

2016-2017

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AT WILLIAMS

What is Comparative Literature?

Comp Lit is the study of literature from a range of different contexts and traditions. This includes literature produced by various cultures around the world, but also texts that belong to different times, different genres, and different media.

At Williams, Comp Lit is a vibrant interdisciplinary program that brings together faculty and courses from a range of departments and programs, including the foreign language and literature departments, English, Africana Studies, Latino/a Studies, American Studies, Religion, and Theatre, among others.

What kinds of courses can I take in Comp Lit?

Courses listed in the Comparative Literature section of the course catalog cover a wide range of texts and cultures: from the Russian novel to Chinese poetry, from the Qur'an to Japanese film. There are also courses that read different kinds of "texts," like fashion, museums, or the mass media. Classes are typically small, and students receive close attention from professors who work to meet their individual needs and interests.

Do I have to know a foreign language?

Not necessarily. Many of our students are studying foreign languages and reading literature in the original language, but all the courses listed on the back of this sheet are taught entirely in English, and many have no prerequisites.

Can I major in Comp Lit?

Yes! Within the major, we have two tracks students can choose from. In the first track, students focus on a specific national language and work up to advanced literature courses with readings in the original language. The other track emphasizes classes taught in English and reading in translation, but covers a wider range of traditions.

For information, contact the program chair: Janneke.vandeStadt@williams.edu

Comp Lit Courses / Spring 2017

Core Courses

- COMP 111 The Nature of Narrative (W) – Rouhi
- COMP 117 Intro to Cultural Theory (W) – Thorne
- COMP 202 Modern Drama – Pethica
- COMP 206 Book of Job & Joban Literature (W) – Dekel
- COMP 224 The Cookbook Through History – Goldstein
- COMP 227 Chinese Performative Culture – He
- COMP 229 Japanese Society, 800s-1800s (D) – Bolton & Siniawer
- COMP 230 Renaissance: Self and World (D) (W) – Vasiliauskas
- COMP 240 Intro to Literary Theory (W) – Pye
- COMP 242 Americans Abroad (D, W) – Fox
- COMP 246 Vampires: Fiction/Film/Fashion (W) – Kone
- COMP 259 Adultery in the 19th-Century Novel Tutorial (W) – Cassidy
- COMP 285 World War II in Russian Culture – Aliev
- COMP 287 Intro to Post Colonial Studies (D, W) – Anam
- COMP 288 Comic Abuse in Greece and Rome (W) – Draper
- COMP 292 Revolution & Counter-Revolution (D, W) – Egeiq
- COMP 294 Philosophy & Narrative Fiction Tutorial (W) – Mladenovic
- COMP 301 Literary Theory & The Sublime – Bolton
- COMP 309 Complexion Complexities – Ford
- COMP 324 The Digital Caribbean – Josephs
- COMP 326 Queer Temporalities Tutorial (W) – Hidalgo
- COMP 349 Max Weber & Critical Theory – Josephson
- COMP 355 Contemporary Theatre & Performance – Holzapfel
- COMP 358 Across the Oceans and Seas (D, W) – Anam
- COMP 395 Signs of History – Johnston

Core courses are literature courses with a particularly strong emphasis on critical theory or on comparison across cultures, languages, media, etc. Courses not on this list that meet these criteria may be counted with the chair or advisor's approval.

Electives

- COMP 107 The Trojan War (W) – Hoppin
- COMP 128 Reading Asian American Lit (W) – Wang
- COMP 204 20th-Century Russian Literature – van de Stadt
- COMP 223 Japanese Food Culture (D) – Kagaya
- COMP 237 Classical Arabic Poetry – Friedman
- COMP 249 Chinese Science Fiction – Liu
- COMP 362 Story, Self, and Society Tutorial (W) – Simko
- COMP 281 Banlieue in Lit, Music, Film (D) – Saint-Just (*in French*)

Any literature course at the college can be counted as an elective for the major. Appropriate courses in art or music may also be counted with the permission of the chair or your advisor.