

Welcome to the Department of Utopian Arts and Letters

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The Department of Utopian Arts and Letters (DUAL) is a project of public dreaming born out of our deepest desires for decolonization, climate justice, and collective liberation. Taking inspiration from traditions of Afrofuturism, Indigenous resurgence, queer worldmaking, and speculative fiction, we operate within, across, and beyond official governmental and academic departments to create educational resources for the kinds of joyful futures we want to work toward. Without investing in naïve hope or magical thinking, we fundamentally understand that to prepare for and survive the unfolding, intersecting crises of the present, we need to expand our imagination beyond the “monocultures of the mind” that limit our creativity and thus our capacity to adapt. We hire artists as faculty because we believe that artists are agents of cultural change, animators of public imagination, and experts in worldmaking, and they are under-utilized in educational approaches to the future. Faculty create syllabi for classes—part road map and part syllabus—that foster an idea of utopia through workshops, self-guided exercises, readings, and other resources. Their courses offer creative approaches to tackle the “wicked problems” of our time and possible pathways to new worlds and alternative ways of being. These visions of thriving, potentially conflicting tomorrows are made available through a series of high-profile, accessible, and engaging open learning resources. All videos, syllabi and resources are available on the Department of Utopian Arts and Letters’ [Mighty Network platform](#). In this talk, you’ll hear from Kimberly Skye Richards, the librarian for the Department, about the genesis of the project in the climate art movement, and our existing courses that help us build imaginative and creative skills to work towards an ecojust future.