

Comparative Literature

The Comparative Literature program at Washington University offers a Master of Arts (AM); a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD); a combined PhD with Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, or Spanish; a graduate certificate in Translation Studies; and a graduate certificate in Early Modern Studies. In addition, a track within the PhD program for international writers targets promising authors, translators, and public intellectuals from around the world who wish to enhance their career by coupling it with academic preparation in comparatist literary studies in the United States. In close cooperation with other humanities programs, Comparative Literature enables students to tailor a course of study appropriate to their areas of interest, strengths, and long-term goals.

At its core, Comparative Literature aims to provide students with a grounding in contemporary and historically significant methodologies and approaches to comparative literature, including especially those pertinent to the following four areas: transcultural studies; translation studies; literature, politics and society; and new and old media. Students combine this core with the thorough study of at least one primary literature (usually nationally or geographically defined) and grounding in three methods or theories appropriate to developing approaches to their literary field. Depending on the focus of their degree and course of study, graduates typically apply for academic positions in comparative literature programs; language, literature, and culture departments; and such programs as gender studies, theater, performing arts, and area studies. Some graduates choose to pursue employment in publishing and arts-related fields outside of academia.

Phone: 314-935-5170
Email: complit@wustl.edu
Website: <http://complit.wustl.edu>

Faculty

Director

Lynne Tatlock (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/lynne-tatlock/>)

Hortense and Tobias Lewin Distinguished Professor in the Humanities
PhD, Indiana University

Endowed Professors

Timothy Moore (<https://classics.wustl.edu/people/timothy-moore/>)

John and Penelope Biggs Distinguished Professor of Classics
PhD, University of North Carolina

Anca Parvulescu (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/anca-parvulescu/>)

Liselotte Dieckmann Professor of Comparative Literature
PhD, University of Minnesota

Vincent Sherry (<https://english.wustl.edu/people/vincent-sherry/>)

Howard Nemerov Professor in the Humanities
PhD, University of Toronto

Gerhild Scholz Williams (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/gerhild-williams/>)

Barbara Schaps Thomas and David M. Thomas Professor in the Humanities
PhD, University of Washington

Professors

Nancy E. Berg (<https://jimes.wustl.edu/people/nancy-e-berg/>)

PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Lingchei Letty Chen (<https://ealc.wustl.edu/people/lingchei-letty-chen/>)

PhD, Columbia University

Rebecca Copeland (<https://ealc.wustl.edu/people/rebecca-copeland/>)

PhD, Columbia University

Tili Boon Cuillé (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/tili-boon-cuille/>)

PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Matt Erlin (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/matt-erlin/>)

PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Robert K. Henke (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/robert-henke/>)

PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Catherine Keane (<https://classics.wustl.edu/people/catherine-keane/>)

PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Stephanie Kirk (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/stephanie-kirk/>)

PhD, New York University

Tabea Linhard (<https://rll.wustl.edu/people/tabea-alexalinhard/>)

PhD, Duke University

Joseph Loewenstein (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/joe-loewenstein/>)

PhD, Yale University

Marvin H. Marcus (<http://ealc.wustl.edu/people/marvin-marcus/>)

PhD, University of Michigan

Erin McGlothlin (<https://complit.wustl.edu/people/erin-mcglathlin-0/>)

PhD, University of Virginia

Angela Miller (<https://complit.wustl.edu/people/angela-miller/>)

PhD, Yale University

Wolfram Schmidgen (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/wolfram-schmidgen/>)

PhD, University of Chicago

Henry Schvey (<https://pad.wustl.edu/people/henry-i-schvey/>)

PhD, Indiana University

Michael Sherberg (<https://rll.wustl.edu/people/michael-sherberg/>)

PhD, University of California, Los Angeles

Harriet Stone (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/harriet-stone/>)

PhD, Brown University

Associate Professors

J. Dillon Brown (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/j-dillon-brown/>)

PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Ignacio Infante (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/ignacio-infante/>)

PhD, Rutgers University

Caroline Kita (<http://german.wustl.edu/people/caroline-kita/>)

PhD, Duke University

Ji-Eun Lee (<https://ealc.wustl.edu/people/ji-eun-lee/>)

PhD, New York University

William McKelvy (<https://english.wustl.edu/people/william-mckelvy/>)

PhD, University of Virginia

Steven Meyer (<https://english.wustl.edu/people/steven-meyer/>)

PhD, Yale University

Jamie Newhard (<https://ealc.wustl.edu/people/jamie-newhard/>)

PhD, Columbia University

Jessica Rosenfeld (<https://english.wustl.edu/people/jessica-rosenfeld/>)

PhD, University of Pennsylvania

Alexander Stefaniak (<https://music.wustl.edu/people/alexander-stefaniak/>)

PhD, Eastman School of Music

Julia Walker (<https://english.wustl.edu/people/julia-walker/>)

PhD, Duke University

Assistant Professors

Aylin Bademsoy (<https://german.wustl.edu/people/aylin-bademsoy/>)

PhD, University of California, Davis

André Fischer (<https://german.wustl.edu/people/andre-fischer/>)

PhD, Stanford University

Sarah Koellner (<https://german.wustl.edu/people/sarah-koellner/>)

PhD, Vanderbilt University

Professor of Practice

Matthias Goeritz (<https://complit.wustl.edu/people/matthias-goeritz/>)

PhD, Washington University

Lecturer

Philip Purchase (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/philip-purchase/>)

PhD, University of Southern California

Professors Emeriti

Dolores Pesce (<https://music.wustl.edu/people/dolores-pesce/>)

Avis Blewett Professor of Music in Arts & Sciences

PhD, University of Maryland

Paul Michael Lützeler (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/paul-michael-lutzeler/>)

Rosa May Distinguished University Professor in the Humanities

PhD, Indiana University

Robert E. Hegel (<https://complit.wustl.edu/people/robert-e-hegel/>)

Liselotte Dieckmann Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature in

Arts & Sciences; Professor Emeritus of Chinese

PhD, Columbia University

Naomi Lebowitz (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/naomi-lebowitz/>)

Hortense and Tobias Lewin Distinguished Professor Emerita in the Humanities

PhD, Washington University

Stamos Metzidakis (<http://complit.artsci.wustl.edu/people/stamos-metzidakis/>)

PhD, Columbia University

Degree Requirements

PhD in Comparative Literature

The PhD in Comparative Literature program requires 60 units of course credit plus a dissertation. Course distribution normally entails the following: at least 12 core credits in comparative literature seminars, including Comp Lit 502 Introduction to Comparative Literature; 12 credits in one nationally, ethnically, or geographically defined literature; and 6 credits in a second such literature. The program also requires the study of a third discipline relevant to the student's intellectual and critical concerns, such as a third literature, music, the plastic arts, philosophy, history, or film. At a minimum, students need to demonstrate — in addition to superior skills in English — superior ability in at least a second language and reading skills in a third language. Beyond the minimum, the choice and number of languages required correspond to each student's three areas of concentration.

In addition to taking courses, students will take three comprehensive examinations that have both written and oral components. The first two will help guide the student toward the dissertation; the third examination is the dissertation proposal.

Students interested in pursuing one of the combined degrees should apply to the appropriate language and literature program (Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese or Spanish), indicating their interest in the dual degree. The application will be vetted by the respective program and by Comparative Literature. The dual degree requires students to complete all requirements in the home discipline plus four courses in core categories in Comparative Literature, including Comp Lit 502. Students in the dual-degree programs are expected to include a comparatist component in their dissertations.

AM in Comparative Literature

The AM in Comparative Literature may be earned along the way to the PhD; Comparative Literature normally does not admit students who intend to pursue the AM only. It requires 36 units of course credit, including Comp Lit 502 and three additional courses in Comparative Literature on the graduate level. The remaining 24 units may be pursued in Comparative Literature or in affiliated departments or programs. All students earning an AM in Comparative Literature must demonstrate superior skills in English and, at a minimum, reading ability in one additional language pertinent to their areas of interest. These 36 units count toward the PhD requirements. Students participating in a Mentored Teaching Experience (MTE) may teach in Comparative Literature and/or in one of our allied programs, including language instruction. To be qualified to serve as an assistant in instruction in a language department, students may be required to take the relevant course in language pedagogy. The program strives to give students a variety of teaching experiences that prepare them for the academic market in their areas of concentration.

Graduate Certificate in Translation Studies

With its interest in crossing the borders between languages, cultures, and national literatures, the discipline of comparative literature implicitly performs and assesses theoretically the function and value of "translation" in the widest sense of the term. The Graduate Certificate in Translation Studies offered by Comparative Literature explicitly supports both the practical turn to translation and the critical and theoretical assessment of translation in the context of globalization, multiculturalism, cultural hybridity, postcolonial theory, and interdisciplinarity. The certificate requires 15 course credits overall, 6 of which may count toward both the certificate and the PhD degree and 9 of which may be allocated only to the certificate. Applicants must already be enrolled in a PhD program at Washington University.

Graduate Certificate in Early Modern Studies

The Graduate Certificate in Early Modern Studies enables students to develop interdisciplinary and transnational expertise outside of their home departments; such expertise can generate innovative work at the dissertation level and beyond. Through courses, reading groups, summer seminars, conferences, and teaching opportunities, certificate students will come into a wider intellectual community of early modern faculty and graduate students from several departments. Students who satisfy certificate requirements will earn the Graduate Certificate in Early Modern Studies along with a PhD in their home department. The certificate takes advantage of two long-standing strengths in Early Modern Studies at Washington University: a long tradition of interdisciplinary work and a commitment to cross national and geolinguistic boundaries. In particular, Comparative Literature — where the certificate is housed — has created strong cross-departmental links between Eastern and Western departments and programs.