The information presented here is as of 10/21/2009. For up-to-date course offerings, please return to the previous page and select “Courses Offered.”

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (Div. I)

Chair, Professor GAIL M. NEWMAN

Professors: CASSIDAY, DRUXES, GOLDSTEIN, B. KIEFFER*, KLEINER, LIMON, NEWMAN, ROUHL, SWANN. Associate Professors: C. BOLTON, S. FOX*, FRENCH, KAGAYA, PIEPRZAK, VANDE STADT. Assistant Professors: MARTIN, NAAMAN, NUGENT**, VAR-GAS*. Bolin Fellow: SO.

Students motivated by a desire to study literature in the broadest terms, as well as those interested in particular examples of literary comparison, will find an intellectual home in the Program in Comparative Literature. The Program in Comparative Literature gives students the opportunity to develop their critical faculties through the study of literature in its international and multicultural context. By crossing national, linguistic, historical, and disciplinary boundaries, students of Comparative Literature learn to read texts for the ways they make meaning, the assumptions that underlie that meaning, and the aesthetic elements evinced in the making. Students of Comparative Literature are encouraged to examine the widest possible range of literary communication, including the metamorphosis of genres, forms, and themes.

Whereas specific literature programs allow the student to trace the development of one literature in a particular culture over a period of time, Comparative Literature juxtaposes the writings of different cultures and epochs in a variety of ways. Because interpretive methods from other disciplines play a crucial role in investigating literature’s larger context, the Program offers courses intended for students in all divisions of the college and of all interests. These include courses that introduce students to the comparative study of world literatures and courses designed to enhance any foreign language major in the Williams curriculum. In addition, the English Department allows students to count one course with a COMP prefix as an elective within the English major.

The Program supports two distinct majors in Comparative Literature and Literary Studies. The major in Comparative Literature requires advanced work in at least one language other than English and is strongly recommended for students contemplating graduate study in the discipline. Both majors provide a strong basis for any career demanding analytical, interpretive, and evaluative skills and allow the student, within a framework of general requirements, to create a program of study primarily shaped by the student’s own interests.

MAJORS

Comparative Literature

The Comparative Literature major combines the focused study of a single national-language literature with a wide-ranging exploration of literary forms across national, linguistic, and historical boundaries. Each student declaring the major must select a single foreign language as his or her specialty, although the serious study of literature in foreign languages other than the student’s specialty is strongly encouraged. The languages currently available are French, German, Ancient Greek, Latin, Russian, and Spanish. Each student will also be paired with a faculty advisor with whom the student will meet each semester to discuss how best to fulfill the requirements for the major.

Eleven courses are required for the major:

Comparative Literature 111 The Nature of Narrative

Any three comparative literature core courses. A core course is any course that meets the following criteria: a) it must treat primarily literature and b) it must be genuinely comparative across cultures and/or primarily theoretical. The three core courses may be chosen from the offerings of the Program in Comparative Literature or from the offerings of other departments and programs, including the foreign language programs and English, Religion, Africana Studies, and Latino/Latina Studies.

Three literature courses in the student’s specialty language, in which texts are read in the original. At least one of the three must be above the 200-level.

Three courses in which most of the course work concerns literature other than that of the student’s specialty language or literary theory. These courses may be selected from Comparative Literature offerings or from other departments and must be approved by the student’s major advisor. Only one may be in English or American literature.

Comparative Literature 401 Senior Seminar (variable topics)

Students who are considering a major in Comparative Literature should aim to acquire intermediate-level proficiency in their specialty language by the end of the sophomore year. They should also complete core course requirements by the end of their junior year. Students pursuing the Comparative Literature major are strongly encouraged to study abroad during their junior year and may receive major credit for up to 4 courses taken during study abroad. At least three courses towards the major must be at the 300 level or above. Students are expected to take the version of 401 offered in their senior year.

Literary Studies

The Literary Studies major allows for a wide-ranging exploration of literary forms across national, linguistic, and historical boundaries. Unlike the major in Comparative Literature, the Literary Studies major does not require the student to choose a specialty language, although the serious study of literature in one or more modern languages is strongly encouraged. Each student will be paired with a faculty advisor, with whom the student will meet each semester to discuss how best to fulfill the requirements for the major.

Eleven courses are required for the major:

Comparative Literature 111 The Nature of Narrative

Any four comparative literature core courses. A core course is any course that meets the following criteria: a) it must treat primarily literature and b) it must be genuinely comparative across cultures and/or primarily theoretical. The three core courses may be chosen from the offerings of the Program in Comparative Literature or from the offerings of other departments and programs, including the foreign language programs and English, Religion, Africana Studies, and Latino/Latina Studies.

Five courses devoted to literature or literary theory that cover at least three different national/cultural traditions. The courses may be selected from Comparative Literature offerings or from other departments and must be approved by the student’s major advisor. Of the courses taken outside of the Program in Comparative Literature, no more than two may have the same course prefix. Students are strongly encouraged to include courses in a foreign language among these five.

Comparative Literature 401 Senior Seminar (variable topics)

Students who are considering a major in Literary Studies should aim to complete core course requirements by the end of their sophomore year. Students who choose to study abroad during their junior year may receive major credit for up to 4 courses taken during study abroad. At least three courses towards the major must be at the 300 level or above. Students are expected to take the version of 401 offered in their senior year.

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE OR LITERARY STUDIES

Prerequisites

Honors candidates in Comparative Literature or Literary Studies are required to have maintained a GPA of 3.5 in the major to qualify for submitting a thesis proposal. In addition, candidates must demonstrate a strong interest in a specific topic for which an appropriate faculty advisor will be available in the senior year.

Timing

Students wishing to pursue a thesis in Comparative Literature or Literary Studies are strongly urged to secure an advisor by the end of the week after Spring Break in their junior year. By May 15th of their junior year, candidates must submit to the Program Advisory Committee a one- to two-page proposal and a preliminary bibliography. The Advisory Committee will inform candidates by June 1 whether they may proceed with the thesis and advise them about any changes that should be made in the focus or scope of the project. The summer before the senior year will be spent compiling a more detailed bibliography and preparing for the process of writing the thesis.

In their senior year, candidates will devote two semesters and the winter study period to their thesis (493-W31-494). By the end of the Fall semester, students will normally have undertaken substantial research and produced the draft of at least the first half of the project. At this point students should also have a clear sense of the work remaining for completion of the thesis. In the course of the Fall semester, students will also have chosen and met with a second reader for the project, who will provide additional guidance and read the final thesis. By the end of Winter Study, students should have completed a draft of the entire project. At the beginning of the Spring semester, the Program Advisory Committee will, together with the advisor, determine whether the project may continue as an Honors Thesis, or whether its first portions (COMP 493-W) will be graded as Independent Studies.

The second semester of independent thesis work will be spent revising as necessary. The completed thesis in its final form will be due one week before the last day of classes. At the end of the Spring term, the student will make a public presentation of the final project, to which members of the Advisory Committee will be specially invited.

Characteristics of the Thesis, Evaluation, and Major Credit

The topic of the thesis must be comparative and/or theoretical. It is also possible to write a thesis that consists of an original translation of a significant text or texts; in this case, a theoretical apparatus must accompany the translation. The complete thesis must be at least 50 and at most 75 pages in length, excluding the bibliography.
The advisor will assign the grades for the thesis courses (COMP 493-W-494); the Advisory Committee will determine whether a candidate will receive Honors, Highest Honors, or no honors.

For students who pursue an honors thesis, the total number of courses required for the major—including the thesis course (COMP 493-W-494)—is 12, i.e., one of the thesis courses may substitute for one elective.

STUDY ABROAD

The Program in Comparative Literature strongly urges its students to study abroad. Students who have Comparative Literature as a major should seriously consider study abroad in a country where their specialty language is spoken; they will likely be able to complete some of the specialty language courses required for the major during study abroad. Literary Studies students can also benefit from study abroad; literature courses from abroad are often candidates for credit as major electives.

COURSES

COMP 104(F) Introduction to World Theatre and Performance (Same as Theatre 104) (D)
(See under THEA 104 for full description.)

COMP 107 The Trojan War (Same as Classics 101) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under CLAS 101 for full description.)

COMP 108 Roman Literature: Foundations and Empires (Same as Classics 102) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under CLAS 102 for full description.)

COMP 111FS The Nature of Narrative (Same as English 120) (W)
This course examines the nature and workings of narrative using a wide range of texts chosen from different traditions, media, and genres. We will analyze literature by some of the world’s great writers (as well as visual texts from graphic novels to video games) to see what they have to teach us about narrative and language. At the same time we will also read a small selection of critical essays to help us broaden our idea of what literature can be and do. Readings will be drawn from the Chinese classics, the Christian Bible, and the works of Bashô, Woolf, Borges, Kundera, and others. The critical essays will also represent a range of different times, places, and schools. All readings will be in English, although we will discuss issues of translation, and those with foreign language skills are invited to make comparisons with the original where possible. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: regular attendance, ungraded creative project, short response assignments, two 5- to 7-page papers, and at least one paper rewrite.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 19). Preference given to students considering a major in Comparative Literature or Literary Studies and those who have studied a foreign language.

Hours: 9:55-11:10 TF 2:35-3:50 TF
First Semester: C. BOLTON
Second Semester: C. BOLTON

COMP 113 The Ancient Novel (Same as Classics 105) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under CLAS 105 for full description.)

COMP 117(F) Introduction to Cultural Theory (Same as English 117) (W)
(See under ENGL 117 for full description.)

COMP 134 Myth in Music (Same as Music 134) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W)
(See under MUS 134 for full description.)

COMP 139(F) Metafiction (Same as English 139) (W)
(See under ENGL 139 for full description.)

COMP 152 Japanese Film (Same as Japanese 152) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under JAPN 152 for full description.)

COMP 201(F) The Hebrew Bible (Same as Jewish Studies 201 and Religion 201)
(See under REL 201 for full description.)

COMP 203(F) Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature in Translation (Same as Russian 203)
(See under RUSS 203 for full description.)

COMP 204 Revolution and Its Aftermath: Russian Literature Since 1900 (Same as Russian 204) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under RUSS 204 for full description.)

COMP 205 The Latin-American Novel in Translation (Same as Spanish 205) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under RLSP 205 for full description.)

COMP 206(S) The Book of Job and Joban Literature (Same as Jewish Studies 206 and Religion 206) (W)
(See under REL 206 for full description.)

COMP 207Ti(S) Tolstoy: The Major Novels (Same as Russian 210T) (W)
(See under RUSS 210 for full description.)

COMP 208 Fatal Passions and Happy Fools: French Theater in the Age of Louis XIV (Same as French 208) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under RLFR 208 for full description.)

COMP 209 The Legend of the Wandering Jew (Same as Jewish Studies 209 and Religion 209) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under REL 209 for full description.)

COMP 210 Latina/o Language and Literature: Hybrid Voices in Contemporary Context (Same as American Studies 240, Latina/o Studies 240 and Linguistics 254) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (D)
(See under LATS 240 for full description.)

COMP 211 From Voltaire to Nietzsche (Same as German 210) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under GERM 210 for full description.)

COMP 212 Nordic Lights: Literary and Cultural Diversity in Modern Scandinavia (Same as Women's and Gender Studies 200) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (D)

Mythologized as the land of the aurora borealis and the midnight sun, Scandinavia's five distinct nations—Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland—are often mistakenly associated with blond-haired and blue-eyed uniformity. Modern Scandinavia, however, is a place of great social and cultural diversity. From medieval Viking sagas to contemporary Nordic rap, the Scandinavian literary tradition is rich in tales of global exploration, childhood imagination, sexual revolution, and multiracial confrontation. Through readings of nineteenth-century drama, twentieth-century novels, and twenty-first-century cinema, we will investigate a wide range of issues on class, ethnicity, and identity, including the indigenous reindeer-herding Sami people, Danish colonialism and the Greenlandic Inuit, Norwegian collaboration and resistance during World War II, and Nordic emigration (to North America) and immigration (from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East). Discussion will also focus on Scandinavia’s leadership in gender equality and sexual liberation, Scandinavian political isolation and integration (into both the UN and the EU), and the global effects of Nordic pop (ABBA to Björk), glamour (Greta Garbo to Helena Christensen), technology (Volvo to Nokia), and design (IKEA to H&M). Readings to include works by Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, Hans Christian Andersen, Karen Blixen, Astrid Lindgren, Hallåk Laxness, Reidar Jönsson, and Peter Hoëg. Films to include works by Ingmar Bergman, Lasse Hallström, Bille August, Colin Nutley, Lukas Moodysson, Josef Fares, and Tomas Vinterberg. All readings and discussions in English.

Format: seminar. Requirements: active participation, two short papers, an oral presentation, and a final paper.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 15 (expected: 15). Preference given to Comparative Literature and Women's and Gender Studies majors and those with compelling justification for admission.

MARTIN
COMP 213(S) Reading Jesus, Writing Gospels: Christian Origins in Context (Same as Classics 210 and Religion 210) (W)
(See under REL 210 for full description.) BUELL

COMP 214 Defining the African Diaspora (Same as Africana Studies 160 and English 251) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under AFR 160 for full description.) ROBOLIN

COMP 215 Reading Contemporary Drama, or Turn of This Century Drama (Same as Theatre 215) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under THEA 215 for full description.) NAAMAN

COMP 216 Protest Literature: Arab Writing Across Three Continents (Same as Arabic 216) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under ARAB 216 for full description.) NAAMAN

COMP 217 Ancient Wisdom Literature (Same as Classics 205, Jewish Studies 205 and Religion 205) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under REL 205 for full description.) DEKEL

COMP 218 Revolutionary African Literatures (Same as Africana Studies 140 and English 250) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under AFR 140 for full description.) ROBOLIN

COMP 220(F) Cultural Foundations: The Literature and History of Early China (Same as Chinese 224 and History 315) (D)
(See under CHIN 224 for full description.) NUGENT

COMP 223(F) Reading Films (Same as English 203)
(See under ENGL 203 for full description.) (Literary Genres)

COMP 224(S) Issues in Contemporary Japan through Literature and Film (Same as Japanese 224)
(See under JAPN 224 for full description.) KAGAYA

COMP 228(F) Modern Arabic Literature in Translation (Same as Arabic 228) (W) (D)
(See under ARAB 228 for full description.) NAAMAN

COMP 230 T Violent States, Violent Subjects: Nation-Building and Atrocity in 19th-Century Latin America (Same as Spanish 230T) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (D)
(See under RSLP 230 for full description.) FRENCH

COMP 231 T Postmodernism (Same as English 266T) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
(Not offered 2009-2010)
In one definition, postmodernism in art and literature is what you get when you combine modernism’s radical experimentation with pop culture’s easy appeal. This term has been used to describe works from Andy Warhol’s paintings of Campbell’s soup cans and Jean Baudrillard’s critical essays on Disneyland to Thomas Pynchon’s paranoid novel about postal conspiracy, *The Crying of Lot 49*. Theorists of the postmodern have argued that it represents not only a radical change in aesthetic sensibilities, but a fundamentally new relationship between art, language, and society. In this tutorial, we will read some of the most important theoretical essays defining the postmodern (essays which themselves often embrace this playful and sometimes ironic style), and we will pair them with artistic texts that are said to illustrate the features of postmodernism. The latter will be mainly novels and short stories from various countries, but one feature of this theory is a flattening of the distinction between high and low culture as well as between the written and the visual, so we will also examine examples from film, architecture, visual theory, and popular culture. Along the way we will ask whether global theoretical paradigms like postmodernism can help us understand other cultures better (by locating them within a single universal system), or whether this approach conceals important cultural differences. Texts will include essays by Jean Baudrillard, Fredric Jameson, Jean-François Lyotard, and others; novels and short stories by writers like Don DeLillo, Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino, and Murakami Haruki; painting and sculpture associated with Pop Art and Superflat; the architecture of Williamstown area museums, etc. Writing assignments will focus on reading the theoretical texts critically and applying their ideas to the artistic texts in creative and interesting ways. Open to sophomores as well as advanced students.

Format: tutorial. Requirements: After an introductory lecture meeting, students will meet with the instructor in pairs for approximately an hour each week; they will write a 5-page paper every other week (five in all), and respond to their partners’ papers in alternate weeks. Emphasis will be on understanding and engaging the criticism that we read, and comparing the critical and fictional texts creatively in a way that sheds light on both. Prerequisites: a 100-level literature course (Comparative Literature, English, etc.) and sophomore standing or higher, or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to students majoring in a discipline related to critical theory (or considering such a major) and those with a demonstrated interest in the material.

C. BOLTON

COMP 233 Introduction to Classical Arabic Literature (Same as Arabic 233) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
(See under ARAB 233 for full description.) VARGAS

COMP 234(F) Comedy/Tragedy (Same as English 235) (W)
(See under ENGL 235 for full description.) KLEINER

COMP 235 China on Screen (Same as Chinese 235) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under CHIN 235 for full description.) NUGENT

COMP 237(S) Gender and Desire 1200-1600 (Same as English 237 and Women’s and Gender Studies 237) (W) (D)
(See under ENGL 237 for full description.) KNOPP

COMP 241(F) Performing Race: From Shakespeare to Spike Lee (Same as Africana Studies 241 and Theatre 241) (D)
(See under THEA 241 for full description.) P. ERICKSON

COMP 242 T Reading and Writing the Body (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

Am I a body, or do I have one? The tradition of favoring thought over physical experience has long informed, and limited, our sense of self as human beings. While some writers maintain that the creative impulse is a gift of the muse and that it is rooted entirely in the mind or spirit, there are those for whom the human body frequently takes a central role in the process of creation and as a subject of artistic inquiry or contemplation. In their writing, these authors tell a very different tale with regard to the literary process, and it is focused on the primacy of the physical experience. This course will consider the work of, among others, Maupassant, Kafka, Tanizaki, Tolstoy, Dinesen, Bachel, MandeLstam, and Atwood in order to examine how writers from different cultural and aesthetic perspectives either present or use the body as a vehicle of expression. We will also consider other areas of study that are intimately related to the physical experience, such as asceticism, illness, prostitution, and disability, and occasionally turn our attention to other art forms.

Format: tutorial. Requirements: weekly one-hour sessions with the instructor and a fellow student. Every other week the student will write and present orally a 5- to 6-page paper on the assigned readings for that week. On alternate weeks the student will write and present a 2-page critique of the fellow student’s paper. No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to majors in Comparative Literature.

VAN DE STADT

COMP 243(S) formerly 252 Modern Women Writers and the City (Same as Women’s and Gender Studies 252)

Ambivalence has always been a vital part of literary responses to city life. Whether they praise the city or blame it, women writers react to the urban environment in a significantly different way from men. While male writers have often emphasized alienation and strangeness, women writers have celebrated the mobility and public life of the city as liberating. We will look at issues of women’s work, class politics, sexual freedom or restriction, rituals of consumption, the conservation of remembrance of architecture, and community-building in cities like London, New York, Berlin, Paris. We will examine novels and short stories about the modern city by writers as diverse as Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein, Anzia Yezierska, Ann Petry, Jean Rhys, Marguerite Duras, Margaret Drabble, Ntozake Shange, Verena Stefan and Humma Lahiri and Edwidge Danticat. We will consider theoretical approaches to urban spaces by feminists (Beatrix Colomina, Elizabeth Wilson), architectural historians (Christine Boyer) and anthropologists and sociologists (Janet Abu-Lughod, David Silbey, Michael Sorkin). Several contemporary films will be discussed. All readings in English.

Format: lecture and discussion. Requirements: two short papers and a 100-level English course. "Enrollment limit: 25 (expected: 20)."

Hour: 1:10-2:25 MR DRUXES
COMP 244 Helen, Desire and Language (Same as Classics 224 and Women’s and Gender Studies 224) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (See under CLAS 224 for full description.) HOPPIN

COMP 248(S) The Modern Theatre: Plays and Performance (Same as English 234 and Theatre 248) (See under THEA 248 for full description.) BAKER-WHITE and ERICKSON

COMP 250 From Adam to Noah: Literary Imagination and the Primeval History in Genesis (Same as Jewish Studies 207 and Religion 207) (Not offered 2009-2010) (See under REL 207 for full description.) DEKEL

COMP 252(F) The Masks of Japanese Literature (Same as Japanese 252) (D) (See under JAPN 252 for full description.)

COMP 254 On the Outside Looking In (Same as Japanese 266) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (See under JAPN 266 for full description.)

COMP 255 Love and Death in Modern Japanese Literature (Same as Japanese 255) (Not offered 2009-2010) (D) (See under JAPN 255 for full description.)

COMP 256(S) Crises and Critiques: The Literature and Intellectual History of Early 20th Century China (Same as Chinese 251 and History 215T) (W) (D) (See under CHIN 251 for full description.)

COMP 259T Adultery in the Nineteenth-Century Novel (Same as English 261T and Women’s and Gender Studies 259T) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (See under CHIN 261T for full description.)

COMP 260 Reading Reading: An Introduction to the Qur’an and Islam (Same as Religion 230) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (See under REL 230 for full description.) DARRROW

COMP 261 Japanese Theatre and its Contemporary Context (Same as Japanese 260) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (See under JAPN 260 for full description.) KAGAYA

COMP 262 Outlaws and Underworlds: Arabic Literature of the Margins (Same as Arabic 262) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (See under ARAB 262 for full description.) NAAMAN

COMP 264 Japanese Literature and the End of the World (Same as Japanese 254) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (See under JAPN 254 for full description.) C. BOLTON

COMP 265 The Interaction of Three Religions and Cultures in Early Modern Spain (Same as Spanish 271) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (See under RSLP 271 for full description.) ROUHI

COMP 266 Confession and Deception in Japanese Literature (Same as Japanese 256) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (See under JAPN 256 for full description.) C. BOLTON

COMP 268(F) Latino/o Theatre and Performance, 1950-2000 (Same as American Studies 235, Latina/or Studies 235, Theatre 235 and Women’s and Gender Studies 235) (D) (See under LAT/ 235 for full description.) JOTTAR

COMP 270(S) Performing Greece and Rome (Same as Classics 262 and Theatre 262) (See under CLAS 262 for full description.) HOPPIN and BUCKY

COMP 271 Religion and the Modern Literary Imagination (Same as English 271 and Religion 271) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (See under REL 271 for full description.) HAMMERSCHLAG

COMP 272 Literature of the Americas: Transnational Dialogues on Race, Violence and Nation-Building (Same as American Studies 256, Latino/a Studies 272 and Spanish 272) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (D) (This course will present some of the methodologies and issues involved in studying the literature of the American hemisphere, with particular emphasis on the dialogue between US and Spanish American writers in the 19th century. Then as now, some of Latin America’s most important intellectuals were profoundly affected by the experience of living in the US, and their influential formulations of Latin American identity reflect their ambivalence towards the northern neighbor that was both enviably successful and alarmingly imperialistic with regard to the rest of the hemisphere. Reading Domingo F. Sarmiento, José Martí, and other Spanish American authors in dialogue with Emerson, Whitman and the like, we will examine the various and intertwined ways in which American writers from both North and South of the Rio Grande addressed questions of fundamental importance to the new nations of the Americas, including the legacies of slavery and colonial violence, the scope of democracy and women’s participation in it, the link between geography and national identity, and the nature of inter-American relations. This course fulfills the EDI requirement by challenging students to engage in a comparative study of the US and Latin American societies, focusing on the ways that political events and decisions in the US have affected Latin American lives and the ways that Latin American writers (and their audiences) have viewed the US. Conducted in English. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: regular class attendance and participation, three 5- to 7-pages papers and shorter writing assignments. No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 19). (Cultural Studies))

COMP 275 Russian and Soviet Film in Retrospect (Same as Russian 275) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (See under RUSS 275 for full description.) CASSIDAY

COMP 278 Premodern Japanese Literature and Performance (Same as Japanese 276) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (See under JAPN 276 for full description.) KAGAYA

COMP 301 Word Virus: Cultural Theory after the Linguistic Turn (Same as Linguistics 301 and Religion 301) (Not offered 2009-2010) (See under REL 301 for full description.) JOSEPHSON

COMP 302T Latino Writing: Literature by U.S. Hispanics (Same as Spanish 306) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (See under RSLP 306 for full description.) BELL-VILLADA

COMP 303 Cities of the Anglophone Chinese Imagination (Same as American Studies 305, Asian Studies 305 and English 374) (Not offered 2009-2010) (D) (See under AMST 305 for full description.) WANG
COMP 304T(S)  German Studies, 1830-1900 (Same as German 302T) (W)
(See under GERK 302 for full description.)
B. KIEFFER

COMP 305  Dostoevsky and His Age (Same as Russian 305) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under RUS 305 for full description.)
CASSIDAY

COMP 306  Tolstoy and His Age (Same as Russian 306) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under RUS 306 for full description.)
VAN DE STADT

COMP 307T(F)  From the “Wende” till Today in Literature, Film, and Politics (Same as German 305 and Women’s and Gender Studies 305) (W)
(See under GER 305 for full description.)
DRUXES

COMP 308  Everyday Life in Literature and Film (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
To bring the all too familiar everyday to our attention, artists and writers have made it strange. What happens when we view everyday life from elsewhere? While everyday culture has often been experienced as repressive and alienating in modern Western societies, a new importance assigned to everyday life made it liberating in Japan during the 20th century and in contemporary China. The contours of the everyday are delightfully vague, and it always exceeds theorizing. For instance, is the street the home or the home the street? Many lived largely in institutions that regulate our daily lives, or is it lived between and outside them? Everyday objects and commodities like the potato, the postcard, the car, clothes, housing, etc., will be analyzed. Fiction by Leo Tolstoy, Franz Kafka, Georges Perec, Manil Suri, Haruki Murakami, and Banana Yoshimoto. Films by Chantal Akerman, Pedro Almodovar, Benoît Jacquot, and Pierre Jeunet. Art projects that transform the everyday will also be discussed, including those of Sophie Calle, Mary Kelley, Merrie Lademann Uekes, and Christine Hill. Short theoretical excerpts from Freud, Krauss, Goffman, Lorde, and Bourdieu. All works not originally in English will be read in English translation.
Format: seminar. Evaluation will be based on two short oral reports on everyday objects and their history, two 3- to 5-page papers, and a 10- to 12-page final paper or creative project.
Prerequisites: one 200-level literature course. Enrollment limit: 20 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to students majoring in Comparative Literature and Literary Studies.

COMP 309T  Exile, Homecoming and the Promised Land (Same as Jewish Studies 491T and Religion 289T) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W) (D)
(See under REL 289 for full description.)
HAMMERSCHLAG

COMP 311  US-China Foreign Cultural Relations, 1900-1950 (Same as American Studies 311, Asian Studies 311 and English 334) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
Foreign relations between the United States and China, particularly on the level of culture, have emerged as a vital, if poorly understood, topic in recent years. This course attempts to historicize this interest by exploring a period of intense US-Sino cultural exchange from the turn of the 20th century to the start of the Cold War. We begin from the perspective of cultural comparison: how did major American and Chinese authors respectively understand their place in the world? How did they define and narrate issues such as industrialism, populism, and modernity? How did they perceive their Chinese or American “Other,” and develop new cultural forms to negotiate their differences? We will present a variety of approaches to this section with major texts by such authors as John Dos Passos, Pearl Buck, Amy Lowell, Jack London, and (China) Lu Xun, Shen Congwen, Mao Dun, Zhou Zuoren, Yu Dafu. Then, we proceed from an angle of cultural connection by exploring authors who directly engaged and experienced both cultures, often building bridges between the two. How did American writers in China use their time abroad to challenge their own culture, and vice versa? What types of bonds did US and Chinese writers develop during this period? How did contact and collaboration between these two cultures lead to new forms of literary and social critique? In this section, we will read cultural works by (US) Pearl Buck, Agnes Smedley, Edgar Snow, W.H. Auden, and (China) Lin Yutang, Lao She, Hu Shi, Zhang Ailing. Overall, the goal of this course will be to gain a better understanding of our current moment of US-Sino contact by examining a period in which most of our present ideas of the “Other” took shape and crystallized. No reading knowledge of Chinese is required; all readings in Chinese will be offered in English translation.
Format: discussion/seminar. Requirements: active class participation, weekly response papers, and one final research paper.
No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 25 (expected: 20). Preference given to students majoring in Comparative Literature or Literary Studies and who have previously studied Chinese.

SO

COMP 312(F)  Global English/Global Chinese: Cultural Contexts (Same as Chinese 312)
How did English become the world’s most powerful spoken language? How did Chinese become the world’s most commonly spoken language? Will Chinese surpass English as the world’s lingua franca be determined by the rise of Chinese as global languages? What is the relationship between the political and social power of a language, and its prevalence across the world? This course attempts to offer some answers to these questions by reading a number of important modern American, British, and Chinese cultural and literary texts that explore issues of language, power, and the political. We will specifically examine four contexts: late 19th century American literature such as Huck Finn and A Hazard of New Fortunes that debate the idea of English as a national language versus English as a cosmopolitan language; British colonial literary texts of the early 20th century such as Kim and Passage to India that posit the idea of a global English; Chinese cultural texts from the mid-20th century that address the issue of Chinese as a potential “world” language and its relationship (and resistance) to English as a dominant language; and finally, our present moment in which English and Chinese have begun to intermix in a number of new and transnational cultural and media forms, such as novels by Timothy Mo and installations by Shu Bing. Ultimately, this course asks, how do languages become powerful on a global scale, and what language(s) will become most common and influential in the 21st century?
Format: discussion/seminar. Requirements: active class participation, one short paper, and one long paper.
Hour: 2:35-3:50 MR

COMP 313  Cervantes’ Don Quixote (Same as English 308 and Spanish 303) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under RLSP 303 for full description.)
ROUHI

COMP 329(F)  Contemporary World Novel (Same as English 339) (See under ENGL 379 for full description.) (Literary Genres)
LIMON

COMP 338  Theorizing Popular Culture: Latinas/os and the Dynamics of the Everyday (Same as American Studies 339 and Latina/o Studies 338) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W) (D)
(See under LATS 338 for full description.)
CEPEDA

COMP 340(F)  Literature and Psychoanalysis (Same as English 363) (W)
The British psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott once wrote: “It is a joy to be hidden, and a disaster not to be found.” This course will explore the many ways in which writers explore this paradox, examining in the process several main strands of psychoanalytic thought in relation to literature that precedes, accompanies, and follows them in history, and experimenting with our own writing. Approximately the first two-thirds of the course will involve close readings of theoretical and literary texts, which will be shared in a seminar format. In the latter portion of the course, students will work with each other and with the instructor on analyzing the processes of reading and writing as they produce original psychoanalytic readings of texts of their choice. All readings in English.
Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: active engagement with the material and with each other; reading journal; the equivalent of two shorter and one longer paper.
Prerequisites: one previous course in either Comparative Literature or English, or permission of instructor. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 19). Preference given to Comparative Literature students.
Hour: 2:35-3:50 MR

COMP 343(S)  Modern Critical Theory (Same as English 373) (See under ENGL 373 for full description.)
SOKOLSKY

COMP 344  From Hervenetics to Post-Coloniality (Same as Religion 304) (Not offered 2009-2010) (D)
(See under REL 304 for full description.) (Literature and Theory)
DREYFUS

COMP 346  Questioning the Cultural Self in Literature (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (W)
Cultural encounters entail a questioning of identity, values and worldview. As the familiar gives way to the unknown, issues of knowledge and power can begin to influence the interaction between different groups. In this course we will examine texts dealing with differences in language, religion, race, class, gender and citizenship that lead to the formation of allegiances and rivalries. What constitutes a cultural group? How is difference determined? What is the nature of the
This course will consider different kinds of works (poetry, memoirs, fiction, essay) written by authors forced to live in exile as a consequence of political and/or religious persecution. Our point of departure will be the paradigmatic expulsion and subsequent diaspora of the Jews of Spain and Portugal. Most assignments, however, will be drawn from twentieth century texts written during, or in the wake of, the massive destruction and displacements brought about by the Spanish Civil War and World War II. How is the life lost portrayed? How are the concepts of home and the past interwined? What kind of life or literature are possible for the deracinated survivor? We will discuss the role of writing and remembrance in relation to political history, as well as in the context of individual survival. Readings might include works by Nuño de Reinoso, León, Cernuda, Semprún, Benjamin, Nancy, and Blanchot.

Format: seminar. Requirements: active participation in class discussions, oral presentation, several short writing assignments, a midterm paper and a final paper.

Prerequisite: Comparative Literature 111 or an equivalent English course. Enrollment limit: 20 (expected: 20). Preference given to majors in Comparative Literature.

S. FOX

COMP 353(S) Writing the City: Beirut and Cairo in Contemporary Arabic Literature (Same as Arabic 353)
(See under ARAB 353 for full description.) NAAMAN

COMP 359 Latinas/as and the Media: From Production to Consumption (Same as American Studies 346 and Latina/o Studies 346) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (D)
(See under LATS 346 for full description.) CEPEDA

COMP 369 Race, Gender, Space (Same as African Studies 400, English 365, and Women's and Gender Studies 400) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
(See under AFR 400 for full description.) ROBOLIN

COMP 370 Displaying, Collecting and Preserving the Other: Museums and French Imperialism (Same as African Studies 370 and French 370) (Not offered 2009-2010)
(See under RLFR 370 for full description.) PIEPRZAK

COMP 375 New Asian American, African American, Native American, and Latina/o Writing (Same as African Studies 402, American Studies 403, English 375 and Latina/o Studies 403) (Not offered 2009-2010) (D)
(See under AMST 403 for full description.) WANG

COMP 401(F) Senior Seminar: Literature and the Law (Same as English 449 and Legal Studies 399)
In this seminar, we will examine the complex relationship between literature and the law from three different perspectives. First, we will look at the law as a genre of literature by reading several works of legal writing, such as the Code of Hammurabi, sections of the Old Testament, and the Constitution of the United States. Second, we will read literary and visual works that rely on legal practice, forensic analysis, or trial procedure to structure their narrative, including Aeschylus' Oresteia, Kafka's The Trial, Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov, and Court TV. Third, we will integrate our study of these two by reading theory by Freud, Derrida, Foucault, and others, on the cultural significance of the law, as well as the co-evolution of legal consciousness and literary craft. Format: seminar. Evaluation will be based on thoughtful and timely preparation for class, several shorter writing assignments, and a final research project.
Prerequisites: a 300-level literature course or permission of instructor. Enrollment limit: 15 (expected: 10). Preference given to students majoring in Comparative Literature and Literary Studies.
Hour: 1-10-2:25 MR CASSIDAY

COMP 401 Senior Seminar: Sublime Confusion: A Survey of Critical Theory (Same as English 370) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)
What does it mean to have a theory of literature? Can something as vital, as varied, and as vague as art or fiction ever be reduced to anything like a science? We will investigate these questions with a survey of art and literary theory that takes up a cross section of texts from classical times to the present. We will focus particular attention on the aesthetic quality called "the sublime"—a category that has often been constituted in opposition to "beauty" to express the power and the attraction of art that is not beautiful, but whose frightening, confusing, even threatening aspect is somehow thrilling or appealing. This idea interested early critics of taste, such as Montaigne, Diderot, Burke, Kant, Schiller, Shklovsky, Eichenbaum, I.A. Richards, Barthes, Derrida, Lyotard, and others. We will find and discuss illustrations drawn from literature, visual media, and contemporary culture.
Format: seminar. Requirements: active class participation, short writing assignments, a polished oral presentation, and a final 15-page paper.
Prerequisites: a course in critical (art or literary) theory or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 16 (expected: 16). Priority will be given to seniors majoring in Comparative Literature, Literary Studies, or a related discipline, and those with a demonstrated interest in critical theory.
C. BOLTON

COMP 397(F), 398(S) Independent Study

COMP 493(F)-W31-494(S) Senior Thesis—Comparative Literature

COMP 497(F), 498(S) Independent Study

LIT 493(F)-W31-494(S) Senior Thesis—Literary Studies