Comparative Literature (Bi-Co)

Department Website:
https://www.haverford.edu/comparative-literature

Comparative Literature is a joint Bryn Mawr and Haverford program that draws on the diverse teaching and research interests of the faculty at the two colleges, especially but not exclusively those in our many departments of language and literature.

The study of Comparative Literature situates literature in an international perspective; examines transnational cultural connections through literary history, literary criticism, critical theory, and poetics; and works toward a nuanced understanding of the socio-cultural functions of literature. The close reading of literary texts and other works from different cultures and periods is fundamental to our enterprise.

Interpretive methods from other disciplines that interrogate cultural discourses also play a role in the comparative study of literature; among these are anthropology, philosophy, religion, history, music, the history of art, visual studies, film studies, gender studies, and area studies (including Africana studies, Latin American and Iberian studies, and East Asian studies).

Our students have gone on to do graduate work in comparative literature and related fields; pursued advanced degrees in business, law, medicine, and journalism; and undertaken careers in translation, publishing, international business, diplomacy, and non-governmental organizations.

Learning Goals
• Students should attain advanced skills in a language other than English and show the capacity to analyze and interpret literary and cultural texts in the original language.
• Students should attain advanced skills in the interpretation or translation of the literary texts of two distinct national cultures, in the comparative analysis of these texts across national and/or linguistic boundaries, and in addressing, considering, evaluating, and applying specific methodological or theoretical paradigms.
• Students should make use of these skills in the senior thesis and oral exam, which should also demonstrate the capacity to:
  • evaluate and discuss the merits of a critical or methodological approach.
  • complete an independent scholarly project.
• bring together and analyze critically, in light of certain central issues and themes, a selection of works of literature and criticism read over the four years.

Haverford’s Institutional Learning Goals are available on the President’s website, at http://hav.to/learninggoals.

Curriculum
The resources at Bryn Mawr and Haverford permit the Comparative Literature program to offer an extensive variety of courses, including:
• literature courses in English and the other languages offered at the two Colleges (Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Latin, ancient Greek, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic and Hebrew).
• crosslisted comparative electives taught in English.
• courses in criticism and theory.

Major
We require comparative literature students to have a reading knowledge of at least one language other than English, adequate to the advanced study of literature in that language. Some comparative literature courses may require reading knowledge in the language as a prerequisite for admission.

Students interested in pursuing a comparative literature major should discuss their preparation and program of courses with the comparative literature chair early in their first or second year at the College.

We recommend (but do not require) that:
• majors study abroad during one or two semesters of the junior year.
• students with a possible interest in graduate school begin a second foreign language before they graduate.

Major Requirements
• COML H200 or COML B200 (Introduction to Comparative Literature), normally taken by the spring of the sophomore year.
• Six advanced literature courses in the original languages (normally at the 200 level or above), balanced between two literature departments (of which English may be one): at least two (one in each literature) must be at the 300 level or above, or its equivalent, as approved in advance by the advisor.
• One course in critical theory.
• Two electives in comparative literature.
• COML H398 or COML B398 (Theories and Methods in Comparative Literature).
• COML H399 or COML B399 (Senior Seminar in Comparative Literature).

Senior Project
Each senior major in comparative literature defines their thesis topic in consultation with the faculty members who teach the capstone seminars, COML 398 and COML 399. In the fall semester, as they near completion of COML 398, students produce a viable prospectus in the form of an essay with bibliography. During the spring semester, students enrolled in the Senior Seminar (COMLL 399) complete a senior thesis of 35-40 pages, under the joint guidance of one of the instructors in COML 399 and a faculty member with expertise in the topic of the thesis.

The thesis should build on languages, literary and cultural interests, and competencies cultivated in coursework at Bryn Mawr and Haverford or abroad, should be broadly comparative in nature, and should normally deal with works in both of the student’s major languages. Possible models include: a study of a critical issue as exemplified in authors or works from two different literary or linguistic traditions; an exploration of transnational issues in different media; a critical examination of a problem in literary or cultural theory or literary history; a critical examination of different translations of a literary work.

At the end of the spring semester, during the senior exams period, all seniors are required to participate in senior oral exams before a panel of three faculty examiners—the two thesis co-advisors plus a member of the Comparative Literature Steering Committee or other relevant faculty member. Students respond to questions about the senior thesis during the first half of the exam (approximately 20 minutes); during the second half (another 25 minutes or so) they answer questions about a list of texts and topics they have submitted in advance. (These texts, which may include films and works of art, are chosen by each student from primary and secondary sources that they have studied in courses that count toward the major, with no more than two texts from a single class.)

To get a sense of the kinds of projects our majors elect to pursue, please visit the Senior Thesis archive linked on our homepage.

Senior Project Learning Goals
In the process of writing the senior thesis and preparing for the oral exam, students should develop and demonstrate the capacity to:

• Complete an independent scholarly project in the form of a senior thesis (35-40 pages) that has a logical and clear overall structure and that expresses complex ideas and argues these convincingly, with clarity and precision.
• Familiarize themselves with their chosen texts in the original languages and offer interpretations grounded in close reading of these texts.
• Evaluate and discuss the merits of a critical or methodological approach, identify relevant and generative theoretical frameworks, understand the tradition from which they derive, and competently incorporate them in the service of a critical question.
• Critique and evaluate scholarship relevant to their own scholarly project.
• Comment on or critique the research projects of fellow senior seminar participants.
• Bring together and analyze critically, in light of certain central issues and themes, a selection of works of literature and criticism read over the past four years.
• Make responsible use of both primary and secondary sources.
• Make effective use of library resources, including subject-specific databases and indices online and in print.

Senior Project Assessment
Faculty in the Comparative Literature Steering Committee (CLSC) evaluate the viability of the thesis prospectus, submitted in COML 398. Student performance evaluations in all the assessment categories mentioned below inform the final grades awarded in COML 399 as well as the awarding of honors in the major and of the departmental prize for the most accomplished senior essay. The examiners are drawn from faculty members teaching COML 399, members of the CLSC, and other colleagues in other relevant disciplines. Examiners (three per student) participate in the required senior oral examination and make the final evaluations of the second semester senior capstone experience. Separate grades are given for the senior essay, seminar performance, and oral exam; the final grade in COML 399 reflects the totality of the senior experience in all categories stated, with the most important element being the senior thesis.

The thesis is evaluated on the following criteria:

• Conceptualization of an original research question
• Familiarity with and well-grounded interpretation of primary texts in the original languages.
• Engagement with chosen theoretical framework or frameworks and with relevant secondary literature.
• Successful revision in response to criticism.
• Crafting of a clearly structured and clearly expressed argument.

Requirements for Honors

Students who, in the judgment of the Comparative Literature Steering Committee, have done distinguished work in their comparative literature courses and in the Senior Seminar will be considered for departmental honors.

Minor Requirements

Requirements for the minor are COML 200 and COML 398, plus four additional courses—two each in the literature of two languages. At least one of these four courses must be at the 300 level. Students who minor in comparative literature are encouraged to choose their national literature courses from those with a comparative component.

NOTE: Both majors and minors should work closely with the co-chairs of the program and with members of the steering committee in shaping their programs.

Study Abroad

The majority of our majors study abroad for one semester or two, normally during the junior year, at programs approved by Bryn Mawr and Haverford. We ask our students to confer with the chair of the relevant language department as well as the chair of Comparative Literature in advance when choosing courses abroad in order to determine which courses may be counted towards the major, and which kind of credit (i.e. 200-level or 300-level) should be given for a particular course although we strongly advise that the 300-level courses be taken within the Bi-Co. The course in critical theory must be taken within the Tri-Co.

Prizes

The Laurie Ann Levin Prize is awarded annually to the senior major(s) whose work merits recognition for intellectual achievement, as demonstrated in the senior thesis.

Faculty

Two co-chairs, one at each college, and a Bi-College steering committee administer the program. The committee generally includes those faculty members most often involved in teaching the introductory course and the senior seminar.

Many other faculty at both institutions contribute courses to the program; see the Courses section for more information.

Steering Committee Members at Haverford

Imke Brust

Associate Professor and Chair of German

Roberto Castillo Sandoval
Professor of Spanish

Maud McInerney
The Laurie Ann Levin Professor of Comparative Literature; Professor of English; Chair of Comparative Literature

Jerry Miller
Associate Professor of Philosophy

Deborah Roberts
The William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor; Professor and Chair of Classics

David Sedley
Associate Professor and Chair of French and Francophone Studies

Steering Committee Members at Bryn Mawr

Martín Gaspar
Assistant Professor of Spanish

Jennifer Harford Vargas
Associate Professor of English and Co-Director of the Latin American, Latina/o and Iberian Studies Program

Tim Harte
Provost and Professor of Russian

Shiamin Kwa
Co-Chair and Associate Professor of East Asian Studies

María Cristina Quintero
Fairbank Professor in the Humanities, Professor of Spanish and Co-Director of Comparative Literature

Roberta Ricci
Professor and Chair of Italian on the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Chair in the Humanities

Azade Seyhan
Fairbank Professor Emeritus in the Humanities and Research Professor

Courses at Haverford

COML H120 THE EPIC IN ENGLISH (1.0 Credit)

Maud McInerney
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An exploration of the long narrative poems that shape the epic tradition in anglophone literature. Readings in classical epic and medieval epic, Milton, Romantic epics and the modern aftermath of epic. Crosslisted: English, Comparative Literature
COML H142 INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL STUDIES (1.0 Credit)
John Muse
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An introduction to the trans-disciplinary field of Visual Studies, its methods of analysis and topical concerns. Traditional media and artifacts of art history and film theory, and also an examination of the ubiquity of images of all kinds, their systems of transmission, their points of consumption, and the very limits of visuality itself. Crosslisted: Visual Studies, Fine Arts, Comparative Literature (Offered: Fall 2020)

COML H200 INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (1.0 Credit)
Maud McInerney
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
A general introduction to the evolving field of comparative literature. Students read, discuss, and write about texts from across a wide range of national literatures and historical periods, with attention both to how these texts influence and relate to each other and to where and why they must differ. An additional focus on theoretical issues relevant to reading in general and, more particularly, reading between canons. (Offered: Fall 2020)

COML H202 BAWDY BODIES: COMEDIES OF THE GROTESQUE IN ANTIQUITY AND THE RENAISSANCE (1.0 Credit)
Matthew Farmer
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
In this course, we will use Bakhtin’s concepts of the grotesque and the carnivalesque to interpret the novels of Rabelais and the plays of Shakespeare; we will also explore Greek and Roman precedents for the grotesque literature of the Renaissance. Crosslisted: Classics, Comparative Literature Pre-requisite(s): First Year Writing (Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H202B BAWDY BODIES: COMEDIES OF THE GROTESQUE IN ANTIQUITY AND THE RENAISSANCE (1.0 Credit)
Matthew Farmer
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
In this course, we will use Bakhtin’s concepts of the grotesque and the carnivalesque to interpret the novels of Rabelais and the plays of Shakespeare; we will also explore Greek and Roman precedents for the grotesque literature of the Renaissance. Crosslisted: Classics, Comparative Literature Pre-requisite(s): First Year Writing (Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H203 WRITING THE JEWISH TRAJECTORIES IN LATIN AMERICA (1.0 Credit)
Ariana Huberman
Division: Humanities
The course proposes the study of Latin American Jewish literature focusing on narrative, essay, and poetry of the Twentieth and Twenty-First centuries. It pays close attention to themes, registers, and cultural contexts relevant to the Jewish experience in Latin America. What is Jewish about this literature? Where do these texts cross paths, or not, with other migratory and minority experiences? The texts studied question identity and Otherness, and explore constructions of memory while examining issues of gender, assimilation, transculturation, migration, and exile in relation to the Jewish Diaspora in the Americas. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, placement, or instructor consent (Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H205 LEGENDS OF ARTHUR (1.0 Credit)
Maud McInerney
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An exploration of the Arthurian legend, from its earliest versions to most recent retellings. The tradition of Arthurian tales is complex and various, combining Celtic and Christian mythologies. Sometimes called the “matter of Britain” the Arthurian narrative has been critical in establishing national and ethnic identities ever since the Middle Ages. Medieval notions of chivalry and courtly love also raise fascinating questions about the conflict between personal and private morality, and about the construction of both identity and gender.

COML H212 REFASHIONING THE CLASSICS: DRAMATIZATION AND ILLUSTRATION (1.0 Credit)
Deborah Roberts
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
In this class – part of a Philadelphia Area Creative Collaboratives (PACC) project with visiting artists Anne Carson and Robert Currie and the Philadelphia theater group Lightning Rod Special – we will explore the ways in which modern writers have read, responded to, and recreated ancient Greek and Latin texts, with a focus on drama and performance and on the illustrated book. Crosslisted: Classical Studies, Comparative Literature
COML H214 WRITING THE NATION: 19TH-CENTURY LITERATURE IN LATIN AMERICA (1.0 Credit)
Roberto Castillo Sandoval
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An examination of seminal literary texts written in Latin America in the nineteenth century. Novels, essays, travelogues, short stories, miscellaneous texts, and poetry will be analyzed and placed in the context of the process of nation-building that took place after Independence from Spain. A goal of the course will be to establish and define the nexus between the textual and ideological formations of 19th-century writings in Latin America and their counterparts in the 20th-century. The course fulfills the "pre-1898" requirement. This course is conducted in Spanish. Cross-listed: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, placement, or instructor consent (Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H215 TALES OF TROY (1.0 Credit)
Bret Mulligan
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An introduction to the myth of the Trojan War and its role in the history of western literature and culture, focusing on the development and adaptation of the myth in literature, art, music, and film. All CSTS courses are taught in English and do not require knowledge of Latin or Greek. Crosslisted: Classical Studies, Comparative Literature

COML H217 UNRULY BODIES: NARRATIVES OF DISABILITY IN GREECE AND ROME (1.0 Credit)
Hannah Silverblank
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
In this course, students will consider a range of depictions of physical alterity in ancient Greek and Roman epic, drama, poetry, history, philosophy medical writing, and iconography. All CSTS courses are taught in English and do not require knowledge of Latin or Greek. Crosslisted: Classics, Comparative Literature

COML H222 RETHINKING LATIN AMERICA IN CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVE (1.0 Credit)
Aurelia Gómez De Unamuno, Sebastián Figueroa
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts); B: Analysis of the Social World
This course explores literary texts and films produced after the 70s that address political issues related to marginal subjects that previously were not visible. The course is organized around different agendas such as “indigenismo”, ethnic politics and indigenous movements, post-coloniality, subalternity, sexual diversity, migration and the border, drug trafficking, and gender violence. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, placement, or instructor consent (Offered: Fall 2020)

COML H224 GERMANY/BERLIN FROM A TRANSNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (1.0 Credit)
Imke Brust
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts); B: Analysis of the Social World
This course focuses primarily on the ways in which Germany/Berlin has influenced the visual imagination of American and other foreign artists, as well as a German immigrant artists, and Germans in the diaspora. While Germany without doubt has profoundly affected other countries worldwide, Germany and in particular the city of Berlin have also been shaped significantly by foreign influences, most recently during the recent refugee crisis in Europe. This course explores a variety of different visual media from film to the creation of museums. Taught in English with an extra session in German. Crosslisted: German, Comparative Literature, Visual Studies

COML H229 TOPICS IN VISUAL STUDIES: ROLAND BARTHES AND THE IMAGE (1.0 Credit)
John Muse
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An exploration of the rhetoric of visual culture through an examination of 20th century French critic Roland Barthes’ many writings on photography, film, and what he calls the “civilized code of perfect illusions.” We will spend the semester reading his texts, charting the trajectory of a career that begins with the euphoria of an ever-expanding semiotic and ends with a meditation on the limits of this very project. Crosslisted: Visual Studies, Fine Arts, Comparative Literature

COML H231 CARIBE QUEER: SEXUALITIES AND NARRATIVES FROM THE HISPANIC CARIBBEAN (1.0 Credit)
Lina Martinez Hernandez
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
The course will look at different narrative and artistic productions regarding alternative sexualities in the Hispanic Caribbean. We will take as a point of departure the Cuban revolution and move to the present. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature
Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102 (Offered: Fall 2020)
COML H232 CERVANTES AND THE FAKE QUIXOTE. ORIGINALITY AND AUTHORSHIP IN EARLY MODERN SPAIN (1.0 Credit)
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An examination of the literature and cultures of the Spanish Golden Age through the mockumentary Cervantes contra Lope (2016). Emphasis will be placed on the concepts of novelty, authorship, falsification, and originality. We will read works by Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, Fernando de Avellaneda, and Jerónimo de Pasamonte. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature Prerequisite(s): SPAN H102 or placement into 200-300 level courses

COML H233 TOPICS IN CARIBBEAN LITERATURE: A NEW WAVE (1.0 Credit)
Asali Solomon
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts); B: Analysis of the Social World
This course will focus on authors of the Caribbean and its diaspora, engaging fiction, theory, memoir, poetry and drama from the mid-twentieth century through the present. Core themes will include migration, class, colonialism, racial identity, gender and sexuality. Crosslisted: English, Africana Studies

COML H245 PERFORMANCE, LITERATURE AND THE ARCHIVE (1.0 Credit)
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
The ‘archive,’ as both an institutional and performance practice and a theoretical concept, has been one of the most studied sites in performance and literary studies. The hegemonic, patriarchal institution of the archive that constructs and perpetuates the canon and the master narratives of history while, marginalizing, silencing, and erasing the subaltern and the subcultural has been contested by the poststructuralist philosophers and critical theorists of the late 20th and early 21st century. A new concept of the archive transpired in the interdisciplinary fields of postcolonial, gender, cultural, and performance studies, one that is more utopian and more inclusive and is not limited by dominant repressive power structures and ideologies. This archive does not merely revisit the past to excavate the eradicated traces and silenced voices, but also, perhaps more importantly, opens the potential for a formerly unimaginable, and yet-to-be-imagined future.

COML H253 HISPANIC CARIBBEAN MIGRATION TALES (1.0 Credit)
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
Students will learn about different Hispanic Caribbean migratory experiences through a selection of short stories, novels, memoirs, and essays, as well as in film, and performative production. The texts that will be analyzed are mostly originally written in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature Prerequisite(s): SPAN H102 or 200-300 level in the placement test

COML H255 CINEMA FRANÇAIS/FRACOPHONE ET COLONIALISME (1.0 Credit)
Koffi Anyinefa
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)

COML H262 EUROPEAN FILM (1.0 Credit)
Imke Brust
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This course will explore what role film plays in the conceptualization of the European Union. After a brief historical overview, we will familiarize ourselves with a variety of important European film movements after 1945. Our class discussion will cover important European film movements such as German Expressionist Film, Italian Neorealism, French New Wave, Czech New Wave, New German Cinema, and Dogma 95. In addition, we will be watching films from Poland, the Netherlands, and the Balkans. Towards the end of the semester we will discuss how the accelerated integration of the European Union since the 1990s has affected film production within the European Union and what aesthetic, and political ideas shape contemporary European films. Furthermore, this class also aims to highlight transnational aspects of European film in particular in light of the recent European refugee crisis. This course is taught in English with an extra-session in German. (Taught in English with an extra session in German.) Crosslisted: Comparative Literature, German (Offered: Fall 2020)

COML H278 BEASTS, HYBRIDS, AND GIANTS: CONFRONTING MONSTERS FROM THE PAST (1.0 Credit)
Hannah Silverblank
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This course investigates the role of the monster — source of horror, of power, of disgust, of humor, and sometimes even endearment — in genres ranging from ancient Greek epic and Gothic fiction to science fiction and horror cinema. (Offered: Fall 2020)
COML H301 TOPICS IN MIDDLE ENGLISH: PRE-MODERN WOMEN WRITERS (1.0 Credit)
Sarah Watson
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
Considers the construction of genders and sexualities in the medieval period. Crosslisted: English, Comparative Literature
(Offered: Fall 2020)

COML H305 IMAGINING TERESA OF AVILA: HER NOT-SO-HOLY LIFE AND AFTERLIFE (1.0 Credit)
Almudena Vidorreta
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This course examines the figure of the Spanish mystic Teresa de Jesus (1515-1582) and how she has been imagined and depicted as a symbol of feminism in Literature and film. The course focuses on her works, as well as fiction, art and film which have drawn from her production, from the Renaissance to The Simpsons. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature Prerequisite(s): one 200-level course
(Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H312A ADVANCED TOPICS IN FRENCH LITERATURE: L’ÉDUCATION ET SES SUJETS DE LA RENAISSANCE AUX LUMIÈRES (1.0 Credit)
David Sedley
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
The goal of this course is to put modern theories and practices of education into historical perspective by looking at some of their early-modern French and European counterparts. We will focus on how a cluster of its "subjects"—both things that are studied and people who study them—developed into fixtures of modern education. These educational subjects include inclusivity, civility, technology, essays, literature, images, theater, and algorithms. We will read early-modern authors such as Rabelais, Montaigne, Marie de Gournay, Elisabeth de Bohême, Poullain de la Barre, Racine, and Rousseau. We will also read selections from recent pedagogical theory in order to see whether and how they reflect, reform, or reject early-modern ideas. Crosslisted: FREN and COML
(Offered: Fall 2020)

COML H312B ADVANCED TOPICS:ÊTRE ET NE PAS ÊTRE: POUR UNE HISTOIRE DE LA SUBJECTIVITÉ AU 20E SIÈCLE. (1.0 Credit)
Koffi Anyinefa
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
To Be, Not to Be: Subjectivities of the 20th Century Who am I? What is “I”? Does the so called first person stand for a human subject? This interdisciplinary seminar, equally open to art and to philosophy, aims to excavate the causes of the tragic destiny of human subjectivity during the 20th century. Along with Beckett, Deleuze and Foucault, we will read some earlier authors who foretold this apocalyptic future of the Self, including Nietzsche, Maupassant and Rimbaud. Crosslisted: French, Comparative Literature Prerequisite(s): At least one 200-level course
(Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H327 TRAVEL NARRATIVES IN LATIN AMERICA (1.0 Credit)
Ariana Huberman
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This course examines the imprint travel writers have left on the literature of Latin America from the seventeenth century to the present. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature

COML H329 HAMDANI: CO-SPIRATION OF THE SACRED AND THE SATIRICAL (1.0 Credit)
Guangtian Ha
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This course builds on a fourteenth-century Uyghur text titled The Contest of the Fruits – a rap battle-style put-down between different fruits – to explore the role of humour and satire in helping us think through notions of the sacred. Cross Listed: Anthropology; Comparative Literature Prerequisite(s): At least two 200-level courses in any of the following areas: religion, anthropology, sociology, classics, linguistics, literature (regardless of language), and philosophy. Students with previous engagements with the Hurford Center or with a strong interest in arts, religion, and philosophy are especially encouraged to enroll. In addition, it is highly desirable that students who enroll in this course have significant knowledge of a non-English language so they can draw from other traditions of humour. For this reason, it is recommended that students whose primary language is English have at least two years of continuous study of a non-English language or its equivalent; native [and heritage] speakers of a non-English language may be assumed to meet this recommendation. Those students unsure of their qualification should email Prof. Ha (gha@haverford.edu) for a consultation session.
(Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H377 PROBLEMS IN POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE: VIOLENCE, TERROR, AND IDENTITY (1.0 Credit)
Rajeswari Mohan
COML H381 VISUAL POLITICS OF BONDAGE (1.0 Credit)
Reema Rajbanshi
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This course examines the visual politics of literatures of bondage, focusing on colonial Brazil/Amazon, the cross-temporal Indian Ocean World, and our contemporary moment of globalization. Our central course inquiry across the course will address the visual politics both nascent and full-fleshed in textual and imagistic representations of those extremely uneven power relations definitive of bondage, and is attentive across genres to the novel, painting, photography, and film. Cross-listed for English and Visual Arts. Prerequisite(s): Two 200-level courses in English or instructor consent
(Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H389 INTERPRETING LYRIC POETRY: LOVE, LOSS, TRANSCENDENCE (1.0 Credit)
Kimberly Benston
Division: Humanities
An examination of theoretical issues and presentational strategies in verse structures from Ovid to Bishop. Through close readings of strategically grouped texts, we explore the interplay of convention and innovation, attending to themes of desire, loss, and transcendence, and to recurrent lyric figures (e.g., in Narcissus, Orphic, and Ulysses poems; in the dramatic monologue; in the sonnet and elegy; in the sublime; in vernacular traditions and their literary revisions). Issues for study include: allusion and intertextuality; convention and cliché; invention and revision; origination and self-presentation. Practical criticism will lead to theoretical analyses of interpretive modes and the interpreter’s stance. Crosslisted: English, Comparative Literature Prerequisite(s): Two 200-level English courses or instructor consent
(Offered: Spring 2021)

COML H398 THEORIES AND METHODS IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (1.0 Credit)
Jerry Miller
Division: Humanities
This course is both a seminar on theory and method and a workshop on the development of the senior thesis. It introduces students to a variety of critical approaches and their application, and assists them in developing conceptual frameworks for the senior thesis projects they are in the process of formulating. Prerequisite(s): Open to comparative literature senior majors and minors
(Offered: Fall 2020)

COML H399 SENIOR SEMINAR (1.0 Credit)
Deborah Roberts, Maud McInerney
Division: Humanities
Oral and written presentations of work in progress, culminating in a senior thesis and comprehensive oral examination. Prerequisite(s): students must be senior majors in Comparative Literature

Courses at Bryn Mawr

ARCH B303 CLASSICAL BODIES (1.0 Credit)
Alice Donohue
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An examination of the conceptions of the human body evidenced in Greek and Roman art and literature, with emphasis on issues that have persisted in the Western tradition. Topics include the fashioning of concepts of male and female standards of beauty and their implications; conventions of visual representation; the nude; clothing and its symbolism; the athletic ideal; physiognomy; medical theory and practice; the visible expression of character and emotions; and the formulation of the “classical ideal” in antiquity and later times.

EALC B212 TOPICS: INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE LITERATURE (1.0 Credit)
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This is a topics course. Topics may vary.

EALC B315 SPIRITS, SAINTS, SNAKES, SWORDS: WOMEN IN EAST ASIAN LITERATURE & FILM (1.0 Credit)
Shiamin Kwa
This interdisciplinary course focuses on a critical survey of literary and visual texts by and about Chinese women. We will begin by focusing on the cultural norms that defined women’s lives beginning in early China, and consider how those tropes are reflected and rejected over time and geographical borders (in Japan, Hong Kong and the United States). No prior knowledge of Chinese culture or language necessary.

EALC B345 TOPICS IN EAST ASIAN CULTURE (1.0 Credit)
Yonglin Jiang
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This is a topics course. Course contents vary.

ENGL B345 TOPICS IN NARRATIVE THEORY (1.0 Credit)
Jennifer Harford Vargas
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.

FREN B312 ADVANCED TOPICS IN LITERATURE (1.0 Credit)
Brigitte Mahuzier
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.
Prerequisites: two 200-level courses.

FREN B326 ETUDES AVANCÉES (1.0 Credit)
Brigitte Mahuzier
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An in-depth study of a particular topic, event or historical figure in French civilization. This is a topics course. Course content varies.

GERM B231 CULTURAL PROFILES IN MODERN EXILE (1.0 Credit)
Azade Seyhan
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
This course investigates the anthropological, philosophical, psychological, cultural, and literary aspects of modern exile. It studies exile as experience and metaphor in the context of modernity, and examines the structure of the relationship between imagined/remembered homelands and transnational identities, and the dialectics of language loss and bi- and multi-lingualism. Particular attention is given to the psychocultural dimensions of linguistic exclusion and loss. Readings of works by Julia Alvarez, Albert Camus, Ana Castillo, Sigmund Freud, Eva Hoffman, Maxine Hong Kingston, Milan Kundera, Friedrich Nietzsche, Salman Rushdie, W. G. Sebald, Kurban Said, and others.

HART B110 CRITICAL APPROACHES TO VISUAL REPRESENTATION: IDENTIFICATION IN THE CINEMA (1.0 Credit)
Matthew Feliz
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
An introduction to the analysis of film through particular attention to the role of the spectator. Why do moving images compel our fascination? How exactly do film spectators relate to the people, objects, and places that appear on the screen? Wherein lies the power of images to move, attract, repel, persuade, or transform its viewers? In this course, students will be introduced to film theory through the rich and complex topic of identification. We will explore how points of view are framed in cinema, and how those viewing positions differ from those of still photography, advertising, video games, and other forms of media. Students will be encouraged to consider the role the cinematic medium plays in influencing our experience of a film: how it is not simply a film’s content, but the very form of representation that creates interactions between the spectator and the images on the screen. Film screenings include Psycho, Being John Malkovich, and others. Course is geared to freshman and those with no prior film instruction. Fulfills History of Art major 100-level course requirement, Film Studies minor Introductory course or Theory course requirement.
(Offered: Fall 2020)

ITAL B213 THEORY IN PRACTICE:CRITICAL DISCOURSES IN THE HUMANITIES (1.0 Credit)
Alessandro Giammei
Division: Humanities
Domain(s): A: Meaning, Interpretation (Texts)
What is a postcolonial subject, a queer gaze, a feminist manifesto? And how can we use (as readers of texts, art, and films) contemporary studies on animals and cyborgs, object oriented ontology, zombies, storyworlds, neuroaesthetics? In this course we will read some pivotal theoretical texts from different fields, with a focus on race&ethnicity and gender&sexuality. Each theory will be paired with a masterpiece from Italian culture (from Renaissance treatises and paintings to stories written under fascism and postwar movies). We will discuss how to
apply theory to the practice of interpretation and of academic writing, and how theoretical ideas shaped what we are reading. Class conducted in English, with an additional hour in Italian for students seeking Italian credit.

RUSS B218 THE COMING-OF-AGE NOVEL IN 19TH-CENTURY EUROPE (1.0 Credit)
We will study a selection of nineteenth-century French, English, and Russian novels that are concerned with the education, development, and maturing of a young protagonist. These are novels that imagine the often difficult compromise between individual aspirations and the drive towards social integration. We will think about why the Bildungsroman - or, coming-of-age novel - turned out to be one of the most productive and popular literary forms of nineteenth-century Europe. We will study works by such authors as Pushkin, Balzac, Stendhal, Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, Dostoevsky, Goncharov, Tolstoy, Flaubert and others. (Content will vary somewhat each time the course is offered.) We will think about the depiction of childhood and early adulthood; families; national and imperial polities and politics; the relationship between geographic, social, and economic mobility; domestic and professional selves and spaces; gender and sexuality.