Up to now I have known David Jones only as the husband of my boss at work. Dave is a lanky, tall sandy-haired man in excellent health with a sense of humor manifesting itself in frequent witty puns that produce both smiles and groans from his audience. I know he is active in various projects since his recent retirement, one being a neat and productive vegetable garden. I have observed that he seems to readily take charge of organizing activities and fixing things and appears to be very orderly, even meticulous. He seems to enjoy instructing people on the correct way to do things to the point of being somewhat annoyed if others are not taking the care he thinks appropriate. An example of this is the way he sets up his croquet set and instructs guests in the rules of the game.

I know nothing about Dave's work as a captain and absolutely nothing about how he came to be doing this kind of work. I never spoke to him about the issues raised in our class such as the position of the United States in sea commerce, the environmental and safety factors involved in transporting huge containers of liquefied natural gas, the labor issues, the risks and dangers of the work and skill needed to prevent tragedies. And then there are all the interesting details. Just how big are these ships? From where do they sail? Where do they go? What is it like to be responsible for such a ship? How is it loaded and unloaded? And on and on.

I plan to use the interview in both structured and unstructured ways. I prefer not to predict what might be the most interesting line of inquiry. I believe that Dave will be happy to talk about his work and himself. The one idea that I do have now and might pursue is the issue of control. I have observed that Dave has a take-charge attitude and a respect for the rules and a love for doing the job right. Does a man with that kind of personality tend to find and excel in the work a sea captain needs to do? Or did the job mold his approach to other life experiences? Whatever happens, it should be both enjoyable and educational, an interesting adventure.

SAMPLE TITLE PAGE:

American Studies 050:283  
Maritime Adventure  
Professor Angus Kress Gillespie  
July 21, 2006

TRADITIONAL BOAT BUILDER:  
Charles Hankins of Lavallette, New Jersey

Laura Grace Langhorne  
123 Main Street  
Plainfield, NJ 07060  
(732) 555-3434  
lauri@eden.rutgers.edu