Department of Comparative Literature

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Overview

Comparative Literature is the study of the world through its literatures and cultures. Critical theory and translation provide frameworks for making moves: across languages, media, geographic borders, and political visions. In the Department of Comparative Literature, graduate and undergraduate students immerse themselves in national and regional literatures—of Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America, and Europe—while simultaneously placing those cultural practices within dynamic global exchanges, both historical and contemporary. Through courses, conferences, collaborative projects, and digital media, Comparative Literature at UCI advances critical cosmopolitanism—a kind of worldliness cultivated by creative engagements with power, peoples, and their symbolic practices. From novel to poetry, drama to film, monuments to political protest, comics to audio, urban space to visual culture—Comparative Literature introduces students to global cultures in the widest sense, and to the theoretical lenses essential for putting them in perspective. Writing, speaking, visualizing, blogging, social networking: through multiple media Comparative Literature students at every level interpret and engage with other academics and publics outside the academy. Together, students of Comparative Literature strive for a continually evolving practice of critical awareness and political action: a global literacy and citizenship through which to face the challenges of life and work in the 21st century.

The Department seeks to foster and maintain a lively community that includes undergraduates, graduates, and faculty, and to that end holds a variety of meetings and activities so that majors can get to know one another and other members of the Department.

Requirements for the B.A. in Comparative Literature

All students must meet the University Requirements.
All students must meet the School Requirements.

Department Requirements for the Major

A. Complete:

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<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COM LIT 60A</td>
<td>World Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>COM LIT 60B</td>
<td>Reading with Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COM LIT 60C</td>
<td>Cultural Studies</td>
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B. Complete:

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>COM LIT 190W</td>
<td>Advanced Seminar in Comparative Literature and Theory (capstone seminar)</td>
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C. Select two additional upper-division elective courses in Comparative Literature or two other upper-division courses offered in the School of Humanities. Students may request, by petition, one lower-division Comparative Literature course to count as an elective.

D. Completion of one of the three emphases:

1. Emphasis in Comparative Literature and Critical Theory
   (a) Select five upper-division courses in Comparative Literature.
   (b) Competence in a foreign language sufficient for reading and understanding literature and culture in that language may be demonstrated through course work in one of the following ways:

   (1) Two upper-division courses in a foreign literature or culture in which texts are read in the original, or
   (2) One upper-division course in a foreign literature or culture in which texts are read in the original, plus one upper-division course in a literature or culture in translation, or
   (3) Students of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean take three years of language training plus one approved upper-division course in a foreign literature or culture in which texts are read in the original language or in translation, or
   (4) Students of languages for which no language training is offered past 2C may take any two upper-division courses in a foreign literature or culture in translation.
   (5) Students who study Greek and Latin fulfill the entire requirement by successfully completing two years of college-level language training and one upper-division course in a foreign literature or culture in translation.

   An Independent Study course may substitute for any part (i.e., either a language or literature course) of the foreign language requirement upon petition to the undergraduate studies director in Comparative Literature.

2. Emphasis in Cultural Studies
   (a) Select six upper-division courses in Comparative Literature (three of which must be from the following list):

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<th>Course Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>COM LIT 105</td>
<td>Topics in Comparative Multiculturalism</td>
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<td>COM LIT 130</td>
<td>Gender, Sexuality, Race, Class</td>
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COM LIT 132  Discourse, Ideologies, and Politics
COM LIT 140  Critical Cultural Studies
COM LIT 141  Popular Culture
COM LIT 142  The Metropolis and Other Cultural Geographies
COM LIT 143  Literature, Arts, and Media
COM LIT 144  Literature, History, and Society

3. Emphasis in World Literature

Select six upper-division courses in Comparative Literature (three of which must be from the following list):

COM LIT 100A  Nations, Regions, and Beyond
COM LIT 105  Topics in Comparative Multiculturalism
COM LIT 107  Colonialisms and Postcolonialisms
COM LIT 108  Diasporic Literatures and Cultures
COM LIT 123  Literatures in Dialogue
COM LIT 150  Literature in Translation

COM LIT 150 may be replaced with other approved foreign literature-in-translation courses offered in the Humanities.

Residence Requirement for the Comparative Literature Major: COM LIT 190W and four additional upper-division courses in Comparative Literature or other upper-division courses offered in the School of Humanities must be completed successfully at UCI. By petition, two of the four may be taken through the UC Education Abroad Program, providing course content is approved by the appropriate program advisor or chair.

Planning a Program of Study

The Department offers close consultation for academic planning. All students should plan courses of study with faculty advisors. Students who wish to pursue double majors, special programs, or study abroad are urged to seek advising as early as possible.

Additional Information

Careers for the Comparative Literature Major

Courses in Comparative Literature train students to read critically, to think and write analytically in a variety of genres and media, to learn languages, and to do independent research, always in a global context. This course of study helps qualify majors for careers in education, international relations, law, government, technology, communications and media, nonprofit organizations, and publishing. In recent years graduates from the Department of Comparative Literature have won Fulbrights, gone on to law school, nursing school, and master’s programs in social work or psychology, and found jobs in public relations firms, done editorial work, and conducted clinical research in pharmaceutical firms. The Comparative Literature major is also excellent preparation for an academic career. Graduates have gone on to Ph.D. programs at Michigan, Cambridge, Harvard, Princeton, UCLA, UC Berkeley, and other schools. Many also teach English, world literature, and modern foreign languages at the high-school level.

Minor in Comparative Literature

Departmental Requirements for the Comparative Literature Minor

A. Complete:

COM LIT 60A  World Literature
COM LIT 60B  Reading with Theory
COM LIT 60C  Cultural Studies

B. Select three upper-division courses in Comparative Literature.

C. Select one additional upper-division course in Comparative Literature or another upper-division course offered in the School of Humanities.

Residence Requirement for the Comparative Literature Minor: Four upper-division courses must be completed successfully at UCI. By petition, two of the four may be taken through the UC Education Abroad Program, providing course content is approved by the appropriate program advisor or chair.

Graduate Program

Comparative Literature faculty at UCI Irvine are particularly well equipped to guide students in Critical Theory, Cultural Studies, Rhetorical Studies, Postcolonial Theory, Critical Race Theory, Theory of the Novel, Gender and Queer Theory, and Political Theory; the faculty also have expertise in African literature, Persian literature, Irish literature, Caribbean literature, Indigenous literatures, East Asian film, Latin American literature and film, Digital Culture, and Sound Studies, and offer seminars that deal with some of the major figures and issues in contemporary theoretical debates, including Deleuze, Foucault, Gramsci, Derrida, as well as object relations theory/psychoanalysis, theories of sovereignty, state formation, and subaltern studies, and the study of the everyday.

The M.A. is considered to be a step toward the Ph.D.; only students intending to complete the doctorate are admitted to the program. Applicants must hold a B.A. or equivalent degree and should normally have majored in Comparative Literature, English, or a foreign literature. Majors in other disciplines
(e.g., philosophy, history, visual studies, women's studies, ethnic studies) will be considered, provided that a sufficient background in literary and cultural studies and in at least one foreign language is demonstrated.

Program Details
The Department offers a track in (1) Comparative Literature with an emphasis in a literary tradition, (2) Comparative Literature with an emphasis in Translation Studies, and (3) Comparative Literature with an emphasis in Critical Theory. (See the departmental graduate student handbook for a description of these emphases.) Graduate students in Comparative Literature may also complete an emphasis in Chinese Language and Literature, Classics, East Asian Cultural Studies, French, German, Japanese Language and Literature, or Spanish. Emphases in Asian American Studies, Critical Theory, Feminist Studies, and Visual Studies are available through the School of Humanities. Within these emphases, students enroll in sequences of courses that highlight individual interests and expertise. In consultation with advisors, students may also develop individualized curricula that cut across these and other offerings in the Department and School.

A minor field specialization is recommended. This optional component promotes engagement with a field or methodology outside the student's specialization. It may be of a national, historical, disciplinary, or methodological nature, with the student of western postmodern literary theory and forms engaging in a focused study of ancient Greek or Roman philosophy and culture, for example, or the student of East Asian languages and diasporic literatures may work in anthropology or ethnography. This optional component of the student’s program may be fulfilled through course work, independent studies, or a Qualifying Examination topic.

Graduate students in Comparative Literature must demonstrate a command of two foreign languages consistent with their particular focus of study within the program. Competence in two foreign languages is required for the Ph.D. and is verified through examination, a longer translation project, and/or course work.

Teaching
The Department recognizes that most of its graduate students intend to become teachers, and believes that graduate departments should be training college teachers as well as scholars—indeed, that teaching and scholarship complement one another. Thus candidates for the Ph.D. are expected to acquire experience in teaching, and all Ph.D. candidates gain supervised training as part of the seminar work required for the degree.

Fellowships
The Murray Krieger Fellowship in Literary Theory is intended for an outstanding entering graduate student pursuing the Ph.D. in Comparative Literature or English who demonstrates a primary interest in theory as theory relates to literary texts.

A range of other fellowships is also available to students in the Department.

Master of Arts in Comparative Literature
Requirements
Entering students are assigned a faculty advisor who usually serves as the chair of the student’s M.A. examination committee (which consists of at least two other members of the faculty). Nine courses and an examination are required to complete the degree. The normal academic load for both M.A. and Ph.D. candidates is three courses a quarter; teaching assistants take two courses in addition to earning credit for University teaching. Only in exceptional circumstances will students be permitted to undertake programs of less than six full courses during the academic year.

Examination
The M.A. examination is normally taken during the quarter in which the student completes course work. For the examination, the candidate submits an M.A. paper and a statement of purpose outlining past and future course work and preliminary plans for the Ph.D. qualifying examination. The M.A. examination consists of a discussion of the student’s paper and the statement of purpose. In practice, it resembles an extended advising session, but with particularly close attention to the student’s paper.

Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature
The doctoral program in Comparative Literature prepares the student for a professional career in the research and teaching of comparative literary and cultural studies. Some students also choose to enter professions (e.g., specialized research, nonprofit organizations, international cultural exchange) in which the specialized work in a specific field indicated by an advanced degree is highly desirable.

Requirements
Normally, students who have not done graduate work at another university must complete at least 18 courses. Upon completion of the course work, the student takes a qualifying examination on four areas formulated by the student in consultation with the four faculty members who make up the examination committee. The four areas are to cover a major field, a secondary field, a special topic, and theory. All four areas are to be related to each other and to work toward the dissertation. The examination is part written, part oral, according to a formula decided by the student and the committee. The examination as a whole should reflect the student’s ability to work in at least two languages.

After passing the qualifying examination, the student forms a dissertation committee of three faculty members, formulates a dissertation topic in consultation with them, and submits a prospectus for the dissertation along with a preliminary bibliography. Study toward the Ph.D. culminates in the
dissertation. The normative time for advancement to candidacy is four years. The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. is seven years, and the maximum time permitted is nine years.

Faculty

M. Ackbar Abbas, M.Phil. University of Hong Kong, Professor of Comparative Literature; Film and Media Studies; Visual Studies (Hong Kong culture and postcolonialism, visual culture, architecture and cinema, cultural theory, globalization)

Aijaz Ahmad, UCI Chancellor's Professor of Comparative Literature (critical theory, world literature, marxism, tricontinental social thought)

Eyal Amiran, Ph.D. University of Virginia, Professor of Comparative Literature; Film and Media Studies; Visual Studies (digital media theory, twentieth-century literature, narrative and textual theory, psychoanalysis, modern and postmodern intellectual history)

Luis Avilés, Ph.D. Brown University, Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese; Comparative Literature; European Languages and Studies (Golden Age literature and critical theory)

Etienne Balibar, Ph.D. Catholic University of Nijmegen, Professor Emeritus of French; Comparative Literature (political philosophy, critical theory, epistemology of the social sciences, ethics)

Ellen S. Burt, Ph.D. Yale University, Professor of English; Comparative Literature; European Languages and Studies (eighteenth-century French literature and nineteenth-century poetry)

Nahum D. Chandler, Ph.D. University of Chicago, Professor of African American Studies; Comparative Literature; European Languages and Studies (modern philosophy, intellectual history, history of the human sciences)

Alicia Cox, Ph.D. University of California, Riverside, Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature (19th-century American literature; Native American and indigenous literature and cultural studies; gender and sexuality studies; queer Indigenous studies; Indigenous feminisms; autobiography; American Indian boarding school studies; settler colonialism)

Alexander Gelley, Ph.D. Yale University, Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature (eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European novel, critical theory)

David Theo Goldberg, Ph.D. The Graduate Center, City University of New York, Director of the UC Humanities Research Institute and Professor of Comparative Literature; Anthropology; Criminology, Law and Society (race, racism, race and the law, political theory, South Africa, digital humanities)

Hu Ying, Ph.D. Princeton University, Professor of Chinese; Comparative Literature (narrative literature, translation theory, feminist theory)

Virginia W. Jackson, Ph.D. Princeton University, Chair in Rhetoric and Communication and Associate Professor of English; Comparative Literature (poetics, 19th, 20th and 21st century American poetry, 19th century American literature and culture, the history of literary theory)

Susan C. Jarratt, Ph.D. University of Texas at Austin, Professor Emerita of Comparative Literature; Education (histories and theories of rhetoric, ancient Greek rhetoric, writing studies)

Adriana M. Johnson, Ph.D. Duke University, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature; Spanish and Portuguese (Latin American literature and film, subaltern studies, postcolonial studies, politics and culture)

Laura H. Kang, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Cruz, Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies; Comparative Literature (feminist epistemologies and theories, cultural studies, ethnic studies)

Ketu H. Katrak, Ph.D. Bryn Mawr College, Professor of Drama; Comparative Literature (drama and performance, African drama and Ancient Sanskrit drama [from India], postcolonial literature and theory, women writers and feminist theory)

Arlene Keizer, Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley, Associate Professor of English; Comparative Literature (African American and Caribbean literature, critical race and ethnic studies, feminist and psychoanalytic theory, cultural studies)

Rodrigo Lazo, Ph.D. University of Maryland, College Park, Associate Professor of English; Comparative Literature; Culture and Theory (hemispheric American studies, eighteenth century, Latino studies and the Americas, Cuba, immigrant literature)

Catherine Liu, Ph.D. Yale University, Professor of Film and Media Studies; Comparative Literature; Visual Studies (Hou Hsiao-hsien, culture wars, Frankfurt School, historiography of critical theory/cultural studies, surveillance, cold war culture and neoliberalism)

Julia R. Lupton, Ph.D. Yale University, Associate Dean for Research and Professor of English; Comparative Literature; Education; Religious Studies (Renaissance literature, literature and psychology)

Steven J. Mailloux, Ph.D. University of Southern California, Professor Emeritus of English; Comparative Literature (rhetoric, critical theory, American literature, law and literature)
Catherine Malabou, Ph.D. Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Professor of Comparative Literature (German idealism, contemporary French philosophy, cultural theory, neurobiology, epigenetics)

J. Hillis Miller, Ph.D. Harvard University, UCI Endowed Chair and Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature; English (Victorian literature, critical theory)

Liron Mor, Ph.D. Cornell University, Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature (literary and critical theory, contemporary Israeli and Palestinian literature and film, postcolonial theories, conflict, sympathy, questions of translation and literary adaptation)

Jane O. Newman, Ph.D. Princeton University, Professor of Comparative Literature; English; European Languages and Studies; Religious Studies (comparative Renaissance and early modern literature and culture [English, French, German, Italian, neo-Latin], Mediterranean Renaissance studies, Baroque, afterlives of antiquity, Walter Benjamin, Erich Auerbach, pre-modern lessons for the modern and post-modern)

Carrie J. Noland, Ph.D. Harvard University, Professor of French; Comparative Literature (20th-century poetry and poetics, avant-garde movements in art and literature, critical theory, performance studies)

Margot Norris, Ph.D. State University of New York College at Buffalo, Professor Emerita of English; Comparative Literature (modern Irish, British, American and continental modernism, literature and war)

Laura B. O'Connor, Ph.D. Columbia University, Associate Professor of English; Comparative Literature (Irish literature, twentieth-century poetry, Anglo-American modernism)

Kavita S. Philip, Ph.D. Cornell University, Associate Professor of History; Comparative Literature; Informatics (history of modern South Asia, science and technology, political ecology, critical theoretical studies of race, gender, colonialism, new media, and globalization)

Rajagopalan Radhakrishnan, Ph.D. Binghamton University, State University of New York, UCI Chancellor's Professor of English; African American Studies; Comparative Literature; Culture and Theory (critical theory, postcoloniality, nationalisms and diasporas, poststructuralism, postmodernism, democracy and minority discourse, cultural studies, globalization and transnationalism)

Nasrin Rahimieh, Ph.D. University of Alberta, Department Chair and Professor of Comparative Literature; Gender and Sexuality Studies (Modern Persian literature and culture, diaspora studies, women's writing.)

John C. Rowe, Ph.D. State University of New York College at Buffalo, Professor Emeritus of English; Comparative Literature

Annette M. Schlichter, Ph.D. Humboldt University of Berlin, Associate Professor of Comparative Literature; European Languages and Studies (feminist theory and criticism, queer theory, critiques of heterosexuality, contemporary American literature, gender and literature, voice studies)

Beryl F. Schlossman, Doctorate University of Paris 7, Ph.D. Johns Hopkins University, Professor of Comparative Literature; European Languages and Studies; Film and Media Studies; Visual Studies (Modern literature, critical theory, film studies, psychoanalysis, the arts in society.)

Gabriele J. Schwab, Ph.D. University of Konstanz, UCI Chancellor's Professor of Comparative Literature; Anthropology; Culture and Theory; European Languages and Studies (modern literature, critical theory, psychoanalysis, comparative literature)

Martin Schwab, Ph.D. Heidelberg University, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy; Comparative Literature; European Languages and Studies

John H. Smith, Ph.D. Princeton University, Professor of Comparative Literature; German (18th- and 19th-century literature and intellectual history, literary theory)

James Steintrager, Ph.D. Columbia University, Director of the Emphasis in Critical Theory and Professor of English; Comparative Literature; European Languages and Studies (eighteenth-century comparative literature, ethical philosophy and literature, systems theory, amatory and erotic fiction)

Rei Terada, Ph.D. Boston University, Professor of Comparative Literature; Culture and Theory (theory, poststructuralism, nineteenth- and twentieth-century poetry)

Jennifer Terry, Ph.D. University of California, Santa Cruz, Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies; Comparative Literature; Gender and Sexuality Studies (cultural studies, social theory; science and technology studies, formations of gender and sexuality, critical approaches to modernity, American studies in transnational perspective, processes of militarization)

Ngugi Wa Thiong'O, B.A. Makerere University, UCI Distinguished Professor of Comparative Literature; English (African and Caribbean literatures, theater and film, performance studies, cultural and political theory)

Georges Y. Van Den Abbeele, Ph.D. Cornell University, Dean of the School of Humanities and Professor of Comparative Literature; English; European Languages and Studies; Film and Media Studies; Visual Studies (French and European philosophical literature, travel narrative and tourism/migration studies, critical theory and aesthetics, francophone literature, history of cartography, media history and theory.)