Comparative Literature (LITR)

* LITR 027a / HUMS 027a / WGSS 027a, Six Pretty Good Selves  
Marta Figlerowicz and Ayesha Ramachandran  
Through the prism of thinking about the self, this course provides first-year students with an intensive introduction to studying the humanities at Yale. The course is anchored around six trans-historical models of thinking about selhood: the ideal self, the lover, the revolutionary, the convert, the solipsist, and the social climber. We range widely across genres, media, periods, and geographies: from Plato’s Symposium to Machado de Assis’s Epitaph for a Small Winner, from the ghazals of Hafez to the Kamasutra. We also make extensive use of Yale’s rich manuscript archives, historical object collections, and art galleries and devote sustained attention to improving students’ academic writing skills. Friday sessions will alternate between writing workshops and field trips to Yale collections. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  
WR, HU 1½ Course cr

LITR 101a / HUMS 115a, Purposes of College Education  
Pericles Lewis  
College is a crucial institution in which our society works through its expectations for young people. The first half of this course explores some of the purposes that have been ascribed to college, including development of personal character, participation in a community, preparation for citizenship, and conversation with others on intellectual matters. The second half touches on the social and economic contexts of college education, including the history of the curriculum, the role of social class, the cost of higher education, and career preparation. We read Plato’s Republic, a key text for the philosophy of education, in its entirety. Other readings from Aristotle, Confucius, Bhagavad-Gita, Virginia Woolf, Martin Luther King, Max Weber. Lectures are designed for interactive conversation. Preference for first-year and sophomore students, but all students are welcome.  
HU 0 Course cr

* LITR 130b / HUMS 130b, How to Read  
Rudiger Campe and Hannan Hever  
Introduction to techniques, strategies, and practices of reading through study of lyric poems, narrative texts, plays and performances, films, new and old, from a range of times and places. Emphasis on practical strategies of discerning and making meaning, as well as theories of literature, and contextualizing particular readings. Topics include form and genre, literary voice and the book as a material object, evaluating translations, and how literary strategies can be extended to read film, mass media, and popular culture. Junior seminar; preference given to juniors and majors.  
HU

* LITR 140a, How To Compare  
Samuel Hodgkin  
This course is an exploration of literary comparison from methodological as well as historical perspectives. We compare texts within genres, across genres and media, across periods, and between cultures and languages. We consider questions such as whether all comparisons must assume a common ground, and whether there is always an implicit politics to any comparison. Topics range from theories of translation and elphrasis to exoticism and untranslatability. Readings include classics by critics such as Aristotle, Ibn Sina, and Kristeva, and writers such as Marie de France, Nezami, and Calvino. It also engages with the literature of our own moment: we will read a newly-translated novel by the Chilean writer Nona Fernández, and the Iranian poet Kayvan Tahmasebian will visit the class for a conversation. We will also discuss films (Parajanov and Barta) and a new Russian computer game. This course fulfills an introductory requirement for students considering one of the majors in the Comparative Literature department, but all are welcome, and the methodologies and questions discussed in the class are useful for any kind of humanistic inquiry.  
HU

LITR 143b / ENGL 192b / FILM 240b, World Cinema  
Marta Figlerowicz  
Development of ways to engage films from around the globe productively. Close analysis of a dozen complex films, with historical contextualization of their production and cultural functions. Attention to the development of critical skills. Includes weekly screenings, each followed immediately by discussion.  
HU

* LITR 168a / ENGL 139a / HUMS 127a / THST 129a, Tragedy in the European Literary Tradition  
Katie Trumpener  
The genre of tragedy from its origins in ancient Greece and Rome through the European Renaissance to the present day. Themes of justice, religion, free will, family, gender, race, and dramaturgy. Works might include Aristotle’s Poetics or Homer’s Iliad and plays by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Seneca, Hrotsvitha, Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Calderon, Racine, Büchner, Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov, Wedekind, Synge, Lorca, Brecht, Beckett, Soyinka, Tarell Alvin McCraney, and Lynn Nottage. Focus on textual analysis and on developing the craft of persuasive argument through writing.  
WR, HU

* LITR 169a / ENGL 130a, Epic in the European Literary Tradition  
Stefanie Markovits  
The epic tradition traced from its foundations in ancient Greece and Rome to the modern novel. The creation of cultural values and identities; exile and homecoming; the heroic in times of war and of peace; the role of the individual within society; memory and history; politics of gender, race, and religion. Works include Homer’s Odyssey, Vergil’s Aeneid, Dante’s Inferno, Cervantes’s Don Quixote, and Joyce’s Ulysses. Focus on textual analysis and on developing the craft of persuasive argument through writing.  
WR, HU

LITR 178a / HUMS 233a / MMES 201a / NELC 156a, Classics of the Arabic-Islamic World  
Shawkat Toorawa  
Survey of the literary tradition of the Arabic-Islamic world (West Asia, North Africa, and Muslim Spain), a textual conversation among diverse authors from late antiquity to the Mamluk period. Prose and poetry from the Qur’an to the Arabian Nights; attention to the interdependence of the works and their cultural setting, the agendas authors pursued, and the characters they portrayed.  
HU TR
**LITR 183a / HUMS 180a / ITAL 310a, Dante in Translation**  
Staff  
A critical reading of Dante's *Divine Comedy* and selections from the minor works, with an attempt to place Dante's work in the intellectual and social context of the late Middle Ages by relating literature to philosophical, theological, and political concerns. No knowledge of Italian required. Course conducted in English.  
HU TR 0 Course cr

**LITR 253a / HIST 260a / HUMS 253a / RSEE 312a / RUSS 312a, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* TR**  
Edyta Bojanowska  
The course is a semester-long study of the quintessential big Russian novel, Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, about Napoleon's failed 1812 war against Russia. *War and Peace* (1865-1869) is a sweeping panorama of nineteenth-century Russian society, a novel of profound philosophical questions, and an unforgettable gallery of artfully drawn characters. Reading the novel closely, we pose the following questions. In what ways is this patriotic war epic also an imperial novel? What myths does it destroy and construct? How does it combine fiction and history? What forces drive history, as it unfolds in the present? What are the limits of individual agency, and how much do emperors and generals control the fates of nations and armies? Finally, a question that is never too broad for Tolstoy: what is a meaningful, well-lived life? We explore these questions while refining our tools of literary analysis and situating the novel in its historical context and in our contemporary world. Secondary materials include Tolstoy's letters, contemporary reviews, maps, and historical sources, as well as readings in political theory, philosophy, international relations, and literary criticism. All readings and class discussions in English. No prerequisites required. Both WR and non-WR sections are offered.  
WR, HU

* **LITR 256a / CPLT 657a / PORT 352a / PORT 652a, Clarice Lispector: The Short Stories**  
Kenneth David Jackson  
This course is a seminar on the complete short stories of Clarice Lispector (1920-1977), a master of the genre and one of the major authors of twentieth-century Brazil known for existentialism, mysticism and feminism.  
WR, HU TR

* **LITR 259a / LAST 252a / PORT 356a, Concrete Poetry in Brazil & Portugal: Verbivocovisual Poetics in Theory and Practice**  
Kenneth David Jackson  
Brazilian concrete poetry in international perspective: production and theory of concrete poetry, translation, and criticism during the second half of the twentieth century. Brazilian concrete poets in the context of visual and concrete poetics. Representative works include 'Pilot Plan' and *Theory of Concrete Poetry*, graphic and spatial poems, and public expositions of works. Brazilian concrete poets were among the leaders of an international neo-vanguard movement in mid-twentieth century related to geometrical abstraction in painting. In the journals *Noigandres* and *Invenção*, and the *Theory of Concrete Poetry* the Brazilians link their poetics to Pound, Mallarmé, cummings and other inventive figures in world poetry, while relating poetry to graphic arts through reference to painting and to semiotics, including Fenollosa's essay on use of the Chinese character. The exhibit in S. Paulo's Museum of Modern Art in December 1956 was the beginning of the public exhibition of concrete poetry, now the topic of anthologies, websites, criticism, and museum retrospectives. Concrete poetics dominated the production of poetry in Brazil for half a century with a major effect on cultural and intellectual life. Prerequisite: PORT 140 or equivalent.  
HU

**LITR 265b / EALL 256b / EAST 358b / GLBL 251b / HUMS 272b, China in the World**  
Jing Tsu  
Recent headlines about China in the world, deciphered in both modern and historical contexts. Interpretation of new events and diverse texts through transnational connections. Topics include China and Africa, Mandarinization, Chinese America, science and technology, science fiction, and entrepreneurship culture. Readings and discussion in English.  
HU

**LITR 284a / FREN 270a / GMAN 214a, Mad Poets**  
Thomas Connolly  
A lecture course introducing undergraduates to the rich tradition of poetry written in French (and German) during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Each week is devoted to exploring the life and work of a poet whose ways of behaving, creating, and perceiving the world might be described as insane. There is, perhaps, no shortage of mad poets, but those whose life and work provide topics for discussion here include Hölderlin, Nerval, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mallarmé, Lautréamont, Apollinaire, Breton, Artaud, and Celan. Students become familiar with the tools required to read, interpret, understand, and enjoy poetry, and develop an understanding of the poets’ broader literary historical, philosophical, and political significance. Regular references are made to other modes of expression, including painting, photography, film, music, dance, philosophy, theater, and architecture. Lectures in English. Sections in English or French. Readings available both in original language and in English translation.  
WR, HU

* **LITR 301b / FILM 360b / RSEE 380b / RUSS 380b, Putin's Russia and Protest Culture**  
Marijeta Bozovic  
Survey of Russian literature and culture since the fall of communism. The chaos of the 1990s; the solidification of power in Putin's Russia; the recent rise of protest culture. Sources include literature, film, and performances by art collectives. Readings and discussion in English; texts available in Russian.  
WR, HU

* **LITR 302a / ARBC 173a / ARBC 598a / CPLT 828a / NELC 338a / NELC 614a, Tracing the Image of the Arab "Other"**  
Jonas Elbousty  
This course places the modern Arabic novel in conversation with the west in an effort to uncover both dominant narratives regarding Arab identity, as well as counter narratives that present a challenge to these dominant narratives. We study the tradition of modern Arabic literature, looking specifically to the ways in which the image of the “other” is presented in Arabic narratives as well as the ways in which the image of the Arab is constructed through the others’ literature. Prerequisite: ARBC 140.  
WR, HU TR

* **LITR 305b / ENGL 483b / HUMS 428b / JDST 143b, Advanced Literary Translation**  
Robyn Creswell  
A sequel to LITR 348, The Practice of Literary Translation. Students apply to this workshop with a project in mind that they have been developing, either on their own or for a senior thesis, and they present this work during the class on a regular basis. Practical translation is supplemented by readings in the history of translation practice and theory, and by the reflections of practitioners on their art. These readings are selected jointly by the instructor and members of the class. Topics include the history of literary translation—Western and Eastern; comparative approaches to translating a single work; the political dimension of translation; and translation in the context
of religion and theology. Class time is divided into student presentations of short passages of their own work, including related key readings; background readings in the history of the field; and close examination of relevant translations by accomplished translators. Students receive intensive scrutiny by the group and instructor. Prerequisite: LITR 348.

* LITR 308b / ER&M 306b / JDST 352b / MMES 308b, Literature at the Limit from Palestine and Israel  Hannan Hever Readings and films from post-1948 Palestine and Israel, with special attention given to historical and political contexts. Consideration of the limit, in the geographical sense of borders and checkpoints, as well as in the existential sense of extremity and trauma. HU

* LITR 330b / GMAN 227b / HUMS 330b / PHIL 402b, Heidegger's Being and Time  Martin Hagghund Systematic, chapter by chapter study of Heidegger's Being and Time, arguably the most important work of philosophy in the twentieth-century. All major themes addressed in detail, with particular emphasis on care, time, death, and the meaning of being. HU

* LITR 348b / ENGL 456b / HUMS 427b / JDST 316b, The Practice of Literary Translation  Robyn Creswell This course combines a seminar on the history and theory of translation (Tuesdays) with a hands-on workshop (Thursdays). The readings lead us through a series of case studies comparing, on the one hand, multiple translations of given literary works and, on the other, classic statements about translation—by translators themselves and prominent theorists. We consider both poetry and prose from the Bible, selections from Chinese, Greek, and Latin verse, classical Arabic and Persian literature, prose by Cervantes, Borges, and others, and modern European poetry (including Pushkin, Baudelaire, and Rilke). Students are expected to prepare short class presentations, participate in a weekly workshop, try their hand at a series of translation exercises, and undertake an intensive, semester-long translation project. Proficiency in a foreign language is required. HU

* LITR 349a / ENGL 224a / THST 317a, Tragedy and Drama of Reconciliation  Jan Hagens Close reading of dramas of reconciliation from the Western canon that have traditionally been categorized as tragedies. Ways in which the recategorization of such plays lends additional complexity and meaning to their endings and allows for new interpretations of the texts, their authors, and the history of drama. HU

* LITR 353a / CLCV 353a / HUMS 375, Greek Tragedy and Psychoanalysis  Nebojsa Todorovic What do ancient fifth-century Athens and turn-of-the-(twentieth-)century Vienna have in common? In fact, psychoanalysis' development was intertwined with Freud's interpretations of classical Greek tragedy, and Greek tragedies in turn shed light on psychoanalytic concepts in excess of Freud's readings. The juxtaposition of these two worlds allows us to understand each with a fresh perspective. And this is what we study in this class: we read and interpret the best-known tragic plays by ancient playwrights Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides in dialogue with key concepts of psychoanalytic criticism. Well-established questions that Greek tragedy raises about gender politics, the evolution of democracy, the progressive disintegration of the Athenian polis, the construction of citizenship and foreignness, the influence of rhetoric and sophistry is reframed in dialogue with Freud's (and his followers') redefinitions of language, the unconscious, the self, trauma, violence, and gender. The goal of this course is to provide students with a clear understanding of the historical evolutions of these two forms of cultural production while also engaging in more theoretical and comparative work of literary interpretation and critical theorization. Considering the pivotal role that both psychoanalysis and Greek tragedy held in the development of later currents of thought (including postcolonial studies, Black Studies, feminist theory, queer theory, and Black studies), particular attention is paid the afterlives of the Freudian method and classical tragedy. WR, HU

* LITR 374a / FILM 325a / GMAN 379a, German Cinema 1918-1933  Jan Hagens The years between 1918 and 1933 are the Golden Age of German film. In its development from Expressionism to Social Realism, this German cinema produced works of great variety, many of them in the international avantgarde. This introductory seminar gives an overview of the silent movies and sound films made during the Weimar Republic and situate them in their artistic, cultural, social, and political context between WWI and WWII, between the Kaiser's German Empire and the Nazis' Third Reich. Further objectives include: familiarizing students with basic categories of film studies and film analysis; showing how these films have shaped the history and the language of film; discussing topic-oriented and methodological issues such as: film genres (horror film, film noir, science fiction, street film, documentary film); set design, camera work, acting styles; narration in film; avantgarde cinema; the advent and use of sound in film; Realism versus Expressionism; film and popular mythology; melodrama; representation of women; modern urban life as spectacle; film and politics. Directors studied include: Grune, Lang, Lubitsch, Murnau, Pabst, Richter, Ruttmann, Sagan, von Sternberg, Wiene, et al. WR, HU

* LITR 431a / HUMS 229a / LAST 431a / SPAN 431a, 1968@50 Latin American Languages of Liberation  Moira Fradinger On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the upheavals of 1968, this seminar looks at the Latin American cultural and political discourses of liberation throughout the sixties, with an eye at assessing their aftermath and their legacy today. While the language that characterized the foundation of the nation-states in the 19th century was emancipation, in the second part of the twentieth century, and particularly around 1968, Latin America embraced the world discourse of liberation. This seminar examines languages of liberation in an array of disciplines and artistic practices from South and Central America as well as the Caribbean. We explore regional debates that were also inserted in the larger discourse of the anti-colonial struggles of the global South. Topics include Philosophy of liberation (Dussel), Theology of liberation (the 1968 Council of Bishops in Medellin, Colombia), Theater of the oppressed (Boal), Pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire), Cinema of liberation (manifestos of third cinema), the New Song protest movements across the region (from Violeta Parra in Chile to Tropicalismo in Brazil), anti-colonialism in the Caribbean (Fanon), anti-neocolonialism (dependency theory, internal colonialism), Indigenous liberation (from the Barbados declarations to the Lacandon jungle declarations), experimental “boom” literature (Cortázar) etc. HU
* LITR 446b / FREN 247b, Experimental Literature, Theory, and Manifestoes  Morgane Cadieu
A survey of the French experimental prose of the 20th and 21st centuries. Corpus includes novels and plays, literary and political manifestoes, and landmark articles on literary theory, structuralism, and poststructuralism. Topics include: inspiration and creativity; the aesthetics of manifestoes and the politics of literature; automatic writing and constrained prose; feminist and queer writings; urban spaces in avant-garde literary movements. Works by: Bataille, Beauvoir, Beckett, Breton, Perec, Sarraute, Wittig. Theoretical excerpts by: Barthes, Deleuze, Derrida, Foucault, Glissant, Malabou.  L5, HU  TR

* LITR 463a / ENGL 268a / HUMS 254a / PHIL 227a, Literature and Philosophy, Revolution to Romanticism  Jonathan Kramnick
This is a course on the interrelations between philosophical and literary writing beginning with the English Revolution and ending with the beginnings of Romanticism. We read major works in empiricism, political philosophy, and ethics alongside poetry and fiction in several genres. Topics include the mind/body problem, political ideology, subjectivity and gender, and aesthetic experience as they take philosophical and literary form during a long moment of historical change.  WR, HU  TR

* LITR 472b / MMES 164b, Politics and Literature in the Middle East  Samuel Hodgkin
This course considers the relationship between literature and politics in Turkey, Iran, and the Arab world since the late 19th century. We read novels, short stories, poetry, essays, play scripts, and comics, and watch movies, while situating them in their artistic and political contexts. This course considers the ways that an artwork can intervene in the political debates of its time, while taking seriously the distinctive modes of political thought that are possible only through art. Topics include gender relations, the legacies of European colonialism, modernization and modernism, revolutionary movements, the role of religion in society, experiences of violence and trauma, and the drastic changes to Middle Eastern societies wrought by the oil boom. All readings are in English translation, but if sufficient students with relevant language skills enroll, an additional biweekly session may be arranged for selected course readings in the original languages.  HU

* LITR 482a / GMAN 288a / HUMS 480a / PHIL 469a, The Mortality of the Soul: From Aristotle to Heidegger  Martin Hagglund
This course explores fundamental philosophical questions of the relation between matter and form, life and spirit, necessity and freedom, by proceeding from Aristotle’s analysis of the soul in De Anima and his notion of practical agency in the Nicomachean Ethics. We study Aristotle in conjunction with seminal works by contemporary neo-Aristotelian philosophers (Korsgaard, Nussbaum, Brague, and McDowell). We in turn pursue the implications of Aristotle’s notion of life by engaging with contemporary philosophical discussions of death that take their point of departure in Epicurus (Nagel, Williams, Scheffler). We conclude by analyzing Heidegger’s notion of constitutive mortality, in order to make explicit what is implicit in the form of the soul in Aristotle.  HU

* LITR 483a / ENGL 248a / HSHM 476a / HUMS 430a / PHIL 361a, Thought Experiments: Connecting Literature, Philosophy and the Natural Sciences  Paul Grimstad
The course looks closely at the intersection of literature, philosophy and natural science through the lens of the thought experiment. Do thought experiments yield new knowledge about the world? What role does narrative or scene setting play in thought experiments? Can works of literary fiction or films function as thought experiments? Readings take up topics such as personal identity, artificial intelligence, meaning and intentionality, free will, time travel, the riddle of induction, “trolley problems” in ethics and the hard problem of consciousness. Authors may include Mary Shelley, Plato, Albert Einstein, Franz Kafka, H.G. Wells, Rene Descartes, Kazuo Ishiguro, Rivka Galchen, Alan Turing, Hilary Putnam, as well as films (The Imitation Game) and television shows (Black Mirror). Students should have taken at least one course involving close analysis of works of literature or philosophy.  WR, HU

* LITR 484b / AFST 443b / FREN 442b, Decolonizing Memory: Africa & the Politics of Testimony  Jill Jarvis
This seminar explores the politics and poetics of memory in a time of unfinished decolonization. It also provides students with a working introduction to anticolonial, postcolonial, and decolonial critique. Together we bring key works on the topics of state violence, trauma, and testimony into contact with literary works and films by artists of the former French and British empires in Africa. Reading literary and theoretical works together permits us to investigate archival silences and begin to chart a future for the critical study of colonial violence and its enduring effects. Literary readings may include works by Djebar, Rahmani, Ouologuem, Sebbar, Diop, Head, Krog, Films by Djebar, Leuenrey, Sembene, and Sissako. Theoretical readings may include works by Arendt, Azoulay, Césaire, Derrida, Fanon, Mbembe, Nggé, Spivak, and Trouillot.  WR, HU  o Course cr