

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.

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