

THE FIELD

Comparative literature is the international, interdisciplinary study of literary and other texts as modes of human expression. Courses in comparative literature examine literary works from many national traditions and study the relations between literature and the other arts. The comparative perspective includes insights from philosophy, history, linguistics, sociology, the media, and other human sciences. Four tracks lead to the bachelor of arts (BA) degree in comparative literature. All emphasize analysis and comparison of works from several national literary traditions (one of which may be English) and the study of these works in their original language. The fourth track also explores the relation of literature to an extraliterary discipline, such as sociology, history, music, or film, to name a few possibilities. Comparative literature offers a translation and interpreting studies certificate and courses in interpreting and translation.

A minor in comparative literature is available.

THE MAJOR

Comparative literature students select one of four interdepartmental options. The options are the general language/literature track, which requires work in two languages (one of which may be English); the advanced language/literature track with elementary work in a third language; the advanced language/literature track with upper-level work in a third language; and the literature and related discipline track. COMP-LIT 394TI: Literary Theory and Criticism is required for each track and counts toward the credits required for the major. In addition to the requirements of these tracks, students take COMP-LIT 357 for their Junior Year Writing requirement.

HONORS

Students should speak with the program's honors coordinator for information on how to pursue honors opportunities within the major.

STUDY ABROAD

Just as the comparative literature program often plays host to exchange students from abroad, universities in Brazil, Ecuador, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, and other countries have provided opportunities for semester-long and yearlong study to majors in comparative literature. Interested students should consult the International Programs Office (413-545-2710, umass.edu/ipo) for specific information on such overseas study. Costs are usually very reasonable, most credits transfer to UMass Amherst, and financial aid is available.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

EDUCATION/TEACHING: Elementary, high school, and college-level teaching, English as a Second Language in the United States and abroad, textbook and educational policy writing

BUSINESS: Banks, travel organizations, publishing houses, shipping firms, sales organizations, advertising agencies, public relations firms, the media

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES: Foreign service researcher or writer, diplomatic corps, archivist, public relations, or civilian support for military installations abroad, cultural affairs consultant, Peace Corps/VISTA member

PROFESSIONAL: Librarian, archivist, translator, interpreter, minister, lawyer specializing in international law or international labor relations, medical practitioner, foreign correspondent

ARTS: Artist/writer, editor, arts management, consultant, museum researcher, curator, film production, literary translator

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND FINE ARTS

The humanities focus on human creativity, endeavor, and culture. The imaginative and creative arts—literary and performing—derive from life and teach about human behavior and constructs of social reality. The history of social, political, and economic systems illuminates and shapes the present and future. Students in the College of Humanities and Fine Arts are expected to broaden their perspectives on individual and cultural expression within their own and other societies, to understand the development and evolution of the discipline of study in relation to the culture from which it emanates, and to learn the methods by which knowledge in the discipline is gained.

Office: 430 Herter Hall

Phone: 413-545-0929

Website: umass.edu/complit