

Comparative Literature Minor

Coordinator: Hustis; *Faculty:* Compte, Harrod, Landreau, Mi, Steinberg

The Comparative Literature Program offers students a unique opportunity to study literary texts across cultural and linguistic boundaries. By fostering an intellectual curiosity about and attentiveness toward the interconnections between the study of literary history, criticism, theory, and poetics, the interdisciplinary study of comparative literature requires students to read and analyze literature in international and multicultural contexts. Through the systematic comparison of literary works from more than one culture or era, students of comparative literature develop a sophisticated understanding of what literature is; through the acquisition and application of interpretive methods characteristic of related disciplines such as art, music, history, film, linguistics, science, and philosophy, they learn how to analyze texts in their sociological, political, linguistic, and cultural contexts.

In consultation with an adviser, students who minor in comparative literature are expected to design an intellectually coherent program of study which focuses on the literature of at least two distinct cultures (e.g., French and African literature of the French colonial period, classical literature and the Renaissance, or Latin American and U.S. literature of the 20th century). While courses in fulfillment of this requirement may be drawn from a wide range of disciplines, the goal of the minor is to enable students to put the literatures of different cultures and eras in dialogue. This cultural and literary juxtaposition will culminate in a required capstone independent research course designed by the student, approved by the coordinator of the Comparative Literature Program, and supervised by a faculty member of the student's choice.

Students interested in a minor in comparative literature should consult with one of the faculty members in the program as early as possible to plan their program of study.

Requirements for the Minor (5 course units)

- One of the following: FRE 240, GRE 201, ITL 240, LAT 201, SPA 241 or the equivalent in another language
- Three additional courses from the CMP courses listed below or from offerings in literature by other departments, chosen in consultation with a faculty member in the Comparative Literature Program (at least two of which should be at the 300 or 400 level)
- CMP 493/Independent Research in Comparative Literature

COURSES

CMP 230/Classical Traditions

1 course unit

(annually)

same as LIT 230

Introduces students to a literary tradition that originates in the classical period. The course will put readings into literary and historical context by focusing on a pivotal literary moment or text, selected by the instructor and analogous in function to the stationary foot of a geometric compass. Around this stationary foot or pivotal moment, the course will explore literary and historical relations—the textual “ancestors” and “progeny” that make up the particular classical tradition under consideration, as well as the surrounding philological, social, and political contexts of the selected pivotal moment in that tradition. The course will also draw upon at least two distinct cultures, at least one of which must be classical.

CMP 231/World Literature to 1700

1 course unit

(annually)

(same as LIT 231)

Introduces students to selected literary traditions before 1700. The course will put readings into literary and historical context by focusing on a pivotal literary moment or text, selected by the instructor and analogous in function to the stationary foot of a geometric compass. Around this stationary foot or pivotal moment, the course will explore literary and historical relations—the textual “ancestors” and “progeny” that influenced or rewrote the pivotal text of the course, as well as the surrounding philological, social, and political contexts of the selected literary moment. The course will also draw upon at least two distinct cultures or traditions, at least one of which must be non-English speaking.

CMP 232/World Literature since 1700

1 course unit

(every semester)

(same as LIT 232)

Introduces students to selected literary traditions since 1700. The course will put readings into literary and historical context by focusing on a pivotal literary moment or text, selected by the instructor and analogous in function to the stationary foot of a geometric compass. Around this stationary foot or pivotal moment, the course will explore literary and historical relations—the textual “ancestors” and “progeny” that influenced or rewrote the pivotal text of the course, as well as the surrounding philological, social, and political contexts of the selected literary moment. The course will also draw upon at least two distinct cultures or traditions, at least one of which must be non-English speaking.

CMP 342/Mythology

1 course unit

(annually)

(same as LIT 342)

This course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to study significant myths and legends which have influenced the shape and content of both Eastern and Western literature and to acquaint them with the shifting and conflicting ways in which mythology has been transmitted and studied from the ancient world to the contemporary, from the East to the West.

CMP 343/Late Medieval Writers

1 course unit

(occasionally)

(same as LIT 343)

An examination of the flowering of vernacular literature that occurred in western Europe in the 14th century. Emphasis will be placed on reconstructing how and why fourteenth-century writers, such as Dante, Juan Ruiz, Boccaccio, Froissart, Petrarch, Chaucer, and Christine de Pizan, came to create a vernacular tradition that transcended national and linguistic boundaries. Topics in the course may include fourteenth-century literary theory, marginalized and competing voices in the century, classical and vernacular precursors, material production of books in the period, social and political change in late medieval Europe, international relations of the period, and theories of literary influence.

CMP 346/Romanticism

1 course unit

(occasionally)

(same as LIT 346)

This course will explore the phenomenon of Romanticism in Great Britain, the United States, and Europe from a comparative perspective. Emphasis will be placed on analyzing how Romanticism intersects with other literary trends of the period and on how it develops as a reaction to the classical ideals of the European Enlightenment and the eighteenth century.

CMP 370/Topics in Comparative Literature

1 course unit

(occasionally)

(same as LIT 394)

Themes and content will vary from semester to semester and from instructor to instructor. However, all offerings of this course will seek to cultivate students' skills in comparative literary and cultural analysis and to foster a level of intellectual engagement with texts, contexts, and traditions that recognizes the benefits to be derived from pursuing advanced study of literary works in their original languages.

CMP 493/Independent Research

variable course units

The capstone experience for the Comparative Literature minor, designed by the student, approved by the coordinator of the Comparative Literature Program, and supervised by a faculty member of the student's choice. An original research project that ties together the two (or more) distinct cultures upon which the student's coursework for the Comparative Literature minor has focused.