Comparative Literature

Department Website: http://complit.uchicago.edu

PROGRAM OF STUDY

The major in Comparative Literature leads to a BA degree and is designed to attract students who wish to pursue interdisciplinary course work focused on the study of literature, textual artifacts, and translation, written in various languages and in various parts of the world.

Some students come to the University of Chicago with a strong background in languages other than English and want to work in two or more literatures (one of which can be English). Some students have a strong interest in literary theory and wish to address poetics, study of genre or translation, and/or questions of transnational circulation and production of knowledge that go beyond the boundaries of national literature offered in other literature departments. Or, some students wish to pursue in-depth study of the interrelationship of literature, culture, and other arts and fields of knowledge, as well as issues that transcend the traditional demarcations of literary history and area studies.

Our students work with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to design a plan of course work that will suit their individual goals while taking advantage of the rich offerings of the University.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The requirements outlined below are in effect as of Autumn Quarter 2018 and will apply to all students in the Class of 2020 and beyond.

Students interested in majoring in Comparative Literature should review the following guidelines and consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Comparative Literature. These guidelines are to assist students in developing a balanced and cohesive plan of study which would be most accommodating and beneficial to the student's academic development.

The major includes seven courses in the major and supportive fields of study, selected in consultation with the Director of Undergraduate Studies; one foundational course in comparative methodology; two courses in Comparative Literature, offered by the department; and a yearlong BA Seminar that serves as a capstone to the major.

Students work with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to identify a primary field (four courses) and a secondary field (three courses) of study. A student wishing to work in two literatures might choose two literatures as the primary and secondary fields (note: only the second literature can be English). The secondary field might be another national literature or area studies (e.g., East European Studies), another discipline (e.g., mathematics, history, film, performance studies, music), or literary theory.

Study abroad offers an attractive means of fulfilling various aims of this program. More than half of the major requirements must be satisfied by courses bearing University of Chicago numbers.

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three language courses in a single language at the intermediate level or above</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four courses in a literature other than English, one of which can be in a closely related field</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three courses in a secondary field, which can be literature in another language (including English), another discipline (e.g., mathematics, performance studies, music), or literary theory</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMLT 20109 Comparative Methods in the Humanities</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two 20000-level courses in literary theory, methods, or special topics in Comparative Literature</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMLT 29801 BA Project and Workshop: Comparative Literature (See BA Project for details)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Units</strong></td>
<td><strong>1400</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foreign Language Requirement

The Comparative Literature major requires three language courses in a single language at the intermediate level or above. Students who come in with high or native proficiency in a language other than English may instead substitute three courses in a second language (other than English) at any level.

A student can provide proof of high language proficiency in two ways:

1. A student may pass one of the College’s Practical Language Proficiency Assessments in a foreign language, if available for the relevant language; for more information, see languageassessment.uchicago.edu/flpc. (https://languageassessment.uchicago.edu/flpc/)

2. A student can demonstrate high proficiency on the basis of the student’s formal schooling experience in a country outside the United States at the high school (secondary) level. Students should write a brief...
description of their schooling and submit it, along with a transcript showing at least two years of high school study in the relevant language, to the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Comparative Literature.

Though all majors must demonstrate proficiency in a single language through at least the second-year sequence in a foreign language (or by providing proof that they enter the program with high proficiency in either of the two ways noted above), they are encouraged to continue their language study beyond the minimum required for the major. The Department of Comparative Literature works closely with the University of Chicago Language Center and helps students achieve their individual goals in language acquisition by suggesting programs of study that would best add to their language expertise and desired proficiency goals.

BA Project

The BA capstone project is to be completed in the student’s last year of study. The project should be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies and supervised by a faculty member of the student’s choice in Comparative Literature. It may be co-advised by a faculty member from another department. Students must complete their formal application to the major by spring of third year and should identify a faculty advisor at that time.

One obvious choice for a BA project is a substantial essay in comparative or interdisciplinary literary study. This option should not, however, rule out other possibilities. Alternative examples are 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.

NB: This program may accept a BA paper or project used to satisfy the same requirement in another major if certain conditions are met and with approval from both program chairs. Students should consult with the chairs by the earliest BA 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.

Participation in the Program

Students should express their interest in the major as early as possible. The first step is to meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to consult about a program of study. Applicants must submit an application form which consists of 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. Students will be notified by email of their acceptance to the program. Finally, students will need to formalize their declaration through my.uchicago.edu (http://my.uchicago.edu) with the assistance of the College adviser.

GRADING

All courses to be used in the major must be taken for a quality grade of B– or higher, except for CMLT 29801 BA Project and Workshop: Comparative Literature, which is graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

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 BA thesis or project that is judged exceptional in intellectual and/or creative merit by the first and second readers.

ADVISING

Students must consult on an ongoing basis with the Director of Undergraduate Studies for selection and approval of course work for the major. Students need to regularly provide documentation of any course approvals for the major to their College adviser for the necessary processing. Further advice and counseling will be available from the preceptor of the BA Seminar and from the faculty member who supervises the student’s BA project.

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE COURSES

CMLT 14920. Comparative Media Poetics: Horror. 100 Units.

Cinema, videogames, and VR: all moving-image media, which have at times exerted multi-directional aesthetic influences on each other. This course will investigate the raw materials and basic forms at the disposal of artists working in and across these media, with a special focus on horror as a genre. Along with fundamental questions regarding the social, psychological, and political uses (and abuses) of horror as a genre, this course will also look at how horror works across a variety of media. In what way do the possibilities available to game developers differ from those available to filmmakers, and vice versa? How are space, time, and action presented and segmented differently across moving images (cinema), interactive moving images (games), and fully-immersive virtual environments (VR)? How do techniques ranging from psychological identification to jump scares work in each medium, and what aesthetic effects are open to one that is not open to the other? Course materials will include horror cinema, horror games (video and otherwise), VR experiences, and written horror literature. Instructor(s): Ian Bryce Jones Terms Offered: Spring
CMLT 21667. Poetics of Space in Travel: Performance and Place in Japan and Beyond. 100 Units.
The role of space in everyday life has acquired a newfound prominence in light of recent events, as exemplified in the emergence of terms like 'social distancing' and 'quarantine' as common parlance. Approaching the implications of this from a different angle through an examination of how spatial imaginings travel across time and medium, we will explore questions of space as they are bound up with problems of gender, exile, aesthetics, and performance. How is space imagined and evoked across different media? How might attention to this question lead us to rethink the way that space mediates our experiences of our surroundings? While Japan will be our primary geographic topos, we will interrogate an understanding of these spatialities as 'Japanese' by surveying the role they come to play in discourses of both 'Japanese-ness' and Western modernism. We will pay special attention to performance (namely, no dance-drama); however, we will also take up short stories, novels, film and more. Centering our investigations on modern and contemporary cultural production, our travels will also take us through premodern terrain to trace the multiple axes along which our diverse array of objects circulate. Figures considered include: Murata Sayaka, Gaston Bachelard, Hori Tatsuo, Doreen Massey, Mishima Yukio, Ôe Kenzaburô, Ezra Pound, and W. B. Yeats. All readings will be in English.
Instructor(s): Olga Solovieva Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 28918

CMLT 21822. Creative Ecologies: Environmental and Multispecies Storytelling. 100 Units.
Literature plays a pivotal role in addressing environmental issues: it can perpetuate damaging narratives or offer creative solutions for sustainable living. What is then the role of literature in an era of ecological crisis? How does literature forward environmental change? How do writers represent the natural world and imagine innovative ways of living ecologically? To answer these questions, we will turn to the field of ecocriticism informed by queer ecology, decolonial thought and critical animal studies. We will explore the themes of migration, extinction, displacement, hegemony, and biodiversity in texts of various genres, from poetry to speculative fiction, particularly in relation to imperial, colonial and capitalist ecologies. Besides questioning troublesome dichotomies within our corpus, such as domestic/wilderness and nature/culture, we will also examine the links between environmental concerns and gender, race, class, and species. While we will be attentive to the specificities of the Italian local environment to fully unravel the role of Italy in aggravating or lessening environmental problems, our approach will remain comparative and global in scope. We will also revisit the literary canon and privilege the stories of historically disenfranchised voices that narrativize ethical and sociopolitical issues related to ecology. The course will include visits to Special Collections and the Map Collection to further enrich our engagement with the literary sources.
Instructor(s): Elizabeth Tavella Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Taught in English. No prior knowledge of Italian is required.
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 21667, TAPS 21667

CMLT 22400-22500. History of International Cinema I-II.
This sequence is required of students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies. Taking these courses in sequence is strongly recommended but not required.

CMLT 22400. History of International Cinema I: Silent Era. 100 Units.
This course provides a survey of the history of cinema from its emergence in the mid-1890s to the transition to sound in the late 1920s. We will examine the cinema as a set of aesthetic, social, technological, national, cultural, and industrial practices as they were exercised and developed during this 30-year span. Especially important for our examination will be the exchange of film techniques, practices, and cultures in an international context. We will also pursue questions related to the historiography of the cinema, and examine early attempts to theorize and account for the cinema as an artistic and social phenomenon.
Instructor(s): A. Field Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required. Required of students majoring or minoring in Cinema and Media Studies.
Note(s): For students majoring in Cinema and Media Studies, the entire History of International Cinema three-course sequence must be taken.
CMLT 22500. History of International Cinema II: Sound Era to 1960. 100 Units.
The center of this course is film style, from the classical scene breakdown to the introduction of deep focus, stylistic experimentation, and technical innovation (sound, wide screen, location shooting). The development of a film culture is also discussed. Texts include Thompson and Bordwell’s Film History: An Introduction; and works by Bazin, Belton, Sitney, and Godard. Screenings include films by Hitchcock, Welles, Rossellini, Bresson, Ozu, Antonioni, and Renoir.
Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Prior or concurrent registration in CMST 10100 required. Required of students majoring or minoring in Cinema and Media Studies.
Note(s): CMST 28500/48500 strongly recommended
Equivalent Course(s): MAAD 18600, ARTH 28600, REES 25005, MAPH 33700, CMST 48600, REES 45005, CMLT 32500, ENGL 29600, ARTV 20003, ARTH 38600, CMST 28600, ENGL 48900

CMLT 23301. Balkan Folklore. 100 Units.
Vampires, fire-breathing dragons, vengeful mountain nymphs, 7/8 and other uneven dance beats, heart-rending laments, and a living epic tradition. This course is an overview of Balkan folklore from historical, political, and anthropological perspectives. We seek to understand folk tradition as a dynamic process and consider the function of different folklore genres in the imagining and maintenance of community and the socialization of the individual. We also experience this living tradition firsthand through visits of a Chicago-based folk dance ensemble, “Balkan Dance.”
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 25908, REES 39009, CMLT 33301, REES 29009, NEHC 30568, ANTH 35908, NEHC 20568

CMLT 23401. The Burden of History: A Nation and Its Lost Paradise. 100 Units.
What makes it possible for the imagined communities called nations to command the emotional attachments that they do? This course considers some possible answers to Benedict Anderson’s question on the basis of material from the Balkans. We will examine the transformation of the scenario of paradise, loss, and redemption into a template for a national identity narrative through which South East European nations retell their Ottoman past. With the help of Žižek’s theory of the subject as constituted by trauma and Kant’s notion of the sublime, we will contemplate the national fixation on the trauma of loss and the dynamic between victimhood and sublimity.
Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30573, CMLT 33401, REES 29013, HIST 24005, REES 39013, HIST 34005, NEHC 20573

CMLT 23823. Melancholy: Readings in Medieval Christian Literature. 100 Units.
The idea of melancholy, a persistent affective orientation toward sadness and/or despair, is ubiquitous in Christian writings from the Middle Ages. This course considers the nature and function of melancholy and possible remedies in Christian discourses, and in so doing it provides a survey of medieval Christian literature. Readings may be drawn from authors such as Boethius, Alan of Lille, Jean de Meun, Marguerite Porete, Dante, and Christine de Pizan. Special attention will be given to the role of literary form in Christian writing, competing accounts of despair and hope, and the relationship of Christianity to non-Christian discourses. There are no language prerequisites, though reading groups may be formed if sufficient students possess relevant language skills.
Instructor(s): M. Vanderpoel Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 23823, MDVL 23823

CMLT 24017. Fact and Fiction: Hoaxes and Misunderstandings. 100 Units.
This course will focus on fictional texts that readers have misrecognized as factual accounts, as well as the less frequent case of factual texts misidentified as fictional. Students will study the rhetorical strategies or historical and cultural circumstances responsible for these “errors of pragmatic framing” (O. Caira) by investigating the contexts governing the production or reception of works such as Apuleius’ The Golden Ass, Les Lettres d’une religieuse portugaise, Denis Diderot’s La Religieuse, Wolfgang Hildesheimer’s Marbot: A Biography, and Orson Welles’ adaptation of The War of the Worlds, among others.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 34017, CMLT 34017, FREN 24017

CMLT 24256. Récits et mémoire des catastrophes naturelles. 100 Units.
Ce cours propose d’interroger, dans une perspective diachronique et comparatiste, les enjeux de la mise en récit et de l’articulation des « catastrophes naturelles ». On se demandera, par exemple, quelles formes de rationalisation, quels rapports à la temporalité implique le choix du récit, de l’image, du spectacle et de tel ou tel média (architecture, peinture, film, bande dessinée,...). L’hypothèse de travail majeure du cours est que l’articulation des catastrophes est inseparable de strategies mémoirelles et d’enjeux politiques. La réflexion se portera sur quelques mémoires (avec des extraits de Boccace, Montaigne, Samuel Pepys) et représentations fictionnelles des épidémies. La comparaison entre Le Journal de l’année de Peste de Defoe et la Peste de Camus amènera à s’interroger sur l’usage de la première personne dans les fictions de la peste.
Instructor(s): Françoise Lavocat Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Taught in French.
Comparative Literature

CMLT 24405. Kieslowski’s French Cinema. 100 Units.
Krzysztof Kieślowski’s The Decalogue and The Double Life of Veronique catapulted the Polish director to the international scene. His subsequent French triptych Blue, White, Red turned out to be his last works that altered his image and legacy to affirm his status as an auteur and a representative of the transnational cinema. We discuss how in his virtual universe of parallel histories and repeated chances, captured with visually and aurally dazzling artistry, the possibility of reconstituting one’s identity, triggered by tragic loss and betrayal, reveals an ever-ambiguous reality. By focusing on the filmmaker’s dissolution of the thing-world, often portrayed on the verge of vague abstraction of (in)audibility or (un)transparency, this course bridges his cinema with the larger concepts of postmodern subjectivity and possibility of metaphysics. The course concludes with the filmmaker’s contribution to world cinema. All along, we read selections from Kieślowski’s and Piesiewicz’s screen scripts, Kieślowski’s own writings and interviews, as well as from the abundant criticism of his French movies. All materials are in English.
Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 34405, CMST 24405, FNLD 25312, REES 31002

CMLT 24408. Before and After Beckett: Theater and Theory. 100 Units.
Beckett is conventionally typed as the playwright of minimalist scenes of unrelenting bleakness but his experiments with theatre and film echo the irreverent play of popular culture (vaudeville on stage and screen eg Chaplin and Keaton) as well as experimental Theatre and modern philosophy, even when there are no direct lines of influence. This course will juxtapose these points of reference with Beckett’s plays and those of his contemporaries (Ionesco, Genet and others in French, Pinter in English). It will then explore more recent plays that suggest the influence of Beckett by Caryl Churchill and Sarah Kane in English, Michel Vinaver in French, as well as the relevance of theorists and philosophers include Barthes, Wittgenstein, and critics writing on specific plays. (Drama)
Instructor(s): Loren Kruger Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): PQ: Completed Hum Core; no first years. Prior TAPS course and/or French would be helpful but are not required
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 24408, TAPS 28438

CMLT 24651. Global Horrors: Film, Literature, Theory. 100 Units.
This course explores literary and cinematic works of horror from around the world. Subgenres of horror include gothic/uncanny, sci-fi horror, post-apocalyptic, paranormal, monsters, psychological horror, thrillers, killer/slasher, and gore/body-horror, among others. As a mode of speculative fiction, horror envisions possible or imagined worlds that center on curiosities, dreads, fears, terrors, phobias and paranoia that simultaneously repel and attract. Works of horror are most commonly concerned with anxieties about death, the unknown, the other, and our selves.
Instructor(s): Hoda El Shakry Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Content warning: Course materials will feature graphic, violent, and oftentimes disturbing images and subjects. Enrolled students will be expected to watch, read, and discuss all course materials.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 32823, GNSE 22823, ENGL 24651, ENGL 34651, CRES 23100, CMLT 34651

CMLT 24813. South African Fictions and Factions. 100 Units.
This course examines the intersection of narrative in print and film (fiction and documentary) in Southern Africa since mid-20th century. We begin with Cry, the Beloved Country, a best seller written by South African Alan Paton while in the US, and the original film version by British-based director (Korda), and American screenwriter (Lawson), which show both the international impact of South African stories and important elements missed by overseas audiences. We continue with fictional and nonfictional responses to apartheid and decolonization, and examine the power and the limits of the “rhetoric of urgency” (L. Bethlehem). We will conclude with writing and film that grapples with the contradictory post-apartheid world, whose challenges, from crime and corruption to AIDS and the particular problems faced by women and gender minorities, elude the heroic formulas of the anti-apartheid era. (Fiction, Film/Drama, Black Studies)
Instructor(s): Loren Kruger Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Third or fourth year undergraduates and graduates only. Must have completed Hum Core plus one or more of the following: Intro to Fiction or equivalent; International Cinema, or equivalent; Intro to African studies
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 44813, ENGL 24813, CMST 24813, CRES 24813, ENGL 44813, CMST 34813

CMLT 25105. In the Beginning*: Origin, Style, and Transformation in the King James Version Matrix. 100 Units.

The 400th anniversary of the King James Bible (KJV) set off a series of events and texts dedicated to the great influence of this literary classic—a vernacular English Bible from 1611. What is it about the KJV that has so obsessed readers and writers? How has it become part of and affected world literature? Are there competing ways of conceiving the biblical text in English literature? In this course, we will trace some of the KJV’s thematic and stylistic influences in global Anglophone literature; sometimes we will deal with direct allusion and rewriting, and other times we will study the possibilities of more tenuous links. In parallel to this work, we will problematize the KJV’s astounding centrality by: examining some pre-KJV literature and alternative early-modern and 20th century translations (particularly as these intersect with Jewish tradition); attending
to subversive and postcolonial literary uses of the translation; and close-reading the political and ideological motivations behind certain forms of critical adulation. Texts examined may include works by authors such as George Peele, William Shakespeare, Herman Melville, William Faulkner, Toni Morrison, Cynthia Ozick, Zora Neale Hurston, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka.

Instructor(s): Chloe Blackshear Terms Offered: Spring

CMLT 25662. Archiving AIDS: Art, Literature, Theory. 100 Units.
The AIDS pandemic had a major impact on cultural production of the 1980s and the 1990s. But its effects did not end with the advent of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) in 1995. This course will examine the AIDS archive in its broadest sense-including art, literature, and theory produced in direct and indirect response to the pandemic from the 1980s to the present. What was the role of cultural production in political activism? What kinds of narratives did the allegorization of AIDS make possible and normalize? How has the AIDS pandemic been remembered and memorialized in more contemporary art and literature? Drawing from U.S., Latin American, and European texts, we will explore how AIDS has impacted sociopolitical issues related to sexuality, gender, class, and race.

Instructor(s): Kris Trujillo Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HLTH 25662, GNSE 20105, LACS 25662, CRES 25662

CMLT 25801. Machiavelli and Machiavellism. 100 Units.
This course is a comprehensive introduction to Machiavelli’s The Prince in light of his vast and varied literary corpus and European reception. The course includes discussion of Machiavelli as playwright (“The Mandrake”), fiction writer (“Belfagor,” “The Golden Ass”), and historian (“Discourses,” “Florentine Histories”). We will also closely investigate the emergence of myths surrounding Machiavelli (Machiavellism and anti-Machiavellism) in Italy (Guicciardini, Botero, Boccalini), France (Bodin and Gentillet), Spain (Ribadeneyra), and Northern Europe (Hobbes, Grotius, Spinoza) during the Counter Reformation and beyond.

Instructor(s): Rocco Rubini Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 35801, CMLT 21603, ITAL 23000

CMLT 26102. Ecstasy. 100 Units.
The concept of ecstasy is often associated with an extraordinary experience of the philosophical, sexual, and religious varieties, but in what way is ecstasy also bound to rituals of the ordinary? In this course we will explore numerous ways that ecstasy and synonymous terms like “orgasm,” “bliss,” and “jouissance” have been conceptualized in philosophical, theological, and literary texts from late antiquity to the present. What does the figural relationship between ecstasy and orgasm suggest about the broader relationship between philosophy, theology, sexuality, and desire? What role do pleasure and pain play in philosophical and theological reflection? How has ecstasy been deployed both as a form of political resistance and as complicit in the perpetuation of histories of violence? Focusing on the Christian tradition and its impact on queer theory, our readings may include, but are not limited to, texts by Plotinus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Margaret Ebner, Hadejewich, Margery Kempe, Teresa of Ávila, Lacan, Glück, Edelman, and Muñoz.

Instructor(s): Kris Trujillo Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 36102, RLST 26102, CMLT 36102, GNSE 36104, GNSE 26104

CMLT 27610. Brave Old Worlds: Russian Jewish Culture. 100 Units.
This course will examine the worlds of Russian Yiddish culture, with a focus on its radical and Revolutionary forms. Material will include folklore and ethnography, poetry and visual art, and political history of Bundist and anarchist movements. Literature and theory will include the work of Dovid Bergelson, S. An-sky, Lilya Brik, Moyshe Kulbak, Peretz Markish, Gennady Estraikh, Anna Shternshis, Yevgeniy Fiks, Nina Gourianova, and others. All texts will be in translation.

Instructor(s): Anna Elena Torres Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Study Abroad

CMLT 27621. Philosophical Aesthetics: Heidegger and Adorno. 100 Units.
Two major positions in German philosophical aesthetics of the 20th century will be considered in detail: 1) the ontological-hermeneutic theory advanced by Martin Heidegger; 2) the dialectical-critical theory developed by Theodor W. Adorno. Primary readings will be Heidegger’s Origin of the Work of Art and selections from Adorno’s Aesthetic Theory. In addition, selected shorter pieces by the two authors will be studied, with a special emphasis on their work on lyric poetry. The seminar will also consider contributions by Georg Simmel, Walter Benjamin, Helmut Plessner, Arnold Gehlen, Georg Lukács. The course seeks to develop an understanding of the conceptual foundation of each of the two philosophical positions. Particular topics to be considered: a) the nature of artistic presentation (Darstellung); b) the nature of artistic truth; c) the historical character of art; d) the political significance of art; e) the relation of art to philosophy.

Instructor(s): David Wellbery Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Undergrads must receive consent.
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 27621, CMLT 37621, SCTH 37621, SCTH 27621, GRMN 37621

CMLT 27721. Race and Religion: Theorizing Blackness and Jewishness. 100 Units.
Founded on ideals of universalism, pluralism and secularism, France and the United States are fraught with contradictions when it comes to race and religion. Which religions are accepted? Which religions are suspect? Is it minority that defines the difference—or only particular kinds of minority, such as race? To untangle the
intersections of race and religion, we will examine Blackness and Jewishness as they are represented in political polemic, fiction, memoir and philosophy from the 1960s to the present. This course introduces students to the foundational concepts for the critical study of race and religion through exploring the constructions of Black and Jewish identity. We will examine the contradictions of secular politics and culture in France and the United States, and discuss how religion, race, and intersecting categories such as gender and sexuality, can become tools of critique. Readings include works by thinkers such as Césaire, Fanon, Memmi, Levinas and Foucault, along with literary classics by Nella Larsen and Sarah Kofman, and contemporary critical essays by Judith Butler, Christina Sharpe and Talal Asad. Throughout this course, we will examine how the concepts of race and religion are key components of the political, philosophical and ethical projects of these authors. No prerequisite knowledge of critical theory, or this historical period, is expected.
Instructor(s): Kirsten Collins
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 27721, GLST 27721, ANTH 23916, CRES 27721, FREN 27721, GNSE 27721, RLST 27721

CMLT 28013. Love, Desire, and Sexuality in Islamic Texts and Contexts. 100 Units.
What separates love from lust? How do our erotic desires and sexual practices intersect with our beliefs? This interdisciplinary class explores these questions in conversation with foundational thinkers from the Islamic tradition alongside insights from feminist and queer theory. We will delve into questions on the relationship between romantic, familial, and divine love; gender, sexuality, and the body; and Orientalism and the politics of reading desire cross-culturally. Exploring a diverse set of primary sources that range from the Qur'an to Rumi's Masnavi to contemporary Bollywood, we will encounter different representations of love, desire, and sexuality in religious and philosophical discourses, literary representations, and visual media. We will examine not only how these representations reflect different historical norms, but also how and to what extent texts and images can inform or impact the norms of their contexts as well. No prerequisite knowledge of the topics or time periods discussed is needed, and students will have the opportunity over the course of the class to develop a project that relates our content to their own interests.
Instructor(s): Allison Kanner-Botan
Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course counts as a Concepts course for GNSE majors.
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 28013, NEHC 29018, RLST 28013, SALC 28013, GNSE 23135

CMLT 28101. Don Quijote. 100 Units.
The course will provide a close reading of Cervantes' "Don Quijote" and 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 Greek romances to the medieval books of knights errant and the Renaissance pastoral novels. 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, the careful reader will come to appreciate glimpses of images with Italian designs.
Instructor(s): Frederick de Armas
Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Taught in English. Students seeking Spanish credit will read the text in the original and use Spanish for the course assignments.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTR 38250, FNDL 21221, SPAN 34202, CMLT 38101, SPAN 24202

CMLT 28105. H. N. Bialik: Poetics of Light and Lament. 100 Units.
This course will comprise a close reading of lyrics of light and lament in the poetry of H. N. Bialik. Attention will be given to their content and interplay, through the prism of both the nostalgia for childhood illumination and the poet's progressive sense of despair and fragmentation. The poet's use of images drawn from Jewish mysticism and his links to Western romanticism will be considered. In addition, Bialik's writing on language will be studied, both in its own right and in relation to his poetry. Comparisons will be drawn to Rilke's lyric poetry and to Herder's treatise on the origins of language. Students will be expected to prepare primary and secondary readings, and produce several short prompt papers during the quarter.
Instructor(s): Michael Fishbane
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Knowledge of Hebrew preferred but English translation will be supplied
Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 30405, FNDL 22902, RLVC 30405, JWSC 28105, CMLT 30405, RLST 28105

CMLT 28447. It's the End of the World as We Know It: Apocalyptic Literature and Millenarian Movements. 100 Units.
The "end of the world" has been a matter of fascination for human beings for thousands of years. This course takes a cross-cultural approach to the study of texts and movements concerned with the end times, traditionally called "apocalyptic" and "Millenarian." We will focus on three major aspects of these movements: the historical and cultural circumstances in which they arose, the institutions and traditions that served as their foundations, and finally their theological and political principles, including how they dealt with failed expectations. We will cover a wide range of contexts, including Roman-occupied Judea during the first century CE, the Xhosaland of southern Africa in the mid 19th century, and the rise of QAnon in the 21st century United States. No prerequisite knowledge of the historical periods or religious traditions examined required.
Instructor(s): Marshall Cunningham
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 28447, GLST 28447, RLST 28447, HIST 25219

CMLT 28500. Journey to the West II. 100 Units.
TBD
CMLT 29992. Anticolonial Thought. 100 Units.

This course looks at the traditions of anticolonial thought from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Comparing movements for national liberation, realignment, and literary self-determination from across the world, we’ll consider the shifting claims of the British, American, French, Spanish, and Russian empires, and the colonial subjects, postcolonial frameworks, and decolonial movements that sought to contest these formations from Chile to Alcatraz, India to Ireland, and Azerbaijan to Martinique. Our focus will most often be on the manifestos and essays in which anticolonial writers outlined their literary and political programs, but we may also look at a few poems, stories, and films. From Vicente Huidobro’s fantasies of a secret international society to end British Imperialism to Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s call to abolish the English Department, how did the radical claims of anticolonial political thought take shape in literary writing?

Instructor(s): Leah Feldman Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course will be taught in conjunction with parallel courses offered by [Professor Harris Feinsod at Northwestern University] and [Professor Peter Kalliney at the University of Kentucky]. The class will meet remotely on zoom one day a week across the three campuses and one day in person. We anticipate building opportunities for cross-campus collaborative research among students as part of an ongoing, large-scale research collaboration.

CMLT 29024. States of Surveillance. 100 Units.

What does it feel to be watched and listened to all the time? Literary and cinematic works give us a glimpse into the experience of living under surveillance and explore the human effects of surveillance - the fraying of intimacy, fracturing sense of self, testing the limits of what it means to be human. Works from the former Soviet Union (Solzhenitsyn, Abram Tertz, Andrey Zvyagnitsev), former Yugoslavia (Ivo Andrić, Danilo Kiš, Dušan Kovačević), Romania (Norman Manea, Cristian Mungiu), Bulgaria (Valeri Petrov), and Albania (Ismail Kadare).

Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): REES 39024, CMLT 39024, REES 29024

CMLT 29045. Dostoevsky and Critical Theory. 100 Units.

The tormented, obsessed, and sadistic characters of Dostoevsky’s novels posed a challenge to positivism and reason too scandalous and compelling to be ignored. The novels inspired some of the most brilliant and influential thinkers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the fields of religion, philosophy, psychology and literary theory. We will read two of Dostoevsky’s philosophically challenging novels alongside works by these critics and philosophers, including Nietzsche, Sartre, Freud, Bakhtin, Kristeva, and Levinas. While exploring their ideas about faith and unbelief, madness and reason, violence and torture, society and history, we will also inquire into the relationships among literature, philosophy and biography and examine the processes of influence and adaptation.

Instructor(s): Anne Eakin Moss Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 39045, CMLT 39045, RLST 28207, REES 29045

CMLT 29071. Magic Nations. 100 Units.

As part of the post-colonial turn, magic realism is a hybrid mode of narration rejects, overcomes, and offers an alternative to the colonial, Enlightenment episteme. It mobilizes the imaginations and narrative modes of pre-colonial pasts in the articulation of new, post-colonial, often national, selves. In this course, we will unpack some captivating narratives from Southeast Europe in which the visions of the pre-modern mythic worlds emerge as the magic, transcendent core of the modern nations. We will indulge in the shi of the enjoyment of the brilliance of these text while focusing on the paradoxes they embody - for example, the simultaneous rejection and reliance on the realist mode, the colonial worldview, and its civilizational hierarchies and models.

Instructor(s): Angelina Ilieva Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 39071, REES 39071

CMLT 29120. Renaissance Epic: Vida, Tasso, and Milton. 100 Units.

This course will focus upon the two most important Renaissance Christian epics, Torquato Tasso’s La Gerusalemme liberata/Jerusalem Delivered (1581) and John Milton’s Paradise Lost (1667), as well as selections from Marco Girolamo Vida’s influential Biblical epic, the Christiad (1535). We will examine these Renaissance epics as ambitious efforts to revive an ancient and pagan form in order to depict Christian and self-consciously modern visions. We will consider how Renaissance epic poets imitate and emulate both their classical models (primarily Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil’s Aeneid, and Ovid’s Metamorphoses) and Judeo-Christian sources; seek to forge an elevated and appropriate language for epic; espouse new visions of the human, the heroic, and gender relations; and adumbrate distinctively modern national, imperial, and global ambitions. All non-English texts will be read in translation, but students who can read Latin or Italian will be encouraged to read the originals.

Instructor(s): Joshua Scodel Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course fulfills the Poetry and 1650-1830 distribution requirements for English majors.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 39120, CMLT 39120, ENGL 29120

CMLT 29567. Mythologies of Labor. 100 Units.

Whether fighting incredible monsters or baking bread, mythological texts invite us to consider the value of labor in unique ways. By reading across a number of premodern traditions (including Greek, Roman, Near Eastern, Scandinavian, Iranian, South African, Indian), this course looks at differences between heroic labor and manual
or domestic labor, labors usually expected of men and of women, labors with religious value versus labors with material consequences, as well as the role of affective labor in the ancient world. As we learn about labor in the past through these texts, the readings will allow us to raise new questions about labor today in the world of global capitalism. Examples of primary texts we will cover are portions of the Homeric epics, Hesiod’s Works and Days, Virgil’s Aeneid, Ovid’s Metamorphoses, Livy’s History of Rome, the Norse Edda and “Prose Edda,” Xhosa narratives, the Near Eastern Gilgamesh and Enuma Elish, chapters from the Vendidad, and some Vedic hymns. The course readings will be given in translation, and no prior language knowledge is expected, but students with knowledge of a relevant language can take the class for credit toward their major on the basis of a specifically tailored midterm exam and/or final paper.

Instructor(s): Claudio Sansone
Terms Offered: Winter

CMLT 29700. Reading Course. 100 Units.
Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor and Director of Undergraduate Studies.
Note(s): 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.

CMLT 29714. North Africa in Literature and Film. 100 Units.
This course explores twentieth- and twenty-first century literary and cinematic works from the countries of North Africa. We will focus in particular on the region of Northwestern Africa known as the Maghreb—encompassing Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Situated at the crossroads of Africa, the Middle East, and Europe, the Maghreb has a layered colonial past culminating in France’s brutal occupation of the region through the 1960s. Inflected by this colonial history, Maghrebi studies tends to privilege Francophone works while overlooking the region’s rich Arabic and indigenous traditions. Understanding the Maghreb as both a geopolitical as well as an imagined space, our course materials reflect the region’s diverse cultural histories and practices. We will consider the Maghreb’s ethnic, linguistic, and religious pluralism in dialogue with broader questions of cultural imperialism, orientalism, decolonization, and globalization. Fictional and cinematic works will be paired with relevant historical and theoretical readings. In light of the recent ‘Arab Spring’ catapulted by the Tunisian uprising in January 2011, we will also touch on contemporary social and political happenings in the region.

Instructor(s): Hoda El Shakry
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 39714, CMLT 39714, NEHC 29714

CMLT 29801. BA Project and Workshop: Comparative Literature. 100 Units.
This workshop begins in Autumn Quarter and continues through the middle of Spring Quarter. While the BA workshop meets in all three quarters, it counts as a one-quarter course credit. Students may register for the course in any of the three quarters of their fourth year. A grade for the course is assigned in the Spring Quarter, based partly on participation in the workshop and partly on the quality of the BA paper. Attendance at each class section required.

Instructor(s): Alia Breitwieser
Terms Offered: Autumn, Spring, Winter
Note(s): Required of fourth-year students who are majoring in CMLT. Students should register for this course in the term where it best fits in their schedule.

CMLT 29991. Affect at the Close: Climate Change, Capitalism, Creating Alternatives. 100 Units.
How does it feel to leave a world behind? Are we already trained in this experience as readers of fictions, who leave worlds behind whenever we put down a book? Can this experience of imperfectly moving on from one world to another, whether the real world or that of another fiction, teach us anything about ourselves as human beings navigating the epochal shifts of climate change and late-stage capitalism? What narrative strategies emphasize the affective and embodied dimensions of entering and exiting from their fictional worlds? We will start answering these questions by reading J. G. Ballard’s The Drowned World, Giorgio Bassani’s The Garden of the Finzi-Contini, and Anna Tsing’s The Mushroom at the End of the World. Other course texts will be determined by student interests. Secondary and theoretical material will be drawn from a range of writers including Georges Didi-Huberman, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Lauren Berlant, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Mark Fisher, Kenneth Burke, Edward Said, Ursula Heise, Amitav Ghosh, and Ursula K. Le Guin. This is a theory-oriented course that does not require previous knowledge. Students will have the option of producing a creative final project instead of a paper.

Instructor(s): Claudio Sansone
Terms Offered: Winter