

DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURES IN ENGLISH



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Head of Department

WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

The 2017/18 academic year was a time of programme renewal and expansion, as part of our response to low undergraduate enrollment. For the first time in years, some of our core introductory courses had more non-majors than majors. This unusual situation provided an opportunity to market specific kinds of literature and film courses to non-majors, even as we continued our drive to recruit students from the high school CAPE cohort into our literature programme. Through our usual initiatives of “Meet the Author Sessions,” CAPE Workshops, School Visitations and through collaborative efforts with other departments and non-UWI stakeholders, we continue to champion literature and the creative arts as viable areas of engagement. In addition, the department participated in an Orientation Village as a marketing initiative and introduced a **Video Promotion** on our You Tube Channel to advertise the department’s

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courses. The Revised MA Programme was reconvened in the academic year, after a two-year suspension. The BA in Film Studies programme was designed and approved for delivery in the new academic year.

The department was active and energetic in showcasing UWI as the premier site of literary excellence in Jamaica. The activities included: public lectures, book launches, literary readings, film screenings, “Reggae Talks,” creative writing workshops, the Poetry Clash Competition, interactive sessions and annual CAPE lectures and workshops for high school students and teachers. We also partnered with other departments, institutions and campuses such as CARIMAC, the Institute of Caribbean Studies, the Department of History and Archaeology, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, the Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work, The National Library, The British Council and BOCAS LitFest, The Gloria Lyn Memorial Fund and the Western Jamaica Campus (WJC) to host a variety of events. We continue to work on the recommendations from the department’s Quality Assurance Review regarding the MFA programme, formal institutionalization of the Writer-in-Residence position, as well as the establishment of a strong internship programme. The department will continue to work towards achieving its objectives in the 2018/2019 academic year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Department welcomed **Professor Curdella Forbes** from Howard University, as a Writer-in-Residence, and St Lucian **Michelle Serieux** as Filmmaker-in-Residence for Semester II. Professor Forbes taught the course LITS2604: Creative Writing Prose Fiction. She also headlined our *Love Affair with Literature* event, as well as conducted a Creative Writing workshop for extra-UWI writers, and participated in the department’s outreach to high school students. Ms Serieux focussed on the development of students’ talent in creative writing for screen, conducted workshops, screened films, participated in UWI/FSU film festival and helped to organize our *March is Movie Month* screenings. **Mrs Tanya Shirley Johnstone** who was appointed as an Adjunct Lecturer for Semesters I & II, taught LITS2603 and LITS2503 respectively.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The department, for the first time, used videos to promote Semester 1 course enrolment. The videos were posted on the “Lits in English UWI Mona” You Tube Channel. Students were able to view lecturers’ introductions of courses before registering.

Three new courses, subject to approval, will be introduced in the academic year 2018/19. These are Introduction to Creative Writing, which was proposed by Dr Isis Semaj-Hall; Creative Non-Fiction and Digital Media and The Graphic Novel which were proposed by Dr Jennifer Brittan. A new programme, the Creative Writing Minor, that represents the department’s fulfilment of a long held goal, was also proposed by Dr Semaj-Hall and Dr Brittan. These new offerings were all approved. New courses in Film Studies (“World Cinema” and “Film History”) were also approved and added to the list of offerings with a level 2, “Nollywood: Genres of African Film,” which was introduced in the first semester and taught by **Dr Connor Ryan**. Dr Ryan also produced a promotional video for the new BA in Film Studies. He also oversaw the creation and dissemination of promotional flyers and assisted Dr Moseley-Wood in creating a Gleaner advertisement for the programme.

Dr Brittan served as Faculty Adviser for a new student-run blog *The Windian*.

The department is still in the process of reviewing and finalizing the Minor in Theatre Studies, in collaboration with the Philip Sherlock Centre for the Creative Arts, revamping the Liberal Studies Major and refining a proposal for a joint BA/BEd in Literature and Education, with the School of Education.

GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The revised MA Programme was approved and offered in the academic year. The credit rating was upgraded from 24 to 36 credits. The department continues to look at ways to revise the programme to include mixed-mode delivery, so that students who are in remote locations from the campus can access the programme. This change would also help to

increase our enrolment in the graduate programme. The Graduate Students Welcome Social was held on September 5. The department congratulated **Alexis Samuels** on winning a UWI Postgraduate Scholarship and for her successful Ph.D. upgrade of her MPhil thesis. Both **Cornel Bogle** and **Ke Vaughn Bailey** won graduate scholarships to pursue their Masters degree at the University of Alberta. Cornel subsequently won the top scholarships after his MA year to pursue the Ph.D. at the University of Alberta. Two (2) students, **Tohru Nakamura** and **Whitney Eaton** were selected for the 2017/2018 Departmental Awards. Both students assisted the department events coordinator, **Dr Semaj-Hall**, and provided administrative support in the office.

Ms Samuels, PhD Candidate and **Mr Tohru Nakamura**, MPhil candidate were selected to participate in the 36th Annual West Indian Literature Conference, held October 4–7, 2017 at the St Augustine Campus. The theme of the conference was “Affect and Ethical Engagement”. Mr Nakamura, presented a paper titled “‘Welcome Each Other’: The Politics of Race and Affect in Earl Lovelace’s *Is Just a Movie*” and chaired a panel. Ms Samuels’ paper was titled, “Social and Gendered Beings in *Brown Girl, Brownstones*, *The Aguero Sisters* and *Changes: A Love Story*.”

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT MATTERS

The Department participated in the Orientation Village, during September 2017 and welcomed first year students majoring in Literature as well as Liberal Studies. During the orientation period, the DLIE embarked on a comprehensive marketing initiative for the promotion of courses and distributed over 500 flyers and posters for fourteen courses offered in Semester 1. The department’s First Year Social was held on September 20. Each first-year was assigned an Academic Advisor from among the teaching staff. The Annual Faculty Awards Ceremony was held on Thursday, November 9. Laurie Bell, Cornel Bogle, Trudi-Ann Cunningham, Kaleb D’Aguilar, Kheilleigh-Ann Gray, Leslie-Ann Laylor, Georgio Russell and Kyle Williams were presented with departmental awards. The department also introduced a Film Prize for the best performance in any second year film course. The prize was won by Kaleb D’Aguilar.

Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood, Outreach and Research Days Coordinator, organized the department's *Poetry Clash* Competition with the help of our graduate student, Francina Cousins, at the annual UWI Research Days held February 7–9. Unpublished poets (past and present UWI students) competed and the top three (3) winners received cash awards. Yashika Graham, Kenloy Smith and Kandine West won the 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes, respectively.

Dr Jennifer Brittan organised the virtual access to celebrated Jamaican-Canadian speculative fiction author Nalo Hopkinson (UC Riverside), to engage her LITS1007 students on her novel *Brown Girl in the Ring*.

In both semesters, the Departmental Consultative Committee Meetings (DCC) were convened. The meetings facilitated exchanges between lecturers and class representatives in order to discuss reports regarding the courses taught, with the aim to improve the department's course delivery. A "Meet the Author" session featuring Professor Paulette Ramsay, author of *Aunt Jen*, was held for CAPE Unit 1 students April 17 at the Multifunctional Room, Main Library. She also participated in another such session at the Western Jamaica Campus.

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES AND OUTREACH

Ms Lisa Brown, Dr. Michael A. Bucknor, Dr Isis Semaj-Hall and Dr Anthea Morrison presented papers and chaired selected panels at the 36th Annual West Indian Literature Conference held October 4–7, 2017 at the St. Augustine Campus. The theme was, "Affect and Ethical Engagement".

The Department of Literatures in English (DLIE) hosted the 11th Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture on March 6, 2018 at the Undercroft, Senate Building. The lecture was presented by Ghanian/Jamaican/American distinguished Professor, Kwame Dawes, the multi-talented writer, poet, literary critic, musician, actor, playwright and producer. His presentation was entitled, "The African Poetry Book Fund, Transforming the Landscape of African Poetry".

Events

The E. Desmond Lee Africa World Documentary Film Festival (AWDFF) was held from Thursday, November 16 to Sunday, November 19 at the Neville Hall Lecture Theatre (N1), FHE, Mona. Over 25 films were shown. The festival was organized by the Department of Literatures in English, the Department of Language, Linguistics and Philosophy, the Institute of Caribbean Studies and CARIMAC. **Dr Moseley-Wood** was the main coordinator of the event. On November 27, 2017, the DLIE hosted a Reading by internationally acclaimed dub poet Malachi Smith on the occasion of his Caribbean Book Tour promoting his latest album “Wiseman”. **Dr Isis Semaj-Hall** and Ms Michelle Serieux, Filmmaker-in-Residence were two of the four panellists for an inter-faculty critical discussion of the film, *Black Panther*, on April 18, 2018 at the Multifunctional Room of the Main Library. This event was facilitated jointly by the Department of Literatures in English from the Faculty of Humanities and Education and the Department of Sociology, Psychology, and Social Work from the Faculty of Social Sciences. Dr Karen King-Aribisala, Commonwealth Writers Prize Winner for *Kicking Tongues* and *The Hangman’s Game* and scholar from the University of Lagos, gave a *Reading* on Thursday, May 31, 2018.

Workshops

Internationally recognized writer and editor, Professor Kwame Dawes conducted a Creative Writing Workshop on Saturday, March 3, 2018. Also, acclaimed Author and Writer-in-Residence, Professor Curdella Forbes conducted a four-week *Creative Writing Workshop* between April 18 and May 9, 2018. She also represented the department in the Jamaica Women in Theatre Festival as a presenter in the Master Class on Dialogue in Script Writing on Saturday, March 24, 2018 at the JAMPRO Meeting Room. A Creative Writing for Film workshop was conducted by Filmmaker-in-Residence, Michele Serieux on June 30 at the UWI Council Room. Certificates were presented to the participants of the workshops.

Book Launches

Dr Michael Bucknor delivered the keynote address and review when Blouse & Skirt Books and the National Library of Jamaica hosted, on May 11, 2017 the launch of *In This Breadfruit Kingdom*, an anthology of Jamaican poetry, selected by Poet Laureate and DLIE **Emeritus Professor Mervyn Morris**. Ms Tanya Shirley Johnstone, Adjunct Lecturer, also delivered a special reading.

March is Literatures in English Month

The Department partnered with the Kingston Book Festival on Sunday, March 4, 2018 to stage “Love Affair with Literature 8” as part of the UWI’s 70th Anniversary celebrations, featuring poetry and prose readings by Edward Baugh, Barbara Lalla, Lesley-Ann “LA” Wanliss, Georgio Russell, Kwame Dawes and Curdella Forbes, all past or present students of UWI. **Dr Michael A. Bucknor** presented the launch talk for Barbara Lalla’s book *Grounds for Tenure* on March 13, 2018 at the Undercroft. *Reggae Talks*, coordinated by **Dr Isis Semaj-Hall**, featured Koffee, Gussie Clarke, Lila Ike and Kevy the artist, and was held at the Multifunctional Room, Main Library on March 27, 2018.

Dr Moseley-Wood, Dr Ryan and Ms Michelle Serieux co-ordinated six film screenings during the Department’s 2018 “March Is Movie Month” Film Series.

INTERACTIVE DISCUSSIONS AND OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS

Dr Jennifer Brittan in her collaboration with 1st year student (Zordan Moffat) visited Jose Marti Technical High School for the purpose of outreach and plans for teaching a class of CAPE literature students and giving a general talk about UWI and the LIE Department in January 2018.

The Department held its annual *CAPE Literatures in English Lecture/Discussion Series* on Friday, April 6 and 13, 2018 at the Old Library. The presenters included Ms Carolyn Allen, **Dr Jennifer Brittan, Ms Lisa Brown, Dr**

Michael A. Bucknor, Ms Caprece McCleary, **Dr Anthea Morrison**, **Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood** and **Dr Isis Semaj-Hall**. On April 13th, **Dr Connor Ryan** provided a Career Presentation to the CAPE students. **Ms Lisa Brown**, **Dr Michael A. Bucknor** and Dr Curdella Forbes (Writer-in-Residence) provided expertise for the discussion session following the staging of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for CSEC students at the Phoenix Theatre in March 2018. **Dr Michael A. Bucknor** did a study session in preparation for the essay paper of the CAPE Literatures in English with the Wolmer's Boys School CAPE Literatures in English group on March 3, 2018. **Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood** was interviewed for the UWI, Mona, Office of Marketing, Communication and Recruitment radio programme, "On Campus", which aired on June 3, 2018. She spoke about the new BA Film Studies as well as more broadly about the programmes offered in the Faculty and the advantages of reading for a degree in Humanities and Education

STAFF/POSTGRADUATE SEMINAR SERIES

Ms Alexis Samuels, MPhil student, presented the paper, "Negotiating the Triad: Traditional and Modern Gender-Performances and Counter Performances in African/Diaspora and Caribbean Women's Fiction" on Thursday, July 27, 2017. Ms Samuels also presented a paper titled, "Performances of Wooing in *Changes* by Ama Ata Aidoo and *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie" on Friday, April 20, 2018. Professor Opal Palmer Adisa, acclaimed Writer and University Director, Institute for Gender and Development Studies, gave a presentation entitled, "A Poet's Commitment to Social Activism and Feminist Sensibilities" on February 16, 2018. On Friday, March 23, 2018, Dr Sherry Johnson of Grand Valley State University presented on the topic "Memory and Personal Narratives of Self". Dr Karen King-Aribisala, University of Lagos presented a paper titled, "Living in Africa as a 'Member' of the African Diaspora – What is Africa to me now?" on May 25. **Dr Jennifer Brittan**, presented a paper titled, "Interplanetary Archipelago: Futures of the Hemispheric Caribbean" on June 8, 2018. On July 20, **Tohru Nakamura** presented his MPhil Upgrade paper titled, "Theorizing

Freedom: A Literary Exploration of Caribbean Ontology in Earl Lovelace, Wilson Harris, and George Lamming”.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND LINKS WITH OTHER UNIVERSITIES

- **Ms. Lisa Brown**, engaged in public service as Adjudicator, JCDC Festival Competition and serves as Steering Committee Member for the IABA World Conference, Brazil 2018 & Host/Convener IABA, Americas Chapter 2019 in preparation for the UWI, Mona Department of Literatures in English hosting the 2019 Conference of the IABA Americas chapter.
- **Dr Michael A. Bucknor** while visiting Trinidad and Tobago, October 2–8, 2017, attended the Board Meeting for the Journal of West Indian Literature and represented the Mona Academic Board on the Board for Undergraduate Meeting. As Chief Judge for the Una Marson Prize of the Lignum Vitae Literary Competition, **Dr Bucknor** gave the judge’s report and announced the winner at the Awards Ceremony held on November 24, 2017 at the National Gallery. He also represented the department at the Western Jamaica Campus Open Day in January 2018 and presented a workshop on “How to Read a Poem.” He was joined by author, Prof Paulette Ramsay, who participated in a “Meet the Author” session. **Dr Bucknor** represented the Mona Campus at the Council Meeting of the Open Campus in Antigua on March 27, 2018. He also participated in the research workshop on gender-based crime in Caribbean literary and oral culture organized by Dr Lucy Evans of the University of Leicester in preparation for a research grant application to support a collaborative research proposal that would include the University of Leicester, The University of the West Indies and the University of Guyana. The workshop was held at the St Augustine Campus, UWI, in Trinidad and Tobago on April 23, 2018. He is also involved in the “Spatial Imaginaries of Jamaican Organized Crime” and has been invited to present on “Literary Representations of Jamaican Crime” in both the Amsterdam Workshop in June 2018 and the Leicester Workshop in November 2018.

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- **Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood** attended a film screening series, “Caribbean Films @ Tallahassee” at Florida State University (FSU), Tallahassee, USA from April 19–22, 2018. The series was organised by Dr Moseley-Wood in collaboration with Dr Candace Ward, Assistant Professor in the Department of Literature, Media and Culture, FSU. The series featured screenings of three Jamaican feature films *Ring Di Alarm!* (2013), *Better Mus’ Come* (2010) and *Songs of Redemption* (2013) as well as the five short films from the JAFTA 2016 Propella Initiative. As part of the activities, Dr Moseley-Wood gave a presentation on April 20 titled, “Memory, Dream, History: Storm Saulter’s *Better Mus’ Come*”. Through the sponsorship of the Literature programme in the Literature, Media and Culture Department, FSU and the College of Motion Picture Arts, FSU, the attendance of the Literatures in English Filmmaker in Residence, Ms Michelle Serieux, was made possible.
- **Dr Semaj-Hall** is now co-editor for *PREE: Caribbean. Writing*. Launched in April 2018, *PREE* is a unique online magazine for new contemporary writing from and about the Caribbean. They publish original works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, essays, interviews and experimental writing, giving our authors international visibility far beyond the islands.

STAFF MATTERS

The Department welcomed **Professor Curdella Forbes**, as a Writer-in-Residence, and St Lucian **Michelle Serieux** as Filmmaker-in-Residence for Semester II. **Mrs Tanya Shirley Johnstone** was appointed as an Adjunct Lecturer for Semesters I & II.

The Department wished farewell to Mr. Doniq Salmon who demitted office on March 31, 2018. The Department also thanked Mrs Diane West for acting in the position of Senior Administrative Assistant, while Mrs Venese Gordon-Francis was on Vacation Leave.

Awards

Ms Tanya Shirley, Adjunct Lecturer Creative Writing Poetry, was on May 25th, one of six Jamaicans awarded a Musgrave Medal by the Institute of Jamaica. Ms Shirley was awarded a Silver Musgrave Medal for her contribution to the arts and literature, and is now preparing for her third publication to follow in the success of her previous two works *She Who Sleeps With Bones* and *The Merchant of Feathers*. Ms Shirley also published three new poems in April, 2018 in the journal *Pree* edited by Annie Paul. An interview with Shirley is also featured on the Facebook page of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies, UWI for poetry month, April 2018. Shirley was also an adjudicator for the final round of the Talk The Poem Recitation Competition held in April, 2018 at UWI, Mona. She was also a featured poet at the annual Blue Flamingo Literary Festival in Nassau, Bahamas on March 23, 2018.

Dr Michael A. Bucknor and **Ms Tanya Shirley** received awards from the Farquharson Institute of Public Affairs (FIPA) on April 5, 2018. Dr Bucknor received the award for “Outstanding Promotion of Caribbean Literature,” while Ms Shirley received the award for “Outstanding New Voice in Caribbean Literature.” Dr Bucknor has also been appointed an Advisor on the Board of the Farquharson Institute.

Dr Connor Ryan was awarded the West African Research Association’s Postdoctoral Fellowship administered by Boston University for his research project “Lagos Never Spoils: Nollywood and Nigerian Media Urbanism.” The highly competitive award is offered each year to two early-career scholars with promising research projects and comes with a grant of US\$6000.

CONFERENCE PAPERS PRESENTED

Ms Lisa Brown made her presentation on “When a Man loves a Woman: Going beyond Care for the Cause. Advocacy and privacy in Robert and Theresa Lee’s *More Love, Less Fear*” at the 36th Annual West Indian Literature conference, held from October 4–7, 2017 at the St. Augustine campus.

Dr Michael A. Bucknor presented a paper on “Postcolonial Intimacies: Cultural Institutions, Literary Friendships and the Black Atlantic” at the 36th Annual West Indian Literature conference, held from October 4–7 at the St. Augustine campus. He also presented the paper, “Black Dandy in Afro-Caribbean Diasporas: Black Aesthetics as an Epistemology of Improvisation, Self-Invention and Re-humanization” at The College of the Holy Cross, in Massachusetts, USA at the conference on “Rethinking the Afro-politan” between October 19–21, 2017. **Dr Bucknor** was the keynote lecturer at the Austin Clarke Legacy: A Celebration and Conference organized by York University, November 17–19, 2017 in Toronto, Canada. His keynote lecture was entitled “Clarke’s Saga Boys: Black Aesthetics as Epistemology.” This paper was also revised and presented as “Economic Insecurity and the Black Dandy: Afropolitan Aesthetics as Epistemology,” at the Caribbean In/Securities and Creativity Research Network (CARISCC) conference at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, on January 15, 2018. He also participated in the “Spatial Imaginaries of Jamaican Organized Crime” Research Workshop at the University of Amsterdam, June 11 and 12, 2018 and presented the paper, “Criminal Intimacies: Psycho-sexual Spatialities of Jamaican Transnational Crime in Garfield Ellis’s *‘Til I am Laid to Rest.*” The paper was dedicated to the memory of Garfield Ellis, the Jamaican writer and former Adjunct Lecturer of the department who died early in 2018.

Dr Jennifer Brittan presented a paper at the annual convention of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) on March 30, 2018 at UCLA. The paper was entitled “Large-Scale Insularities or Nalo Hopkinson’s Dubside SE.”

Dr Isis Semaj-Hall presented on “From Chanting Down to Louding Out: Understanding Affect and Gender Constructs in ‘Equal Rights’” at the 36th Annual West Indian Literature conference, held from October 4–7 at the St. Augustine campus. **Dr. Semaj-Hall** at the *Imagine Kingston Conference*, November 2017, ICS, UWI, Mona also presented a paper titled “‘Kingston, be wise’: Reading a City through Its Recordings”.

Dr Anthea Morrison presented a paper entitled “The (impossible?) Dream of Flying in Kwame Dawes’ *She’s Gone*” at the 36th Annual West

Indian Literature conference, held from October 4–7 at the St. Augustine campus. She also presented a paper entitled “Cartographies of Remembering in Caryl Phillips’ *The Atlantic Sound*” at the 43rd annual conference of the African Studies Association, hosted this year by Yale University, from June 13–16, 2017.

Dr Connor Ryan presented a paper at the Michigan State University Symposium on Migration held April 19–21, 2018. The paper was entitled “Nollywood and The Fantasy of Staying Put.” Dr Ryan also presented a paper titled “New Nollywood, Corporate Spaces, and Neoliberal Technologies of the Self” at the African Literature Association held in Washington DC May 23–26, 2018.

PUBLICATIONS

- **Michael A. Bucknor.** “Austin Clarke and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation: An Interview with Austin Clarke by Michael Bucknor.” *JWIL* 25. 2 (November 2017): 108–115.
- **Anthea Morrison** “Tales of Loss and Resilience; Review of A Permanent Freedom”, *Anthurium* vol. 14, Issue 2 (January 2018), Article 6.
- **Rachel Moseley-Wood** reviewed “Songs of Redemption” in *Caribbean Quarterly*, June 2018. 64.2 (348–352).

PUBLIC SERVICE

- **Dr Jennifer Brittan** served as a reviewer for the journal *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies – LACES*.

Ms Lisa R. Brown

- Adjudicator, JCDC Festival Competition
- Member of Steering Committee for the IABA World Conference, Brazil 2018
- Host/Convener IABA, Americas Chapter 2019 Conference

Dr Michael A. Bucknor

- Senior Editor, *Journal of West Indian Literature* (Regional Refereed Publication) (2004–present)
- Editorial Board Member, *Caribbean Quarterly* (Regional Refereed Publication) (2010–present)
- Member, Board of Readers, *Issues in Critical Investigation*, Vanderbilt University, USA. (2010–present)
- Senior Editorial Advisor, *Lucayos*, College of the Bahamas. (Regional Refereed Publication) (2011–present)
- Actor Boy Judge
- Member of the Poet Laureate Committee, National Library of Jamaica
- Member of the Musgrave Medals Selection Sub-Committee – Literature

Dr Norval Edwards

- Review Editor, Northern Caribbean University’s peer-reviewed journal, *International Review of Humanities*
- Member, Advisory Board, *Issues in Critical Investigation*, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee

Dr Anthea Morrison

- Judge, Helen Zell Poet Laureate prize.

CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS

Undergraduate:

Majors	40
First Class Honours:	N/A
Liberal Studies Majors	42

Postgraduate:

PhD	3
MPhil	5
MA	7