

Comparative Literature

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Web: http://humanities.uchicago.edu/depts/complit/undergrad_program.html

The major in Comparative Literature leads to a B.A. degree. This program is designed to attract students who wish to pursue an interdisciplinary plan of course work focused on the study of literature as written in various languages and in various parts of the world.

Such a student might come to the University with a strong background in languages other than English and want to work in two or more literatures (one of which can be English). Another student might have a strong interest in literary study and wish to address general, generic, and/or transnational questions that go beyond the boundaries of national literature offered by English and other literature departments. Or, a student might wish to pursue an in-depth study of the interrelationship of literature and culture, as well as issues that transcend the traditional demarcations of national literary history and area studies.

These descriptions of academic interest are not mutually exclusive. Each student will design a plan of course work that will suit his or her individual goals and that will take advantage of the rich offerings of this university.

Program Requirements

The aim of the following guidelines is to help students develop a balanced and coherent plan of study. The Director of Undergraduate Studies in Comparative Literature is available to discuss these guidelines with students who are interested in comparative literature.

1. In addition to the thirteen courses counted toward the major, students must complete a second-year sequence in a language other than English or demonstrate language ability of an equivalent skill through accreditation. Students should have completed this requirement, or be well on their way to its completion, by the time they apply to the program, typically the end of their second year. See Participation in the Program below for further details.

2. Six courses in a primary field, or in closely integrated subject areas in more than one field, are required.

3. Four courses in a secondary field, or in closely integrated subject areas in more than one field, are required.

4. Two courses that emphasize critical and intellectual methods in comparative literature are required, one of which must be an introduction to the study of comparative literature. See, for example, CMLT 28801 and 29301 under Courses.

5. One directed study course must be devoted to the preparation of the B.A. project (CMLT 29900). The project will be supervised by a faculty member of the student's choice, with that faculty member's consent and the approval of the Director of Undergraduate Studies; that faculty member may be, but need not be, on the faculty of Comparative Literature. A graduate student in Comparative Literature will serve as a tutor or preceptor for all B.A. projects, working with students on the mechanics of writing and providing tutorial assistance. For details, see the section on the B.A. project.

6. Although students do not register for the B.A. workshop, it is required for all majors. The workshop begins fifth week of Winter Quarter and continues until fifth or sixth week of Spring Quarter. All participants are required to present two drafts of their paper, one in the winter and the second in the spring. Participants other than the presenter make written comments on photocopies of the drafts, which are distributed at least twenty-four hours before the workshop meets each week. During the informal workshops, the drafts are discussed and constructive suggestions are offered to the presenters.

Summary of Requirements

6	primary field courses
4	secondary field courses
2	critical/intellectual methods courses
<u>1</u>	B.A. project (CMLT 29900)
13	

The department encourages students to pursue further language study by taking courses in a second or third language. NOTE: Those language courses will be approved for use in the major only if they are at an intermediate or advanced level; elementary-level courses cannot be counted toward the total number of courses needed to complete the major.

Additional courses in critical/intellectual methods may be counted toward the six courses in the primary field or toward four courses in the secondary field if their materials are appropriate for those purposes, but the total number of courses presented for the major must total thirteen.

A typical student wishing to work in two literatures (one of which can be English) might choose two literatures as the primary and secondary fields. A student interested in literary study across national boundaries with a focus on generic and transnational questions might create a primary field along generic lines (e.g., film, the epic, the novel, poetry, drama, opera); the secondary field might be a particular national literature or a portion of such a literature. A student interested in literary and cultural theory might choose theory as either a primary or secondary field, paired with another field designed along generic lines or those of one or more national literatures.

Courses in the various literature departments and in Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities are obviously germane to the building of any individual program. A student is likely to find courses in the Humanities Collegiate Division and in the Department of History that extend beyond the usual definitions of literature (e.g., film, art, music, history) to be appropriate to her or his individual program of study. Study abroad offers an attractive means of fulfilling various aims of this program as well.

Participation in the Program. Students should express their interest in the major as soon as possible, typically before the end of their second year. The first step is to meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to consult about a program of study. Thereafter, students are required to submit a written proposal of about one thousand words in length that consists of two parts: (1) a statement explaining how the proposed plan of study will take advantage of existing College offerings and meet departmental requirements; and (2) a list of proposed courses (as well as alternates) and indications of how they will fulfill the department's requirements. Applicants must also submit a list of completed courses and a list of courses in which they are currently registered. Special mention should be made of language courses or other language training that affirms a student's level of language proficiency. Each proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the interest of the student and his or her achievement in the languages needed to meet the goals of the intended course of study.

Comparative Literature majors should demonstrate proficiency in a literary language (other than English) that is relevant to their proposed course of study (as indicated in requirement number one above). This requirement must be met at the time of application or shortly thereafter. Such proficiency is measured by the completion of a second-year sequence in the language, or by demonstration of an equivalent skill. Language ability is essential to work in comparative literature of whatever sort. The Department of Comparative Literature takes language preparation into consideration when evaluating applications, but it will also help students achieve their individual goals by suggesting programs of study that will add to their language expertise as appropriate.

B.A. Project. One obvious choice for a B.A. project is a substantial essay in comparative literary study. This option should not, however, rule out other possibilities. Two examples might be a translation from a foreign literature with

accompanying commentary, or a written project based on research done abroad in another language and culture relating to comparative interests. Students are urged to base their project on comparative concepts, and to make use of the language proficiency that they will develop as they meet the program's requirements. For details on the B.A. project, see the Web site at http://humanities.uchicago.edu/depts/complit/undergrad_program.html.

This program may accept a B.A. paper or project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major if certain conditions are met and with the consent of the other program chair. Approval from both program chairs is required. Students should consult with the chairs by the earliest B.A. proposal deadline (or by the end of third year, when neither program publishes a deadline). A consent form, to be signed by both chairs, is available from the College adviser. It must be completed and returned to the College adviser by the end of Autumn Quarter of the student's year of graduation.

Grading. All courses to be used in the major must be taken for a quality grade, which must be a *B-* or higher.

Honors. To be eligible for honors in Comparative Literature, students must earn an overall cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher, and a GPA of 3.5 or higher in the major. They must also complete a B.A. essay or project that is judged exceptional in intellectual and/or creative merit by the first and second readers.

Advising. In addition to their College adviser, students should consult on an ongoing basis with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Comparative Literature. Further advice and counseling will be available from the preceptor for the program and from the faculty member who supervises the student's B.A. project.

Faculty

D. Bevington (Emeritus), T. Chin, A. Davidson, F. de Armas, L. Kruger, F. Meltzer, M. Murrin, L. Rothfield, J. Scodel, N. Stahl (Visiting Professor), Y. Tsivian, R. von Hallberg, D. Wellbery, D. Wray, A. Yu (Emeritus)

Courses: Comparative Literature (CMLT)

20500/30500. History and Theory of Drama I. (=CLAS 31200, CLCV 21200, ENGL 13800/31000, TAPS 28400) *May be taken in sequence with CMLT 20600/30600 or individually.* This course is a survey of major trends and theatrical accomplishments in Western drama from the ancient Greeks through the Renaissance: Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, medieval religious drama, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Jonson, along with some consideration of dramatic theory by Aristotle, Horace, Sir Philip Sidney, and Dryden. The goal is not to develop acting skill but, rather, to discover what is at work in the scene and to write up that process in a somewhat informal report. Students have the option of writing essays or putting on short scenes in cooperation with other members

of the class. *End-of-week workshops, in which individual scenes are read aloud dramatically and discussed, are optional but highly recommended.* D. Bevington, H. Coleman. *Autumn.*

20600/30600. History and Theory of Drama II. (=ENGL 13900/31100, TAPS 28401) *May be taken in sequence with CMLT 20500/30500 or individually.* This course is a survey of major trends and theatrical accomplishments in Western drama from the late seventeenth century into the twentieth (i.e., Molière, Goldsmith, Ibsen, Chekhov, Strindberg, Wilde, Shaw, Brecht, Beckett, Stoppard). Attention is also paid to theorists of the drama (e.g., Stanislavsky, Artaud, Grotowski). The goal is not to develop acting skill but, rather, to discover what is at work in the scene and to write up that process in a somewhat informal report. Students have the option of writing essays or putting on short scenes in cooperation with other students. *End-of-week workshops, in which individual scenes are read aloud dramatically and discussed, are optional but highly recommended.* D. Bevington, H. Coleman. *Winter.*

21200. Marxism and Modernism. (=HUMA 23201, ISHU 23201/33201, RUSS 23200/33200) *Class discussion encouraged.* R. Bird. *Winter.*

21401. Latino/a Intellectual Thought. (=ENGL 22804, GNDR 22401, LACS 22804, SPAN 22801) This course traces the history of Latina/o intellectual work that helped shape contemporary Latina/o cultural studies. Our focus is on how Chicanas/os and Puerto Ricans have theorized the history, society, and culture of Latinas/os in the United States. Themes include folklore and anthropology, cultural nationalism, postcolonialism, literary and cultural studies, community activism, feminism, sexuality, and the emergence of a pan-Latino culture. Throughout, we pay attention to the convergences and divergences of Chicana/o and Puerto Rican studies, especially as contemporary practitioners have encouraged us to (re)think Latina/o studies in a comparative framework. R. Coronado. *Spring.*

21601. Empire and Intimacy: Race and Sexual Fantasy in European Literature. (=ENGL 18105, GNDR 21603, ISHU 21601) This course critically examines European fascination with non-Western peoples, their bodies and sexual practices from the late Renaissance to the twentieth century. Along with select English and French literature that imagines cross-cultural contact in its most shocking form (i.e., interracial sexuality), we examine European proto-anthropology that detailed the sexual "aberrations" of subaltern peoples. Literature to be read includes works by Shakespeare, Behn, Diderot, Byron, C. Brontë, Haggard, Gide, and Forster. All texts available in English; students with a reading knowledge of French encouraged to read French works in the original. G. Cohen-Vrignaud. *Spring.*

21800. Fantasy and Science Fiction. (=ENGL 20900) This course concentrates on works of the "classic" period (from the 1930s to the 1960s). It does, however, begin with representative authors from the nineteenth century (e.g., Jules Verne, H. Rider Haggard), as well as some works from the early twentieth century (e.g., David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*, H. P. Lovecraft's *Mountains of Madness*).

Worth special attention are authors (e.g., C. S. Lewis and Ursula LeGuin) who worked in both genres at a time when they were often contrasted. The two major texts discussed include one from each genre (i.e., Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, Herbert's *Dune*). Most texts come from the Anglo-American tradition, with some significant exceptions (e.g., short works by Kafka and Borges). *M. Murrin. Winter.*

22900/42900. Cinema in Africa. (=AFAM 21900, CMST 24201/34201, ENGL 27600/48601, ISHU 27702) *PQ: At least one college-level course either in African or in film studies, and advanced standing.* This course examines cinema in Africa as well as films produced in Africa. It places cinema in Sub-Saharan Africa in its social, cultural, and aesthetic contexts—ranging from neocolonial to postcolonial, Western to Southern Africa, documentary to fiction, art cinema to TV. We begin with *La Noire de...* (1966), a groundbreaking film by the “father” of African cinema, Ousmane Sembene, contrasted with a South African film, *The Magic Garden* (1960), which more closely resembles African-American musical film. We then continue with anti-colonial and anti-apartheid films, from Lionel Rogosin's *Come Back Africa* (1959) to Sarah Maldoror's *Sambizanga*, Ousmane Sembene's *Camp de Thiaroye* (1984), and Jean Marie Teno's *Afrique, Je te Plumerai* (1995). Lastly we examine cinematic representations of tensions (between urban and rural life; between traditional and modern life) and the different implications of these tensions (for men and women; for Western and Southern Africa; in fiction, documentary, and ethnographic film). *L. Kruger. Winter.*

24800. Fiction and Freedom. (=GRMN 25900) *D. Wellbery. Winter.*

25001. Foucault and the History of Sexuality (=ARTV 27904, CHSS 41900, GNDR 23100, HIPS 24300, PHIL 24800) *PQ: Prior philosophy course or consent of instructor. Open only to College students.* This course centers on a close reading of the first volume of Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, with some attention to his writings on the history of ancient conceptualizations of sex. How should a history of sexuality take into account scientific theories, social relations of power, and different experiences of the self? We discuss the contrasting descriptions and conceptions of sexual behavior before and after the emergence of a science of sexuality. Other writers influenced by and critical of Foucault are also discussed. *A. Davidson. Autumn.*

25101/35101. History, Philosophy, and the Politics of Psychoanalysis. (=PHIL 25401/35401) This course is a reading of some central texts of Freud (both early and late) in the context of a study of the role of psychoanalysis in contemporary European philosophy. Other authors we read may include Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, Marcuse, and Derrida. *A. Davidson. Winter.*

25201. Contemporary Hebrew Poetry. (=JWSC 21800, NEHC 20463) *PQ: Knowledge of Hebrew.* This course examines the works of major contemporary Hebrew poets (e.g., Yehuda Amichai, Nathan Zach, David Avidan, Dalia Rabikovitch, Yona Wollach, Maya Bejerano, Yitzhak Laor). These works are read against the background of previous poets (e.g., H. N. Bialik, Avraham Shlonsky,

Natan Alterman, Shaul Tchernihovsky) to uncover changes in style, themes, and aesthetic. Through close reading of the poems, the course traces the unique style and aesthetic of each poet and views a wide picture of contemporary Hebrew poetry. Texts in Hebrew. *N. Stahl. Autumn.*

25800. The Representation of Jesus in Modern Jewish Literature. (=JWSC 24800, NEHC 20457, RLST 26601) This course examines the Jewish literary world's relation to the figure of Jesus from the end of the nineteenth century to the present. We study the transformations of Jesus through close readings of major works, both prose fiction and poetry, by Yiddish and Hebrew writers (e.g., Uri Zvi Greenberg, H. Leivick, Jacob Glatstein, S. Y. Agnon, Avraham Shlonsky, Natan Bistrizki, A. A. Kabak, Haim Hazaz, Zalman Shneior, Yigal Mosenzon, Avot Yeshurun, Nathan Zach, Yona Wallach, Yoel Hoffmann). Classes conducted in English; students with knowledge of Hebrew are encouraged to read texts in the original. *N. Stahl. Autumn.*

26001. Realism and Anti-Realism in Post-Holocaust Hebrew Literature. (=JWSC 21900, NEHC 20467) This course seeks to trace the narrative dynamics and literary means of post-Holocaust Hebrew literature. The course focuses on works that break with the conventions of realism, and we study the specific forms and means by which each work does so. We discuss questions such as: what are the constraints of the literary discourse on the Holocaust, what is the role of anti-realist depiction of the Holocaust, and in what ways does the fantastic threaten the collective memory. Writers include: S. Y. Agnon, Aharon Appelfeld, David Grossman, Itamar Levi, Yoel Hoffmann, and Michal Govrin. Classes conducted in English; students with knowledge of Hebrew are encouraged to read texts in the original. *N. Stahl. Spring.*

28001/38001. Aeneid in Translation. (=CLAS 37200, CLCV 27200, FNLD 26611) We confront Virgil's *Aeneid* in translation as a poem, as an artifact and representation of Greco-Roman culture, as a response to a millennial oral (Homeric) poetic tradition and a particular historical (Augustan) moment, as a reflection of ancient thought rich with significance for contemporary questions about human life, and as a central piece of world literature. Readings include comparative study of English poetic translations ranging from early modernity (Caxton, Douglas, Phayer, Surrey, and Dryden) to the twentieth century (Taylor, Lewis, Jackson Knight, Mandelbaum, and Fitzgerald) and beyond (Lombardo and Fagles). Students who are majoring in Comparative Literature compare versions of a book of the *Aeneid* in at least two languages. *D. Wray. Winter.*

28101/38101. Cervantes's Don Quijote. (=FNLD 21211, RLLT 34202, SPAN 24202) This course is a close reading of Cervantes's *Don Quijote* that discuss its links with Renaissance art and Early Modern narrative genres. On the one hand, *Don Quijote* can be viewed in terms of prose fiction, from the ancient Hellenistic romances to the spectacular vigor of the books of knight errants and the French pastoral and heroic romances. On the other hand, *Don Quijote* exhibits a desire for Italy through the utilization of Renaissance art. Beneath the dusty roads of La Mancha and within *Don Quijote's* chivalric fantasies, students come to appreciate glimpses of images with Italian designs. Classes conducted in English; Spanish

majors do all work in Spanish. *F. de Armas, T. Pavel. Winter.*

28600. Literature and Madness. (=GRMN 26500) This course explores the curious proximity between literature and the discourse on madness in the modern era. Discussion topics include definitions of insanity and their evolution across time, insane or deviant characters and their function in drama and fiction, the topos of the poet as madman, and the poetics of madness. Authors discussed may include Cervantes, Shakespeare, Goethe, Tieck, Hoffmann, Büchner, Poe, Gogol, James, Hauptmann, Döblin, Pirandello, Schnitzler, Kant, Pinel, Reil, Lombroso, Schreber, and Freud. *C. Frey. Spring.*

28700. Major Works of Modernism. (=GRMN 29000) This course is centered on several canonical works of classical modernism: Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Ein Brief*; Robert Walser's *Jakob von Gunten*; Thomas Mann's *Tod in Venedig*; Franz Kafka's *Die Verwandlung*; Arthur Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else*; Bertolt Brecht's *Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder*; poetry by Stefan George, Hofmannsthal, Gottfried Benn, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Georg Trakl; essays by Georg Simmel, Walter Benjamin, and Robert Musil. On the basis of the works studied we shall endeavor to develop a concept of modernism sufficiently capacious to embrace radically opposed literary and cultural agendas. Readings and discussion in German. *D. Wellbery. Autumn.*

28701/38701. Novels of Self-Discovery: Stendhal, Flaubert, and Fontane. (=FREN 264000/364000) *PQ: Third- or fourth-year standing and consent of instructor.* This course is a study of Stendhal's *The Charterhouse of Parma*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, and Fontane's *Effi Briest* that emphasizes the search for self-identity and the erratic pursuit of happiness. Classes conducted in English. Students who are majoring or minoring in French read the French texts in the original and participate in a weekly French discussion group. *T. Pavel. Spring.*

28801/38801. The Individual, Form, and the Novel. (=ENGL 28906/48906, ISHU 28103, SLAV 25100/35100) *PQ: Advanced standing. This course meets the critical/intellectual methods course requirement for students who are majoring in CMLT.* This course is an exploration and comparison of several different strategies used by European novelists to represent an autonomous individual, all of which give rise to specific novelistic forms (e.g., autobiography, *Bildungsroman*, novel of manners, psychological novel). The primary bibliography for this course includes works by Rousseau, Goethe, Stendhal, and Tolstoy. We also read critical works by Georg Lukacs, Franco Moretti, Clement Lugowski, Mikhail Bakhtin, Lidia Ginzburg, and Alex Woloch. Texts in English and the original; discussion and papers in English. *L. Steiner. Winter.*

28901. Autobiography: From the Ancients to Rousseau. (=EALC 21500, HUMA 28901) Scholars have long associated the genre of autobiography with the rise of the modern Western subject and treated Rousseau's *Confessions* as the first true autobiography. This course questions the validity of these claims and argues for a wider definition of the genre. By examining a range of personal

narratives from the pre-modern period, representing cultures both East and West, we investigate what motivates people to write about themselves. Authors include Li Qingzhao, St. Augustine, Sei Shonagon, Villon, and Rousseau. All texts read in English; students with reading knowledge of relevant languages (i.e., Chinese, French, Japanese, Latin) encouraged to read passages in the original languages. *R. Handler-Spitz. Spring.*

29001/39001. Silk Road Fictions. (=EALC 27450/37450, ENGL 16181/36181) Who first idealized the Silk Road as a crossing of peoples, ideas, and cultural traditions between East and West—and why? This course explores the relations between literary form and cross-cultural history through a range of genres from Tang dynasty poetry to post-colonial detective novel to Japanese anime. Readings include the epic Chinese novel *Journey to the West*; *The Greek Alexander Romance* and its Persian rewritings; *The Travels of Marco Polo*; Kipling's *Kim*; Norbu's *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes*; and poems, music, and essays by Bei Dao, Yo-Yo Ma, Salman Rushdie, and Wole Soyinka. *T. Chin. Spring.*

29301/39301. The Idea of Europe in Realist Prose. *This course meets the critical/intellectual methods course requirement for students who are majoring in CMLT.* (=ENGL 28907/48907, ISHU 29303, SLAV 29800/39800) The idea of Europe as a shared cultural space, in which different national cultures and literatures can engage in a dialogue, emerges in the second half of the nineteenth century in the works of the Western-European authors and several outsiders who include Gogol, Turgenev, and Henry James. This course examines the connections between the development of realist fiction and the formation of the transnational cultural conception of Europe as a realist-age successor of Goethe's conception of Weltliteratur. Our texts include fictional works, essays, and criticism by Goethe, Mme. de Stael Gogol, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, and Henry James. Texts in English and the original; discussion and papers in English. *L. Steiner. Spring.*

29700. Reading Course. *PQ: Consent of instructor and Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Must be taken for a quality grade. This course does not satisfy distribution requirements for students who are majoring in CMLT unless an exception is made by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*

29900. B.A. Project: Comparative Literature. *PQ: Consent of instructor and Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. In consultation with a faculty member, students devote the equivalent of a one-quarter course to the preparation of a B.A. project. Autumn, Winter, Spring.*