

Comparative Literature (PhD)

Comparative Literature offers a core of courses in the discipline and draws on the teaching and scholarly resources of faculty members in more than 20 programs in language, literature, culture, and area studies.

Students seeking the doctoral degree are expected to develop extensive knowledge of one world-language literature and broad knowledge of a second. They are required to complete, in effect, the equivalent of a master's degree in one world-language literature, while demonstrating proficiency in either two additional languages or in one additional language and a third area of relevant study. The program also prepares students in literary theory and criticism and in the scholarly and critical methods of studying the relationships among various literatures and cultures. Interdisciplinary study is also encouraged, as students explore the interrelationships between literature and other fields (such as art history, gender studies, ethnic studies, anthropology, film, philosophy, and psychology) as part of their programs of work. After fulfilling all requirements in the areas of literature, theory, and language and passing both qualifying and comprehensive examinations, students choose a period, genre, or historical, cultural, intellectual, or critical problem on which to write a dissertation.

Work toward the Doctor of Philosophy is offered in collaboration with the Departments of Asian Studies, Classics, English, French and Italian, Germanic Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Slavic and Eurasian Studies, and Spanish and Portuguese, as well as many area-studies centers within the College of Liberal Arts. Additionally, students may undertake relevant coursework in anthropology, history, linguistics, philosophy, LGBTQ studies, women's and gender studies, African and African diaspora studies, Asian American studies, Mexican-American and Latina/o studies, art and art history, music, radio-television-film, and other units approved by the graduate advisor in comparative literature.

Graduate Handbook

Graduate handbook information is updated and maintained by each program. Graduate handbooks are available within each program's office and [online](#). Please contact the program with concerns or questions.

Total hours required: 30 Requirements

To be admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree, the student must have earned a master's degree in comparative literature, in a single world language and literature, or in a related discipline such as art history, folklore, or philosophy. In addition, they must have passed the qualifying examination, which tests the student's knowledge of literary theory and critical methodology and of the first world language and literature.

The student is expected to take at least 30 semester hours of coursework beyond the Master of Arts level, including six semester hours for the dissertation. Each student must also pass a comprehensive examination, which is normally taken upon completion of coursework, and a prospectus examination, which must be taken by the end of the fall or spring semester after the semester in which the student passes the comprehensive examination. The student must then write a dissertation, which may involve, for example, the comparison of works, traditions, themes, writers, or periods from two or more different literatures and cultures. The dissertation may involve the study of literature and some other discipline. It may be a substantial translation, equipped with a general introduction analyzing the work chosen and/or discussing

the problems and theory of translation and provided with detailed, explanatory notes. It may be some other project that the student designs under the supervision of the dissertation committee and that satisfies the aims and interests of the program. Each student should develop a thorough command of two world languages, and proficiency in either a third world language or a relevant area of study. For the purposes of the comprehensive examination, a student may designate as the third area of study either the third world language or another discipline related to the program—for example, an interdisciplinary field, a set of courses linked by a critical or theoretical question, or a topic in cultural studies.

Complete information about the world language requirement, course requirements, and the qualifying and comprehensive examinations is available from the graduate advisor.

Code	Title	Hours
All students must also follow the requirements and policies below:		
Graduate Liberal Arts Requirements		
Graduate University Requirements		