

# COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (BI-CO)

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

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

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

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

## LEARNING GOALS

- Students should attain advanced skills in a language other than English and show the capacity to analyze and interpret literary and cultural texts in the original language.
- Students should attain advanced skills in the interpretation or translation of the literary texts of two distinct national cultures, in the comparative analysis of these texts across national and/or linguistic boundaries, and in addressing, considering, evaluating, and applying specific methodological or theoretical paradigms.
- Students should make use of these skills in the senior thesis and oral exam, which should also demonstrate the capacity to:
  - evaluate and discuss the merits of a critical or methodological approach.

- complete an independent scholarly project.
- bring together and analyze critically, in light of certain central issues and themes, a selection of works of literature and criticism read over the four years.

## CURRICULUM

The resources at Bryn Mawr and Haverford permit the Comparative Literature program to offer an extensive variety of courses, including:

- literature courses in English and the other languages offered at the two Colleges (Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Latin, ancient Greek, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic and Hebrew).
- crosslisted comparative electives taught in English.
- courses in criticism and theory.

## MAJOR

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

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

We recommend (but do not require) that:

- majors study abroad during one or two semesters of the junior year.
- students with a possible interest in graduate school begin a second foreign language before they graduate.

## MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

- COML 200 (Introduction to Comparative Literature), normally taken by the spring of the sophomore year.
- Six advanced literature courses in the original languages (normally at the 200 level or above), balanced between two literature departments (of which English may be one):

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at least two (one in each literature) must be at the 300 level or above, or its equivalent, as approved in advance by the advisor.

- One course in critical theory.
- Two electives in comparative literature.
- COML 398 (Theories and Methods in Comparative Literature).
- COML 399 (Senior Seminar in Comparative Literature).

### MINOR REQUIREMENTS

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

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

### SENIOR PROJECT

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

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

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

### Senior Project Learning Goals

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

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

### Senior Project Assessment

Faculty in the Comparative Literature Steering Committee (CLSC) evaluate the viability of the

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

The thesis is evaluated on the following criteria:

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

### REQUIREMENTS FOR HONORS

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

### STUDY ABROAD

The majority of our majors study abroad for one semester or two, normally during the junior year, at programs approved by Bryn Mawr and Haverford. Courses taken in these programs can, with the approval of the chair, be counted towards the major; we seek the advice of the chairs of the language departments in determining the kind of credit given for particular courses (e.g., in deciding whether a language course should be counted as a 200-level course or a 300-level course). We also ask our students to confer with the chair of the relevant language department in advance when choosing courses abroad.

### PRIZES

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

### FACULTY

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

#### *At Haverford:*

##### **Israel Burshatin**

Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature

##### **Imke Brust**

Assistant Professor of German

##### **Roberto Castillo Sandoval**

Associate Professor of Spanish

##### **Maud McInerney**

Chair and Barbara Riley Levin Professor of Comparative Literature and Associate Professor of English

##### **Jerry Miller**

Associate Professor of Philosophy

##### **Deborah Roberts**

William E. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Classics and Comparative Literature

##### **Ulrich Schönherr**

Professor of German

##### **David Sedley**

Associate Professor of French

##### **Aniko Szucs**

Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Hurford Center for the Arts and Humanities (HCAH) and Visiting Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature

#### *At Bryn Mawr:*

##### **Martín Gaspar**

Assistant Professor of Spanish

##### **Jennifer Harford Vargas**

Assistant Professor of English

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### **Tim Harte**

Associate Professor of Russian

### **Shiamin Kwa**

Assistant Professor on the Jue Chu Lectureship in Chinese Studies

### **María Cristina Quintero**

Professor of Spanish

### **Roberta Ricci**

Associate Professor of Italian

### **Azade Seyhan**

Fairbanks Professor in the Humanities and Professor of German and Comparative Literature

## COURSES

### **COML H200 INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE LITERATURE**

*Maud McInerney*

Humanities (HU)

A general introduction to the evolving field of comparative literature. Students read, discuss, and write about texts from across a wide range of national literatures and historical periods, with attention both to how these texts influence and relate to each other and to where and why they must differ. An additional focus on theoretical issues relevant to reading in general and, more particularly, reading between canons. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **COML H203 WRITING THE JEWISH TRAJECTORIES IN LATIN AMERICA**

*Ariana Huberman*

Humanities (HU)

The course proposes the study of Latin American Jewish literature focusing on narrative, essay, and poetry of the Twentieth and Twenty-First centuries. It pays close attention to themes, registers, and cultural contexts relevant to the Jewish experience in Latin America. What is Jewish about this literature? Where do these texts cross paths, or not, with other migratory and minority experiences? The texts studied question identity and Otherness, and explore constructions of memory while examining issues of gender, assimilation, transculturation, migration, and exile in relation to the Jewish Diaspora in the Americas. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, placement, or instructor consent. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **COML H205 STUDIES IN THE SPANISH AMERICAN NOVEL**

*Graciela Michelotti*

Humanities (HU)

Investigating the Past in Latin American Contemporary Narratives. This course examines issues of memory and identity in the context of personal and national stories/histories. The course will analyze recently published novels, and short stories (including some film adaptations) by representative writers from the region. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, placement, or consent of the instructor. (Typically offered every other year)

### **COML 207 FICTIONS OF LATIN AMERICAN HISTORY**

*Roberto Castillo Sandoval*

Humanities (HU)

This course examines the relationship between history and literature in Spanish America through the analysis and comparison of selected historiographical and literary texts. Particular attention is paid to the ways that historical and literary genres have interacted and influenced one another from the Discovery and Conquest through the Independence and national formation periods and the 20th century. The final class assignment consists of the writing of an original piece of historical fiction in a genre or form of the student's choice, on any event in Latin American history, regardless of whether it was among those covered in class. I provide close guidance both in the research and the writing of the piece. Topics or events may be jointly researched but must be written individually. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): Spanish 102, placement, or instructor consent. (Typically offered every other year)

### **COML H210 SPANISH AND SPANISH AMERICAN FILM STUDIES**

*Graciela Michelotti*

Humanities (HU)

Exploration of films in Spanish from both sides of the Atlantic. The course will discuss approximately one movie per class, from a variety of classic and more recent directors such as Luis Buñuel, Carlos Saura, Pedro Almodóvar, Lucrecia Martel among others. The class will focus on the cinematic discourse as well as the cultural and historic background of each film. The course will also provide advanced language training with

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particular emphasis in refining oral and writing skills. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature; Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, or placement, or instructor consent. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **COML H212 REFASHIONING THE CLASSICS: VOICING MYTH**

*Hannah Silverblank*

Humanities (HU)

This course interrogates the relationships between classical myths and their revoicings. We explore various strands of reception theory in order to discuss the dynamics between different versions of myths, placing emphasis on myths that take voice as a central theme. Crosslisted: Classical Studies, Comparative Literature (Not offered 2017-18)

### **COML H214 WRITING THE NATION: 19TH-CENTURY LITERATURE IN LATIN AMERICA**

*Roberto Castillo Sandoval*

Humanities (HU)

An examination of seminal literary texts written in Latin America in the nineteenth century. Novels, essays, travelogues, short stories, miscellaneous texts, and poetry will be analyzed and placed in the context of the process of nation-building that took place after Independence from Spain. A goal of the course will be to establish and define the nexus between the textual and ideological formations of 19th-century writings in Latin America and their counterparts in the 20th-century. The course fulfills the “pre-1898” requirement. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, placement, or instructor consent. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **COML H220 THE EPIC IN ENGLISH**

*Maud McInerney*

Humanities (HU)

An exploration of the long narrative poems that shape the epic tradition in anglophone literature. Readings in classical epic and medieval epic, Milton, Romantic epics and the modern aftermath of epic. Crosslisted: English, Comparative Literature (Offered every three years)

### **COML H222 RETHINKING LATIN AMERICA IN CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVE**

*Aurelia Gómez Unamuno*

Humanities (HU)

This course explores literary texts and films produced after the 70s that address political issues related to marginal subjects that previously were not visible. The course is organized around different agendas such as “indigenismo”, ethnic politics and indigenous movements, post-coloniality, subalternity, sexual diversity, migration and the border, drug trafficking, and gender violence. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): SPAN 102, placement, or instructor consent. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **COML H223 WRITING NATIONS: AFRICA AND EUROPE**

*Imke Brust*

Humanities (HU)

This course will explore ideas of nation-building in regard to the transnational relations between Europe and Africa. We will discuss African and European experiences of nation-creation to distinguish between exclusionary and inclusionary visions of nation states, and focus in particular on literary texts from Great Britain, Germany, and France in comparison with literary texts from Nigeria, South Africa, and Algeria. Crosslisted: German, Comparative Literature (Offered Fall 2017)

### **COML H227 RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE CLASSICAL WORLD**

*Staff*

Humanities (HU)

This course investigates ancient thinking about race and ethnicity, as represented in the literature of the ancient Mediterranean through such authors as Homer, Herodotus, Aeschylus, Aristotle, Vergil, Caesar, and Tacitus. Crosslisted: Classical Studies, Comparative Literature, PJHR (Not offered 2017-18)

### **COML H229 TOPICS IN VISUAL STUDIES: ROLAND BARTHES AND THE IMAGE**

*John Muse*

Humanities (HU)

An exploration of the rhetoric of visual culture through an examination of 20th century French critic Roland Barthes’ many writings on photography, film, and what he calls the “civilized code of perfect illusions.” We will spend the semester reading his texts, charting the trajectory of a career that begins with the euphoria of an ever-expanding semiotic and ends with a meditation on the limits of this very project.

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Crosslisted: Visual Studies, Fine Arts,  
Comparative Literature (Offered Fall 2017)

### COML H233 TOPICS IN CARIBBEAN LITERATURE

*Asali Solomon*

Humanities (HU)

This course will focus on authors of the Caribbean and its diaspora, engaging fiction, theory, memoir, poetry and drama from the mid-twentieth century through the present. Core themes will include migration, class, colonialism, racial identity, gender and sexuality. Crosslisted: English, Africana Studies, Comparative Literature (Typically offered every other fall)

### COML H250 QUIXOTIC NARRATIVES

*Israel Burshatin*

Humanities (HU)

Study of Cervantes, Don Quixote and of some of the works of fiction, criticism, philosophy, music, art and film which have drawn from Cervantes's novel or address its formal and thematic concerns, including self-reflexivity, nation and narration, and constructions of gender, class, and "race" in narrative. Other authors read include Borges, Foucault, Laurence Sterne, Graham Greene, Vladimir Nabokov, and Kathy Acker. This course fulfills the "pre-1898" requirement. This course is conducted in English. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. (Offered Spring 2018)

### GERM H262 EUROPEAN FILM

*Imke Brust*

Humanities (HU)

This course will explore what role film plays in the conceptualization of the European Union. After a brief historical overview, we will familiarize ourselves with a variety of important European film movements after 1945. Our class discussion will cover important European film movements such as German Expressionist Film, Italian Neorealism, French New Wave, Czech New Wave, New German Cinema, and Dogma 95. In addition, we will be watching films from Poland, the Netherlands, and the Balkans. Towards the end of the semester we will discuss how the accelerated integration of the European Union since the 1990s has affected film production within the European Union and what aesthetic, and political ideas shape contemporary European films. Furthermore, this class also aims to highlight transnational aspects of European film in particular in light of the recent European

refugee crisis. This course is taught in English with an extra-session in German. Crosslisted: German, Comparative Literature (Typically offered every other year)

### COML H266 IBERIAN ORIENTALISM AND THE NATION

*Israel Burshatin*

Humanities (HU)

This course examines cultural production in the frontier cultures of medieval Iberia against a background of collaboration and violence among Islamic, Christian, and Jewish communities, and the subsequent transformations wrought by the rise and decline of imperial Spain. Topics to be examined include the myth of Christian reconquista / Reconquest; the construction of Spanishness as race and nation in the context of Christian hegemony and global empire; depiction of Moors in narrative, material culture, and the discourses of gender and sexuality; internal colonialism and Morisco resistance; perceptions of Spain as exotic or abject other in the Northern European and US imaginary; contemporary African migrations and the "return of the repressed." This class is conducted in English. Students who wish to obtain Spanish credit are expected to read Spanish language texts in the original and write all assignments in the language. (Not offered 2017-18)

### COML H268 ARTISTS UNDER THE POLICING GAZE OF THE STATE: POLITICS, HISTORY, AND PERFORMANCE

*Aniko Szucs*

Humanities (HU)

An investigation of what permanent surveillance meant and means today for society at large and for individual artists living under its pressure, through interdisciplinary texts on the theory and history of surveillance and artworks in multiple genres and media. Crosslisted: Comparative Literature, PJHR, Independent College Programs; Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing or instructor consent. (Offered Fall 2017)

### COML H289 CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

*Deborah Roberts*

Humanities (HU)

This course investigates the beginnings, selected historical developments, and some of the varieties of literature for children, and asks questions about the distinctiveness of such literature, its aims and its presumed readership, and the

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applicability of particular theoretical approaches to children's books. We will look at folk tale and fairy tale, early examples of literature specifically for children, some particularly influential texts, and examples from several sub-genres of children's literature; we will also spend a week each on picture books and poetry for children. Discussion will focus both on the texts themselves and on critical issues of various kinds. Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing or instructor consent. (Offered Spring 2018)

### COML H290 HISTORY OF LITERARY THEORY: PLATO TO SHELLEY

*Deborah Roberts*

Humanities (HU)

In this course we investigate central texts in literary theory from the Greeks to early nineteenth-century Europe, with attention to key critical terms and concepts. Topics of discussion include the nature and origin of literary creation, socio-political ideas about the function of poetry and the poet, mimetic models of literature, the roles of art and nature, literature in relation to its audience, theories of genre, defenses of poetry, allegorical interpretation, the idea of the sublime, definitions of the imagination, poetic language, and the application of critical theory to particular texts. Readings include selections from: Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Longinus, Dante, Augustine, Sidney, Corneille, Dryden, Pope, De Stael, Johnson, Wollstonecraft, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley. Requirements include 5 short papers and a final exam.

Crosslisted: Classical Studies, Comparative Literature, English; Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing or instructor consent. (Typically offered every other year)

### COML H293 TRANSLATION AND OTHER TRANSFORMATIONS: THEORY AND PRACTICE

*Deborah Roberts*

Humanities (HU)

An exploration of the theory and practice of translation: from language to language, from culture to culture, and from medium to medium. We will consider different approaches to translation in theoretical writings and in case studies drawn from works in different languages, with attention to changing views and to areas of controversy. Assignments will include both papers and translations, and students may develop translation projects of their own.

Crosslisted: Comparative Literature, Classical

Studies; Prerequisite(s): Student must be at least at the intermediate level in at least one language other than English. (Offered Fall 2017)

### COML H308 MYSTICAL LITERATURES OF ISLAM

*Staff*

Humanities (HU)

Overview of the literary expressions of Islamic mysticism through the study of poetry, philosophy, hagiographies, and anecdotes. Topics include: unio mystica; symbol and structure; love and the erotic; body / gender; language and experience. (Offered occasionally)

### COML H312 ADVANCED TOPICS IN FRENCH LITERATURE: DISCOURS SUR L'ESCLAVAGE TRANSANTLANTIQUE

*Koffi Anyinefa*

Humanities (HU)

Slavery has profoundly impacted societies on both sides of the Atlantic. Scholars in various fields of inquiry have passionately discussed its origins, history and lasting effects. How have French and Francophone societies engaged with this difficult topic? Starting with the Code noir – a law regulating slavery in French colonies originally passed in 1685 under Louis XIV and reinforced during the 'Siècle des Lumières' – we will read our way through the centuries, mixing texts by both French and Francophone writers such as Bona, Césaire, Chamoiseau, Condé, Fanon, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Tocqueville, to name but a few. A field trip to the recently opened National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. to explore its exhibition on "Slavery and Freedom" will supplement material studied in the course. In French. Crosslisted: French, Comparative Literature (Offered Fall 2017)

### COML H316 WOMEN AND THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN LATIN AMERICA

*Aurelia Gómez Unamuno*

Humanities (HU)

An examination of socialist armed struggles in 1970s, women's rights and feminist movements in Latin America. A comparative study of literary texts, testimonials and documentary films addresses theoretical issues such as Marxism, global feminism, hegemony and feminisms produced in the periphery. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature, PJHR. Prerequisite(s):

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One 200-level, preferred 300-level course, or instructor consent. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **COML H320 SPANISH AMERICAN COLONIAL WRITINGS**

*Roberto Castillo Sandoval, Ariana Huberman*  
Humanities (HU)

Representative writings from the textual legacy left by Spanish discovery, conquest, and colonization of the New World. Emphasis will be placed on the transfiguration of historical and literary genres, and the role of Colonial literature in the formation of Latin-American identity. Readings include Columbus, Bernal Díaz, Gómara, Ercilla, Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Cabeza de Vaca, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and Sigüenza y Góngora. This course fulfills the “pre-1898” requirement. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): One 200-level Spanish course or instructor consent. (Typically offered every other year)

### **COML H321 INTERMEDIAL TRANSFORMATIONS: MUSICO-ACOUSTIC IMAGINATIONS IN LITERATURE AND FILM**

*Ulrich Schönherr*  
Humanities (HU)

The course intends to explore the rich and diverse representations of music in all its socio-aesthetic complexity from antiquity to the present. The thematic scope will range from mythological, philosophical, and religious interpretations of music through issues of gender, race, and politics in literature, opera, and film, to theories of intermediality, and psychological implications of voice and sound. Focusing on exemplary models, we will reconstruct the changing social functions and highly ambiguous attitudes towards music in Western culture, oscillating between fear and fascination. In addition, we will also continuously confront the semiotic question of whether literature can justifiably be read in analogy to musical forms, and whether music as a language is also plausible in reverse. Crosslisted: German, Comparative Literature (Offered Spring 2018)

### **COML H322 POLITICS OF MEMORY IN LATIN AMERICA**

*Aurelia Gómez Unamuno*  
Humanities (HU)

This course explores the issue of memory, the narration of political violence and the tension between truth and fiction. A selection of

documents, visual archives and documentary films are compared with literary genres including testimonies memories, diaries, poetry, and fiction writing. This course also compares the coup and dictatorship of Pinochet with the repression of the student movement of '68 and the guerrilla warfare in Mexico. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature, PJHR. (Typically offered every year)

### **COML H323 SEX-CRIME-MADNESS: THE BIRTH OF MODERN LITERATURE AND THE AESTHETICS OF TRANSGRESSION**

*Ulrich Schönherr*  
Humanities (HU)

The emancipation from rule-bound poetics, didactic, and moral constraints led to a redefinition of literature around 1800, for which the classic/classicist triad of the true, the good, and the beautiful was no longer valid. The successful separation from extra-aesthetic determinants opened up new representational possibilities, in which the “beautiful” became boring and the “ugly” became interesting. Focusing on major literary figures from Goethe to Jelinek, the seminar will examine the ‘paradigm shift’ towards a modern aesthetics of transgression in which social, racial, and sexual deviancy take center stage. Crosslisted: German, Comparative Literature (Not offered 2017-18)

### **COML H334 GENDER DISSIDENCE IN HISPANIC WRITING**

*Israel Burshatin*  
Humanities (HU)

Study of the dissenting voices of gender and sexuality in Spain and Spanish America and U.S. Latino/a writers. Interrogation of “masculine” and “feminine” cultural constructions and “compulsory heterosexuality,” as well as exemplary moments of dissent. Texts to be studied include Hispano-Arabic poetry, Fernando de Rojas’s *Celestina*; Tirso de Molina, *Don Gil de las calzas verdes*; Teresa of Avila, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Reinaldo Arenas. This course is conducted in Spanish. Crosslisted: Spanish, Comparative Literature. Prerequisite(s): One 200-level course or instructor consent. (Typically offered every other year)

### **COML H389 INTERPRETING LYRIC POETRY: LOVE, LOSS, TRANSCENDENCE**

*Kimberly Benston*  
Humanities (HU)

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An examination of theoretical issues and presentational strategies in verse structures from Ovid to Bishop. Through close readings of strategically grouped texts, we explore the interplay of convention and innovation, attending to themes of desire, loss, and transcendence, and to recurrent lyric figures (e.g., in Narcissus, Orphic, and Ulysses poems; in the dramatic monologue; in the sonnet and elegy; in the sublime; in vernacular traditions and their literary revisions). Issues for study include: allusion and intertextuality; convention and cliché; invention and revision; origination and self-presentation. Practical criticism will lead to theoretical analyses of interpretive modes and the interpreter's stance. Crosslisted: English, Comparative Literature; Prerequisite(s): Two 200-level English courses, or instructor consent. (Offered Fall 2017)

### COML H398 THEORIES AND METHODS IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

*Ulrich Schönherr*  
Humanities (HU)

This course is both a seminar on theory and method and a workshop on the development of the senior thesis. It introduces students to a variety of critical approaches and their application, and assists them in developing conceptual frameworks for the senior thesis projects they are in the process of formulating. Prerequisite(s): Students must be senior majors or minors in Comparative Literature. (Typically offered every fall at either Haverford or Bryn Mawr; offered Fall 2017 at Bryn Mawr)

### COML H399 SENIOR SEMINAR

*Israel Burshatin, David Sedley*  
Humanities (HU)

Oral and written presentations of work in progress, culminating in a senior thesis and comprehensive oral examination. Prerequisite(s): Students must be senior majors in Comparative Literature. (Typically offered every spring at either Haverford or Bryn Mawr; offered Spring 2018 at Haverford)

## COURSES AT BRYN MAWR (2017-2018)

### COML B200 INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

*Shiamin Kwa*

This course explores a variety of approaches to the comparative or transnational study of

literature through readings of several kinds: texts from different cultural traditions that raise questions about the nature and function of storytelling and literature; texts that comment on, respond to, and rewrite other texts from different historical periods and nations; translations; and readings in critical theory. (Offered Fall 2017)

### COML B398 THEORIES AND METHODS IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

*Azade Seyhan*

This course, required of all senior comparative literature majors in preparation for writing the senior thesis in the spring semester, has a twofold purpose: to review interpretive approaches informed by critical theories that enhance our understanding of literary and cultural texts; and to help students prepare a preliminary outline of their senior theses. Throughout the semester, students research theoretical paradigms that bear on their own comparative thesis topics in order to situate those topics in an appropriate critical context. This is a required for majors and minors. (Offered Fall 2017)

### ARCH B217 CAPTIVE GREECE, CAPTOR ROME?

*Alice Donohue*

The Western classical tradition is not monolithic, but contains elements from both ancient Greek and Roman culture. This course examines the relationship between the two, from the Hellenistic era through the Roman Empire, and its later consequences, emphasizing the primary evidence of the visual arts and contemporary texts. Suggested preparation: 100-level coursework in history of art, classics, archaeology, or comparative literature. (Offered Spring 2018)

### ARTW B261 WRITING POETRY I

*Airea Matthews*

In this course students will learn to "read like a writer," while grappling with the work of accomplished poets, and providing substantive commentary on peers' work. Through diverse readings, students will examine craft strategies at work in both formal and free verse poems, such as diction, metaphor, imagery, lineation, metrical patterns, irony, and syntax. The course will cover shaping forms (such as elegy and pastoral) as well as given forms, such as the sonnet, ghazal, villanelle, etc. Students will discuss strategies for conveying the literal meaning of a poem (e.g., through sensory description and clear, compelling language) and the concealed meaning of a text

## COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (BI-CO)

(e.g., through metaphor, imagery, meter, irony, and shifts in diction and syntax). By the end of the course, students will have generated new material, shaped and revised draft poems, and significantly grown as writers by experimenting with various aspects of craft. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **CSTS B375 INTERPRETING MYTHOLOGY**

*Radcliffe Edmonds*

The myths of the Greeks have provoked outrage and fascination, interpretation and retelling, censorship and elaboration, beginning with the Greeks themselves. We will see how some of these stories have been read and understood, recounted and revised, in various cultures and eras, from ancient tellings to modern movies. We will also explore some of the interpretive theories by which these tales have been understood, from ancient allegory to modern structural and semiotic theories. The student should gain a more profound understanding of the meaning of these myths to the Greeks themselves, of the cultural context in which they were formulated. At the same time, this course should provide the student with some familiarity with the range of interpretations and strategies of understanding that people of various cultures and times have applied to the Greek myths during the more than two millennia in which they have been preserved. Preference to upperclassmen, previous coursework in myth required. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **EALC B240 TOPICS IN CHINESE FILM**

*Shiamin Kwa*

This is a topics course. Course content varies. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **EALC B255 UNDERSTANDING COMICS: INTRODUCTION TO READING THE GRAPHIC NOVEL**

*Shiamin Kwa*

The graphic narrative form has proliferated at a breathtaking rate in the last several decades. Called “comics,” “graphic novels,” and many other terms in between, these word-image hybrids have been embraced by both popular and critical audiences. But what is a graphic novel? How do we conceive of these texts and, more importantly, how do we read, interpret and write about them? This course is focused on approaches to reading the graphic novel, with a focus on a subgenre called the “literary comic.” Our first approach is to consider different kinds of primary source texts and ask if and how they fulfill our understanding of the graphic narrative. This

consideration will include various test cases, from wordless comics, to texts used as images, to the many varieties of word-image hybrids that are called comic books. Our second approach is to examine different scholarly approaches to analyzing graphic narratives, based in different disciplines such as memoir studies, trauma studies, visual and material culture, history, semiotics, and, especially, narratology. Students taking this course for their major in EALC or COML should meet with the instructor to discuss specific requirements. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **EALC B355 ANIMALS, VEGETABLES, MINERALS IN EAST ASIAN LITERATURE**

*Shiamin Kwa*

This semester, we will explore how artists question, explore, celebrate, and critique the relationships between humans and the environment. Through a topics-focused course, students will examine the ways that narratives about environment have shaped the way that humans have defined themselves. We will be reading novels and short stories and viewing films that contest conventional binaries of man and animal, civilization and nature, tradition and technology, and even truth and fiction. “Animals, Vegetables, Minerals” does not follow chronological or geographical frameworks, but chooses texts that engage the three categories enumerated as the major themes of our course. There are no prerequisites or language expectations, but students should have some basic knowledge of East Asian, especially Sinophone, history and culture, or be willing to do some additional reading (suggested by the instructor) to achieve an adequate contextual background for exploring these texts. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **ENGL B229 MOVIES AND MASS POLITICS**

*Michael Tratner*

Movies and mass politics emerged together, altering entertainment and government in strangely similar ways. Fascism and Communism claimed an inherent relation to the masses and hence to movies; Hollywood rejected such claims. We will examine films that allude to Communism and Fascism, seeking to understand how they join in political debates and comment upon the mass experience of movie going. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **ENGL B388 CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN FICTION**

*Linda-Susan Beard*

## COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (BI-CO)

Noting that the official colonial independence of most African countries dates back only half a century, this course focuses on the fictive experiments of the most recent decade. A few highly controversial works from the 90s serve as an introduction to very recent work. Most works are in English. To experience depth as well as breadth, there is a small cluster of works from South Africa. With novels and tales from elsewhere on the huge African continent, we will get a glimpse of "living in the present" in history and letters. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **FREN B213 THEORY IN PRACTICE: CRITICAL DISCOURSES IN THE HUMANITIES**

*Marie Sanquer*

By bringing together the study of major theoretical currents of the 20th century and the practice of analyzing literary works in the light of theory, this course aims at providing students with skills to use literary theory in their own scholarship. The selection of theoretical readings reflects the history of theory (psychoanalysis, structuralism, narratology), as well as the currents most relevant to the contemporary academic field: Post-structuralism, Post-colonialism, Gender Studies, and Ecocriticism. They are paired with a diverse range of short stories (Poe, Kafka, Camus, Borges, Calvino, Morrison, Djébar, Ngozi Adichie) that we discuss along with our study of theoretical texts. The class will be conducted in English with an additional hour in French for students wishing to take it for French credit. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **FREN B325 TOPICS: ETUDES AVANCÉES**

*Rudy Le Menthéour, Marie Sanquer*

Current topic description: This course offers an insight into Francophone North-African colonial and post-colonial literature by focusing on the role of women in society, particularly through the lens of topics such as politics, religion and sexuality. In addition to literary texts by Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian writers, we will study historical and sociological sources as well as North African feminist traditions. Course will be taught in French. (Offered Fall 2017 and Spring 2018)

### **FREN B350 VOIX MÉDIÉVALES ET ÉCHOS MODERNES**

*Grace Armstrong*

A study of selected 19th- and 20th-century works inspired by medieval subjects, such as the Grail

and Arthurian legends and the Tristan and Yseult stories, and by medieval genres, such as the roman, saints' lives, or the miracle play. Among the texts and films studied are works by Bonnefoy, Cocteau, Flaubert, Genevoix, Giono, and Gracq. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **GERM B245 INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO GERMAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE**

*Qinna Shen*

Current topic: Crime and Courtroom Drama. This is a film-based course about political trials at critical junctures of German history. Current topic description: This is a film-based course about political trials at critical junctures of German history. Taught in English. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **GERM B320 TOPICS IN GERMAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE**

*Staff*

Current topic: This course focuses on the development of strong international and cross-cultural trends in German literature of modernity. Taught in English. Students wanting German credit will meet for additional hour per week. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **HART B110 CRITICAL APPROACHES TO VISUAL REPRESENTATION: IDENTIFICATION IN THE CINEMA**

*Homay King*

An introduction to the analysis of film through particular attention to the role of the spectator. Why do moving images compel our fascination? How exactly do film spectators relate to the people, objects, and places that appear on the screen? Wherein lies the power of images to move, attract, repel, persuade, or transform its viewers? In this course, students will be introduced to film theory through the rich and complex topic of identification. We will explore how points of view are framed in cinema, and how those viewing positions differ from those of still photography, advertising, video games, and other forms of media. Students will be encouraged to consider the role the cinematic medium plays in influencing our experience of a film: how it is not simply a film's content, but the very form of representation that creates interactions between the spectator and the images on the screen. Film screenings include *Psycho*, *Being John Malkovich*, and others. Course is geared to freshman and those with no prior film

## COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (BI-CO)

instruction. Fulfills History of Art major 100-level course requirement, Film Studies minor Introductory course or Theory course requirement.  
(Offered Spring 2018)

### **ITAL B212 ITALY TODAY: NEW VOICES, NEW WRITERS, NEW LITERATURE**

*Roni Kubati*

This course, taught in English, will focus primarily on the works of the so-called “migrant writers” who, having adopted the Italian language, have become a significant part of the new voice of Italy. In addition to the aesthetic appreciation of these works, this course will also take into consideration the social, cultural, and political factors surrounding them. The course will focus on works by writers who are now integral to Italian canon – among them: Cristina Ali-Farah, Igiaba Scego, Ghermandi Gabriella, Amara Lakhous. As part of the course, movies concerned with various aspects of Italian Migrant literature will be screened and analyzed. One additional hour for students who want Italian credit. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **RUSS B214 ANNA KARENINA AND THE TASKS OF LITERATURE**

*Bella Grigoryan*

This course takes Lev Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* as its centerpiece and most sustained point of interest. We will begin with a few of Tolstoy’s important early works (notably, his *Childhood. Boyhood. Youth.*), then read *Anna Karenina* slowly and in detail, identifying its chief formal and thematic characteristics and thinking about the novel’s aesthetics in relation to the ethical questions it raises. These questions traverse a broad range of topics from marital infidelity and legally recognized forms of kinship to a critique of Russian imperial geopolitics and military interventions from a standpoint that prefigures Tolstoy’s late-in-life radical pacifism. Next, we will read three novels (Gustave Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary*, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter*, Alexander Pushkin’s *Eugene Onegin*) that, much as they predate Tolstoy’s masterpiece, help us bring the central preoccupations of *Anna Karenina* into sharper focus. We will conclude the course with Tolstoy’s late short works, a short story by Anton Chekhov, and Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*, which we will contemplate as a reply to and a potential re-writing of *Anna Karenina*, since the English

modernist famously declared that she had “nearly every scene of *Anna Karenina* branded in [her.]” All readings in English. (Offered Spring 2018)

### **SPAN B260 ARIEL/CALIBÁN Y EL DISCURSO AMERICANO**

*Enrique Sacerio-Garí*

A study of the transformations of Ariel/Calibán as images of Latin American culture. Prerequisite: SPAN B110 and/or B120 (previously SPAN B200/B202); or another SPAN 200-level course. (Offered Fall 2017)

### **SPAN B370 LITERATURA Y DELINCUENCIA**

*María Cristina Quintero*

A study of the origins, development and transformation of the picaresque genre from its origins in 16th- and 17th-century Spain through the 21st century. Using texts, literature, painting, and film from Spain and Latin America, we will explore topics such as the construction of the fictive self, the poetics and politics of criminality, transgression in gender and class. Among the topics to be discussed: criminalization of poverty, prostitution, and the feminine picaresque. Prerequisite: At least one SPAN 200-level course. (Offered Fall 2017)