Comparative Literature (CLT)

Major and Minor in Comparative Literature

Department of Cultural Analysis and Theory, College of Arts and Sciences
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Minors of particular interest to students majoring in Comparative Literature: Africana Studies (AFS), Art History (ARH), Cinema and Cultural Studies (CCS), Classics (CLS), English (EGL), French (FRN), German (GER), History (HIS), Italian (ITL), Interdisciplinary Arts (LIA), Japanese Studies (JNH), Judaic Studies (JDS), Korean Studies (KOR), Music (MUS), Spanish (SPN), Theatre Arts (THR), Women's Studies (WST)

Department Information - Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies

The Department of Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies integrates the efforts of a number of humanities programs centering on comparative literature, language, and culture. In addition to the major in Comparative Literature, described below, the Department offers major programs in Cinema and Cultural Studies as well as Humanities. Requirements for these programs appear under each program title elsewhere in the alphabetical listings of Approved Majors, Minors, and Programs. Further information is available in the Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies Office.

The Major in Comparative Literature

The Comparative Literature major allows students to study literature across national, linguistic, and disciplinary boundaries, focusing on the global movement of people, ideas and cultures and stressing the ability to read literature in a language other than English. Students have the opportunity to examine literature’s relation to more recent forms of communication, such as cinema, digital media, and new media, and to cultural and intellectual phenomena including colonialism, postcolonialism, diaspora, migration, urbanization, feminism, and queer studies. The goal of interdisciplinary and comparative approach is to equip students with cultural literacy so that they may exercise global citizenship within a broad historical perspective. The program of study is organized around core courses in Comparative Literature, which students supplement with courses relevant to their interests in the Department of Cultural Analysis and Theory’s majors in Cinema and Cultural Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies, as well as in relevant outside programs and departments. This major is ideal for students seeking a flexible, yet focused program of study that will allow them to explore literature’s relation to pressing social, cultural, and historical issues.

Requirements for the Major in Comparative Literature

The interdisciplinary major in Comparative Literature leads to the Bachelor of Arts degree. All courses offered for the major must be taken for a letter grade. All upper-division courses offered for the major must be passed with a grade of C or higher.

Completion of the major requires 33 credits.

A. Five core courses:

1. Two introductory courses:
   • CLT 101
   • CLT 109 or CLT 121 or CLT 123

2. Theory Course / Upper-Division Writing Requirement:
   • CLT 301 (Note: For students whose first major is in Spanish Language and Literature, SPN 312 can be accepted for this requirement.)

   Upper-Division Writing Requirement:

   For all majors, the term paper for required course CLT 301 is evaluated by the instructor for its quality of writing. Students whose writing is satisfactory fulfill this requirement with that paper. Students who do not fulfill the requirement in CLT 301 must submit to the major advisor a portfolio of papers written for subsequent upper-division courses taken for the major no later than the first semester of senior standing, and must achieve an evaluation of S (satisfactory) on the portfolio. For further details, consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies. CLT 301 also satisfies the Stony Brook Curriculum learning outcome WRTD. Students should consult with the department advisor to ensure that their plan for completing the Upper Division Writing Requirement is consistent with university graduation requirements for General Education. Students completing the Stony Brook Curriculum (SBC) must complete a course that satisfies the “Write Effectively within One’s Discipline” (WRTD) learning objective to graduate. The Upper Division Writing Requirement is consistent in most cases with the SBC learning outcomes for WRTD.

3. Senior Project:
   • A directed study project (CLT 487 or, for students in the honors program, CLT 495) for graduating majors, to be arranged with the major advisor and an instructor of the student’s choice no later than the end of the first semester of senior standing.
4. Literature in the Original Language: at least one course from B (Area Electives) or C (Comparative Electives) below should fulfill this requirement for a course in literature in its original language (other than English).

B. Area Electives: three courses beyond the introductory level that explore literature of a specific regional or national area, chosen from the following:


Note: Most of the upper-division electives in other departments have prerequisites. Plan your program of study with this in mind and, if desired, consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies for help.

C. Comparative Electives: four upper-division courses, at least two from Group 1.

Group 1 (Literature): Courses that examine literature according to comparative methods (feminist and queer theories, colonialism, migration, or diaspora, race and ethnicity, cultural studies, etc.)


Group 2 (Other Forms of Cultural Production): Courses that explore other forms of cultural production (cinema, visual art, music, performance, etc.).

- AMR 390, AMR 395, AMR 397, ARH 315, ARH 322, ARH 324, ARH 329, ARH 330, ARH 333, ARH 336, ARH 344, ARH 345, ARH 346, ARH 347, CCS 301, CCS 311, CCS 312, CCS 313, CCS 324/MUS 324, CCS 390, CCS 391, CCS 392, CCS 393, CCS 394, CCS 395, CCS 396, CCS 397, CDT 317, CDT 318, CDT 341, CLT 335, HUI 338, MUS 300, MUS 307, MUS 308, MUS 310, MUS 311, MUS 314, MUS 320, SPN 405, SPN 420, THR 312, THR 313, THR 315, THR 316, THR 334, THR 344, THR 354, THR 403

Note: Most of the upper-division electives in other departments have prerequisites. Plan your program of study with this in mind and, if needed, consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies for help.

Honors Program

Students who have maintained a grade point average of 3.50 in the major and 3.00 overall may seek a degree in Comparative Literature with honors.

Honors students must use CLT 495 to fulfill their senior project requirement.

The honors program requires one of the following options in addition to the requirements of the major.

- A second course in literature in the original language used for Requirement 4, Literature in the Original Language.
- Study of a language other than that used for Requirement 4 through the intermediate level.
- Fulfillment of the requirements for the minor in a cognate discipline (to be approved by the major advisor; minors in language or literature recommended).

Requirements for the Minor

The minor in Comparative Literature is designed especially to interest students majoring in a foreign language, English, and other humanities fields. It provides a broad overview of the theory and techniques of comparative study, and an opportunity for the student to bring comparative breadth to his or her major field of study.

Completion of the minor requires 18 credits.

A. Three core courses:

- CLT 101
- CLT 301 (Note: For students whose first major is in Spanish Language and Literature, SPN 312 can be accepted towards this requirement)
- Literature in the original language: at least at least one course from B (Area Electives) or C (Comparative Electives) below should fulfill this requirement for a course in literature in its original language (other than English).

B. Area Electives: two courses beyond the introductory level that explore literature of a specific regional or national area, chosen from the following:

Note: Most of the upper-division electives in other departments have prerequisites. Plan your program of study with this in mind and, if needed, consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies for help.

C. Comparative Electives: two upper-division courses, at least one from Group 1.

Group 1 (Literature): Courses that examine literature according to comparative methods (feminist and queer theories, colonialism, migration, or diaspora, race and ethnicity, cultural studies, etc.)


Group 2 (Other Forms of Cultural Production): Courses that explore other forms of cultural production (cinema, visual art, music, performance, etc.).

AMR 390, AMR 395, AMR 397, ARH 315, ARH 322, ARH 324, ARH 329, ARH 330, ARH 333, ARH 336, ARH 344, ARH 345, ARH 346, ARH 347, CCS 301, CCS 311, CCS 312, CCS 313, CCS 324/MUS 324, CCS 390, CCS 391, CCS 392, CCS 393, CCS 394, CCS 395, CCS 396, CCS 397, CDT 317, CDT 318, CDT 341, CLT 335, HUI 338, MUS 300, MUS 307, MUS 308, MUS 310, MUS 311, MUS 314, MUS 320, SPN 405, SPN 420, THR 312, THR 313, THR 315, THR 316, THR 334, THR 344, THR 354, THR 403

Note: Most of the upper-division electives in other departments have prerequisites. Plan your program of study with this in mind and, if needed, consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies for help.

Sample Course Sequence for the Major in Comparative Literature
A course planning guide for this major may be found here.

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CLL

Classical Literature

CLL 215: Classical Mythology
An introduction to ancient Greek religion, literature, and art. Special emphasis will be given to the presentation of myth in Classical Greek literature as well as to the influence of classical mythology on later literature, art, and philosophy. Not for credit in addition to CLS 215.

Advisory Prerequisite: One course in literature
DEC: 1
SBC: HUM
3 credits

CLL 315: Gender and Sexuality in Ancient Greek Literature
This course offers a comparative overview of the ways in which the roles of men and women were depicted in the literature and thought of ancient Greece. Major issues will include: the shift from matriarchal to patriarchal pantheons, sanctioned and unsanctioned homoeroticism, the sorceress and the hysteric as dominant tropes in the mythology of the period, and the role of women in the polis, among others. This course is offered as both CLL 315 and WST 315.

Prerequisite: one D.E.C. G or HUM course
DEC: 1
SBC: HUM
3 credits

CLS

Classics

CLS 113: Greek and Latin Literature in Translation
Historical and analytical study of the development of classical Greek and Latin literature. Extensive readings in translation include works illustrating epic, lyric, drama, history, satire, and criticism.

DEC: B
SBC: HUM
3 credits

CLS 225: The Classical Tradition
The literature of Greece and Rome has had a profound impact on the West in terms of Philosophy, Literature, Political Theory, and Art. The course will explore the writings of Greece and Rome and show how they affected Western literature and thought. Authors will include Homer and Hesiod, and Greek tragedians Thucidides, Virgil, and Ovid.

DEC: HFA+
SBC: GLO, HUM
3 credits

CLS 447: Directed Readings in Classics
Intensive study of a particular author, period, or genre of Greek and Latin literature in translation under close faculty supervision. May be repeated.
Prerequisite: Permission of instructor
1-6 credits

CLS 475: Undergraduate Teaching Practicum
Work with a faculty member as an assistant in one of the faculty member's regularly scheduled classes. The student is required to attend all the classes, do all the regularly assigned work, and meet with the faculty member at regularly scheduled times to discuss the intellectual and pedagogical matters relating to the course.

SBC: EXP+
3 credits, S/U grading

CLT

Comparative Literature

CLT 101: Introduction to World Literatures
A survey of world literatures from an array of cultures, eras, languages, places, and traditions. This global sampling of literatures focuses on the exploration of significant historical moments and phenomena, and their influence on literary and cultural production.

DEC: B
SBC: GLO, HUM
3 credits

CLT 109: Philosophy and Literature in Social Context (III)
The role of literature and philosophy in understanding and critically assessing personal experience and social life. The links among literary texts, philosophical issues, and political and social commitments are explored. Topics include the relations between language and experience, the role of philosophical thinking through literary texts, and the significance of literary expression in different cultural and historical situations. This course is offered as both CLT 109 and PHI 109.

DEC: B
SBC: HUM
3 credits

CLT 121: Death and Afterlife in Literature
Through discussion of representative contemporary and classical texts, this course addresses the topic of how human beings have chosen to live with the one certainty of their existence, its eventual conclusion in death, and how various images of afterlife or denial of its possibility have shaped those choices.

DEC: B
SBC: CER, HUM
3 credits

CLT 122: Images of Women in Literature
An historical and intercultural examination of selected representations of women in world literature ranging from classical literature to modern evocations of women's changing social roles and the rise of feminine self-consciousness.

DEC: B
SBC: HUM
3 credits

CLT 123: Sexuality in Literature
An exploration of the expression and interpretation of sexual experience in literature and culture, through discussion of selections from world literature and art, both classic and contemporary. Themes include temptation and gratification, desire and fulfillment, and how societies shape gender roles and deviance and set limits on sexual representation in literature and art.

DEC: B
SBC: CER, HUM
3 credits

CLT 200: Literature Beyond European Traditions
A survey of the major themes and forms of non-Western literature, such as Asian, Indian, and African. May be repeated as topic changes.

Advisory Prerequisite: WRT 102
DEC: J
SBC: GLO
3 credits

CLT 221: Cross-Cultural Encounters
Introduction to the process and effects of the encounter of two or more previously separate cultures, illustrated by study of historical or contemporary instances of such encounters, and drawing from the art, music, theatre, literature, philosophy or religion of the
selected cultures. May be repeated as the topic changes.

**Prerequisite:** one D.E.C. B or HUM course  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 235: American Pluralism in Film and Literature**

A thorough examination of issues central to American history for nearly two centuries. How "others"--the Irish, Italians, African Americans, Latinos, and people from cultures outside Western Europe--have been portrayed in American literature and film. Readings include slave narratives from the 17th and 18th centuries and literary texts from the 19th and 20th centuries; films from the last 100 years are included. Particular emphasis on the historical period from the Civil War to the present.

**DEC:** K  
**SBC:** USA  
**3 credits**

**CLT 266: The 20th-Century Novel**

Major works and developments in the modern and contemporary novel. This course is offered as both CLT 266 and EGL 266.

**Prerequisite:** WRT 102 or equivalent  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HUM  
**3 credits**

**CLT 301: Theory of Literature**

An introduction to the different modes of analyzing literature by periods, ideas, traditions, genres, and aesthetic theories. Stress is placed on classical theory and on developments in the 20th century.

**Prerequisite:** U3 or U4 standing  
**Advisory Prerequisites:** Two courses in comparative literature  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+, SPK, WRTD  
**3 credits**

**CLT 334: Other Literary Genres**

Historical and analytical study of such literary genres as satire, fable, romance, epistle, saga, allegory, etc. Semester Supplements to this Bulletin contain description when course is offered. May be repeated as the topic changes.

**Prerequisite:** U3 or U4 standing  
**Advisory Prerequisites:** Two courses in literature  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 335: Interdisciplinary Study of Film**

An inquiry into the aesthetics, history, and theory of film as it relates principally to literature but also to disciplines such as art, music, psychology, and cultural history. May be repeated as the topic changes.

**Prerequisite:** one D.E.C. B or HUM course and one course from the following: CCS 101, CCS 201, CLL 215, CLT 235, HUF 211, HUG 221, HUI 231, HUR 241, THR 117  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 361: Literature and Society**

An inquiry, interdisciplinary in nature, into the relationship between the events and materials of political and social history and their effect on the form and content of the literature of a period. Also subsumed under the rubric Literature and Society is the topic Literature and Psychology. May be repeated as the topic changes.

**Prerequisite:** U3 or U4 standing  
**Advisory Prerequisites:** Two courses in literature  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 362: Literature and Ideas**

An inquiry into the primary writings and significant documents in the history of ideas and their effect on the form and content of the literature of a period. May be repeated as the topic changes.

**Prerequisite:** U3 or U4 standing  
**Advisory Prerequisites:** Two courses in literature  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 363: Literature and the Arts**

An inquiry into the aesthetic milieu (including the plastic arts, theatre, and music) and its relationship to the form and content of the literature of a period. Semester Supplements to this Bulletin contain description when course is offered. May be repeated as the topic changes.

**Prerequisite:** U3 or U4 standing  
**Advisory Prerequisites:** Two courses in literature  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 371: Literature and Justice (III)**

This course focuses on the theme of justice in literature and investigates the relation of literature to the law and to philosophical accounts of justice. Readings include literary texts centered on questions of justice, fairness, and moral agency, as well as theoretical works that analyze the role of literature in legal education and judicial decision-making. This course is offered as both CLT 371 and PHI 371.

**Prerequisite:** one D.E.C. B or HUM course; U3 or U4 status  
**DEC:** G  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 391: African Comparative Literature**

Intensive study of multiple African traditions through their history, culture, and literature. The course will insist particularly on novels that address the shifting boundaries of the African continent, both in terms of ideology and of geo-political reality. As such, Ancient Egyptian texts will be confronted with literary productions from Classical Romance culture, and with slave narratives, to address the way through which literature is influenced by the general politics of mobility.

**Prerequisite:** one D.E.C. B or HUM course and one lower-division course from one of the following subject designators: CLT, CCS, or EGL  
**DEC:** J  
**SBC:** HFA+  
**3 credits**

**CLT 392: Multicultural Comparative Literature**

This course will examine the various strategies deployed by U.S. writers to incorporate languages and dialects other than English and non-W.A.S.P. cultural experience into their literary work. In their different ways, these authors celebrate the intellectual diversity of the U.S. and resist the temptations of monolingual culture.
Prerequisite: one D.E.C. B or HUM course and one lower-division course from one of the following subject designators: CLT, CCS, or EGL

**DEC:** K
**SBC:** HFA+
3 credits

**CLT 393: European Comparative Literature**

European literature developed through constant interaction across frontiers rather than through discrete national histories. Poetry, fiction, and drama in every nation were heavily influenced by those of other nations, which they helped shape in their turn. The course examines this reciprocal impact on different genres in different countries across the centuries.

Prerequisite: one D.E.C. B or HUM course and one lower-division course from one of the following subject designators: CLT, CCS, or EGL

**DEC:** 1
**SBC:** HFA+
3 credits

**CLT 394: Asian Comparative Literature**

This course is an overview of the development of Asian literature and thoughts, spanning across the early 20th century to the present. By covering short stories, novels, and poems from Asian traditions, such as China, Taiwan, Japan, and Korea, the course will examine how modernity, coloniality, and war contribute to the shaping of national, and cultural identities. A comparative study of narratives from the various traditions will be engaged to explore the influence and implications of social categories such as gender, class, race, and ethnicity.

Prerequisite: one D.E.C. B or HUM course and one lower-division course from one of the following subject designators: CLT, CCS, or EGL

**DEC:** J
**SBC:** GLO, HFA+
3 credits

**CLT 475: Undergraduate Teaching Practicum I**

Work with a faculty member as an assistant in one of the faculty member's regularly scheduled classes. The student is required to attend all the classes, do all the regularly assigned work, and meet with the faculty member at regularly scheduled times to discuss the intellectual and pedagogical matters relating to the course.

Prerequisites: U4 standing; permission of instructor and chairperson

**SBC:** EXP+
3 credits, S/U grading

**CLT 476: Undergraduate Teaching Practicum II**

Work with a faculty member as an assistant in one of the faculty member's regularly scheduled classes. Students assume greater responsibility in such areas as leading discussions and analyzing results of tests that have already been graded. Students may not serve as teaching assistants in the same course twice.

Prerequisites: CLT 475; permission of instructor and chairperson

**SBC:** EXP+
3 credits, S/U grading

**CLT 487: Independent Reading and Research**

Intensive reading and research on a special topic undertaken with close faculty supervision. May be repeated.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor and department

**SBC:** CER, ESI
0-6 credits

**CLT 495: Comparative Literature Honors Project**

A one-semester project for comparative literature majors who are candidates for the degree with departmental honors. The project involves independent study under close supervision of an appropriate faculty member, and the written and oral presentation to the department faculty colloquium of an honors thesis.

Prerequisites: Permission of instructor and department

**SBC:** ESI
3 credits