

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

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The Comparative Literature major allows students to address fundamental questions about the nature, function, and value of literature in a broadly comparative context. Students read and write about a wide variety of literary works across periods, genres, and national traditions. They investigate ancient and contemporary approaches to literary study, theories and methods of comparison, and the relationship of literature to film and other media. Majors have the freedom to construct a program of study that reflects their intellectual goals. All prospective majors should register with the director of undergraduate studies (DUS), who will work with them to develop a coherent sequence of courses suited to their individual interests.

The Comparative Literature major offers four unique concentrations: Literature and Comparative Cultures; Intensive Language; Film; and Literary Translation. These concentrations share the same core courses. Other courses are normally chosen from different language and literature programs, many of which offer courses on literature and film in translation. Among these programs are African American Studies, Classics, East Asian Languages and Literatures, English Language and Literature, Film and Media Studies, French, German Studies, Italian Studies, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Portuguese, Russian and other Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Spanish.

Prospective majors are strongly encouraged to begin the study of a foreign language as early as possible in their academic careers and to continue such study throughout their time at Yale. All concentrations of the Comparative Literature major require students to have advanced (L4/L5) competence in at least one foreign language. Students interested in graduate study in comparative literature should be aware that many programs require reading knowledge of two or three foreign languages.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

The Comparative Literature major requires twelve term courses, including the senior requirement and two required foundational seminars, one of which must be LITR 130 and the other may be LITR 140 or 143 or 348. Beyond the two required courses and the senior essay, the major requires nine term courses, with specific requirements for each concentration. All concentrations require students to take courses in at least one foreign literature; all have a period requirement and a theory requirement. Additionally, prospective majors must have an L5 in the foreign language in which they plan to work (in some cases an L4 is acceptable with DUS advisement).

For the period requirement, students must take at least one course in three of five historical periods: (1) Antiquity; (2) Medieval; (3) Early Modern; (4) 17th–18th centuries; and (5) the Modern period (1800–present). Courses taken from other departments (excluding Directed Studies) may fulfill the period requirement with DUS permission.

For the theory requirement, students must take one course that involves a significant component of literary or cultural theory. Students who wish to know if a course, particularly those offered in other departments, may count toward this requirement should consult the DUS.

The Literature and Comparative Cultures concentration

Prospective majors electing the Literature and Comparative Cultures concentration must take two required foundational seminars; LITR 130 and one of LITR 140, 143, or 348. Beyond the two required courses and the senior essay, the concentration requires three courses in a foreign literature (see below), three courses that fulfill the period requirement, two elective courses, and one theory course. Period courses, elective courses, and the theory course may be taken in any literature department and may include two courses in a related discipline that has direct bearing on the student's program of study in literature, such as history of art, philosophy, anthropology, music, or theater studies. One of the elective courses may be in creative writing or Directed Studies.

Foreign literature requirement Majors are required to take at least three literature courses in one foreign language. One of these courses may award the language distributional requirement (L5) in an ancient or modern foreign literature, in which the literature is read in the original language. In some cases, the L5 course with which students entered the major can be counted as one of the three foreign literature courses. Two courses can be taken at a basic literature level (normally equivalent to the third year of language study), but at least one course must be taken at an advanced level (normally equivalent to the fourth year of language study or higher).

The Intensive Language concentration

Prospective majors electing this concentration focus their plan of study on two foreign literatures studied in the original language. They must take two required foundational seminars: LITR 130 and LITR 140; three courses in one foreign literature (one of which may be an L5 course); two courses in a second foreign literature (one of which may be an L5 course); three courses that fulfill the period requirement; and one course that involves a significant element of literary or cultural theory. In all five of the foreign literature courses, the literature must be read in the original language.

The Film concentration

Students in the Film concentration focus their plan of study on film and media. They must take two required foundational seminars: LITR 130 and LITR 143 (or equivalent approved by DUS); three courses that fulfill the period requirement; and they must take two foreign literature courses and one course in film theory. They must choose their three electives from courses in Film and Media Studies.

The Literary Translation concentration

Students in the Literary Translation concentration focus on the theory and practice of literary translation. They must take two required foundational seminars: LITR 130 and LITR 348 (or equivalent approved by DUS); three courses that fulfill the period requirement; three courses in one foreign literature (one of which can be an L5 course);

one course in literary or cultural theory; and two courses that engage with some aspect of translation studies. The DUS can provide a list of qualifying courses.

Credit/D/Fail A maximum of two courses taken Credit/D/Fail may count toward the major, with permission of the DUS. None of the specific required courses may be taken Credit/D/Fail.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

For the senior essay (LITR 491, or LITR 492, 493), students develop a research topic of their choice and work closely with a faculty adviser, preferably from the department. Normally, the essay makes use of texts in the language of their original composition. Any exceptions must be approved by the DUS. Deadlines for the prospectus, the rough draft, and the completed essay are listed on the departmental website.

The senior essay may be written over one term (LITR 491) or over two terms (LITR 492, 493). Students with an especially well-developed project may petition to write a yearlong senior essay. Interested juniors must apply by the last day of classes in the spring term. Students may count the second term of the essay as one elective course toward the total number of courses required for the major. Students expecting to graduate in May enroll in LITR 492 during the fall term and complete their essays in LITR 493 in the spring term. December graduates enroll in LITR 492 in the spring term and complete their essays in LITR 493 during the following fall term. Students planning to begin their essay in the spring term should notify the DUS by the last day of classes in the fall term.

COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS

A literature course taught in English translation is sometimes suitable as a foreign literature course. In such cases, majors are expected to request additional assignments from their instructors that demonstrate they have engaged with the texts in the original language. They should submit the appropriate form, signed by the instructor, attesting to their intent to do so. The registrar or the DUS can provide this form; students should submit it to the DUS along with their course schedule.

Non-native speakers of English who are granted permission by Yale College to complete the language distributional requirement by taking ENGL 114, 115, 120, ENGL 121, or 450 may take a total of three English literature courses to fulfill the three foreign literature course requirement, or they may fulfill the major requirements by taking three courses in a third language.

STUDY ABROAD

Comparative Literature majors are encouraged to consider spending a summer, a term, or a year abroad. One course taken through international programs and approved by Yale College may, with permission of the DUS, be applied to the literature requirement.

COURSES WITH ADVANCED LITERATURE INSTRUCTION

The following table lists languages in which advanced literature instruction is available at Yale, specifying courses that fulfill the basic and advanced literature requirements for the majors. Courses with numbers higher than those listed also normally fulfill the requirement, providing that they focus on literature (rather than language) and that the literature is read in the original language.

Other ancient and modern languages, including those from Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East, may be suitable for the major if a qualified faculty adviser is available to supervise the student.

Language	Basic Literature Course	Advanced Literature Course
Arabic	ARBC 150, 151	ARBC 161 or 165
Chinese	CHNS 150, 151	CHNS 170 or 171
French	FREN 170	Courses in French numbered 200 or higher
German	Courses in German numbered 170 or higher	Courses in German numbered 200 or higher
Ancient Greek	GREK 131 or 141	Ancient Greek courses numbered 400 or higher
Modern Hebrew	By arrangement with instructor	By arrangement with instructor
Italian	ITAL 162 and 172	Courses in Italian numbered 200 or higher
Japanese	JAPN 150, 151	JAPN 170 or 171
Korean	KREN 150, 151	EALL 470 or 471
Latin	LATN 131 or 141	Latin courses numbered 400 or higher
Persian	PERS 150 and above	PERS 150 and above
Portuguese	By arrangement with instructor	By arrangement with instructor
Russian	RUSS 150, 151	Courses in Russian numbered 170 or higher
Spanish	SPAN 261, 262, 266, or 267	Courses in Spanish numbered 300 or higher

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites None

Number of courses 12 term courses (incl senior req)

Specific courses required *All concentrations*—LITR 130; *Literature and Comparative Cultures*—1 of LITR 140, 143, or 348; *Intensive Language*—LITR 140; *Film*—LITR 143 or equivalent; *Literary Translation*—LITR 348 or equivalent

Distribution of courses *All concentrations*—3 period courses, as specified; *Literature and Comparative Cultures*—3 courses in a foreign lit, as specified, 1 course in literary or cultural theory, 2 elective courses; *Intensive Language*—3 courses in one foreign lit, 2 courses in a second foreign lit, 1 course in literary or cultural theory; *Film*—2 foreign lit courses, 1 course in film theory; 3 electives in Film and Media Studies; *Literary Translation*—3 courses in a foreign lit, as specified, 1 course in literary or cultural theory, 2 courses in translation studies

Senior requirement One-term senior essay (LITR 491); or two-term senior essay (LITR 492 and LITR 493)

The Comparative Literature program is designed for students interested in literary studies who do not want to limit their programs to a single national literature. The major allows students to develop knowledge of multiple languages and cultures, and can be the foundation of an international education.

First-year students with a broad interest in the humanities might consider the Comparative Literature major because it allows the study of literature to be combined with work in history, philosophy, art, film, and other fields. Students may also pursue particular thematic interests such as gender issues, literature's historical context, or religious and political dimensions of literature. The Comparative Literature major offers four unique concentrations: Literature and Comparative Cultures; Intensive Language; Film; and Literary Translation. These concentrations share the same core courses, while providing opportunity for students to explore their particular interests with the study of literature.

Prospective majors should begin or continue language study during the first year. Interested students are also encouraged to take one or two courses that include some major texts of the Western literary tradition and count toward the major. These courses include:

- DRST 001, Directed Studies: Literature
- DRST 002, Directed Studies: Literature
- ENGL 129, Tragedy in the European Literary Tradition

Students interested in the Comparative Literature major should consult the director of undergraduate studies (DUS) and review the department website.

FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Professors Dudley Andrew, Peter Brooks (*Emeritus*), Rüdiger Campe, Katerina Clark, Roberto González Echevarría, Martin Hägglund, Hannan Hever, Carol Jacobs (*Emeritus*), Pericles Lewis, Rainer Nägele (*Emeritus*), David Quint, Katie Trumpener, Jing Tsu, Jane Tylus, Jesús Velasco

Associate Professors Robyn Creswell, Marta Figlerowicz, Moira Fradinger, Ayesha Ramachandran

Assistant Professor Samuel Hodgkin

Senior Lecturer Peter Cole

Lecturers Jan Hagens, Candace Skorupa, George Syrimis

Affiliated Faculty Rolena Adorno (*Spanish & Portuguese*), R. Howard Bloch (*French*), Francesco Casetti (*Film & Media Studies*), Kang-i Sun Chang (*East Asian Languages & Literatures*), Michael Denning (*American Studies*), Alice Kaplan (*French*), Tina Lu (*East Asian Languages & Literatures*), John MacKay (*Slavic Languages & Literatures*), Giuseppe Mazzotta (*Italian*), Christopher L. Miller (*French*), Joseph Roach (*English*), Maurice Samuels (*French*), Ruth Yeazell (*English*)

See visual roadmap of the requirements.

View Courses