

**HANDBOOK**  
**FOR**  
**UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS**  
**IN**  
**COMPARATIVE LITERATURE**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE**

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

## Table of Contents

### PART I: INTRODUCTION

1. Testing Your Interest
2. Seeing an Undergraduate Advisor
3. Declaring the Major
4. Using the Comparative Literature Website
5. Minor in Translation Studies

### PART II: DESIGNING A DEGREE IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

1. Requirements for Major
2. Honors Subplan
3. Selecting Courses in Comparative Literature
4. Selecting Courses in Other Departments
5. Study Abroad
6. Directed Reading
7. Internships
8. Preparing to Graduate
9. Thinking About the Future
10. Checklist for Major in Comparative Literature

### PART IV: WRITING AN HONORS THESIS

1. Registering for the Honors Thesis
2. Description of the Honors Thesis
3. Honors Thesis Advisor and Second Reader
4. Staying in Touch
5. Drafting the Honors Thesis
6. Research for the Honors Thesis
7. Formatting the Honors Thesis
8. Parts of the Thesis
9. Submission and Evaluation of the Honors Thesis
10. Form for Honors Thesis Preliminary Proposal
11. Form for Honors Thesis Progress Report
12. Checklist for the Honors Thesis

### PART V: OTHER INFORMATION

1. Frequently Asked Questions
2. Understanding Grades
3. Plagiarism
4. Course Evaluations
5. Getting to Know the Faculty and Staff
6. Prizes/Awards
7. Contact Information for Major and Minor

# Part I

## Introduction

Welcome to the Department of Comparative Literature. This handbook is designed to introduce you to our department and our undergraduate program. It outlines the requirements for graduating with a major in Comparative Literature, and it provides ideas on how to select courses and design your individualized program of study. It also lists various policies, procedures, and services for students in Comparative Literature. We hope it contains everything you need to know about getting a degree in Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan.

Our faculty represents the diversity of Comparative Literature as a discipline. Faculty members in our department all hold joint appointments with other departments, including Afroamerican-African Studies, Asian Languages and Cultures, Classical Studies, English Literature, Germanic Languages, History, History of Art, Philosophy, Romance Languages, Near Eastern Studies, Slavic Languages and Literatures, and Women's Studies. Faculty members are also active in programs coordinated by the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, the Center for Chinese Studies, the Center for Russian and East European Studies, Modern Greek Studies, and the Residential College. While our faculty reflects a diversity of interests, perspectives, languages, and cultures, all of us are united by a passion for literature and a strong commitment to international and interdisciplinary approaches to literary and cultural studies. We encourage students to follow their curiosity and develop their commitments to literature, culture, and theoretical investigations by venturing beyond national and disciplinary boundaries, and to explore literature's intersections with other media and disciplines.

You have come to this department because, like the professors with whom you will be studying, you have an interest in other languages, literatures, and cultures; you enjoy reading and the discussions that follow thoughtful reading; you desire to become a strong, articulate writer; you are eager to delve into literature from all over the world; you are curious about the relation between literature and other disciplines. A major in Comparative

Literature provides an ideal intellectual site for students to draw connections across cultures, periods, genres, and disciplines in a rigorous yet individually designed way.

The goal of the Comparative Literature major is to help the student increase skills in analytical reading and argumentative writing, and to develop an understanding of the interrelationships among several literary traditions. Students in Comparative Literature acquire training in at least one foreign language. They study at least two literatures (one of which may be English) in the original languages, and they acquaint themselves with various theoretical, historical, and cultural perspectives on literary and cultural studies. Students take a capstone seminar in the fall semester of their senior year, and they have an option to write an Honors Thesis during the winter semester of their senior year.

The guidelines of the program allow great flexibility in shaping a course of study according to your intellectual goals. As a student majoring in Comparative Literature, you will have the opportunity to work with faculty in several departments. If you wish to pursue a **double major**, it may be possible to count some courses for your other major toward your major in Comparative Literature as well. If you have an interest in **translation**, it is possible to pursue a translation project as part of your coursework, or you could sign up for a **Minor in Translation Studies**. There is also the option of integrating one or two semesters of **study abroad** into your plans for the major.

We pride ourselves as a department on the amount of individual attention that we give to each student. As a student in our department, you should make it a continuing priority to get to know your professors and peers, in class and during office hours. You can meet other students majoring in Comparative Literature by participating in the Undergraduate Comparative Literature Association. We strongly encourage you to keep in regular touch with the Comparative Literature major advisors.

The Comparative Literature office is located in 2021 Tisch (the corridor on the second floor, between Angell Hall and Haven Hall). The office is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm on weekdays during the academic year. The

**student services coordinator** has useful information about courses, registration, enrollment status, honors theses, faculty interests, and student organizations. Along the corridor you will find displays with course flyers, announcements, and snapshots of our faculty and staff.

We invite you to become part of our community along the “Comp Lit Corridor.” Our department organizes an open house in late October for Comparative Literature majors and prospective students. We also host a holiday reception in December for all students and faculty in Comparative Literature. We encourage you to meet our lively and diverse community of graduate students, and to attend lectures and other events organized by the department, in order to learn more about new ideas and current debates in the field of Comparative Literature.

## 1. TESTING YOUR INTEREST

Students find their way into Comparative Literature at different stages of their undergraduate career.

**If you are in your first year** and you think you might want to pursue a degree in Comparative Literature, we recommend that you take one of our introductory courses at the 100 or 200 level. For example you may take a section of COMPLIT 122 (Writing World Literatures) to fulfill the LS&A First Year Writing Requirement. Or you may choose COMPLIT 140 (First Year Literary Seminar), which is especially designed to give first year students the experience of a seminar taught by a faculty member. For general lecture courses at the 100 or 200 level, we highly recommend COMPLIT 100 (Global X), COMPLIT 141 (Great Performances), COMPLIT 200 (Introduction to Translation Across Disciplines), COMPLIT 222 (Great Books in World Literatures) or COMPLIT 240 (Literature Across Borders). You should also make sure that you are working on your language skills, so that you are ready to take more advanced literature courses in a foreign language by your third year.

If you are entering your **second or third year** and are making progress in your foreign language(s), you may start taking courses at the 200 level and beyond. COMPLIT 322 (Translating World Literatures) fulfills the LS&A Upper Level Writing Requirement, and allows you to develop a translation project. We offer topics courses at the 300 level and courses in comparative methodologies at the 400 level. Students who are already majoring in another department or pursuing studies in the Residential College may find it is possible to **add Comparative Literature as a second major**. Some Complit courses can be counted toward the “Comparative Culture & Identity” track in **International Studies**. All students in this track must take one of the following: COMPLIT 240 - Literature Across Borders (fall), COMPLIT 222- Great Books in World Literatures (winter), or COMPLIT 322 - Translating World Literatures.

If you are preparing for (or returning from) **Study Abroad**, a major in Comparative Literature affords you the flexibility to integrate courses taken abroad into your undergraduate curriculum.

## 2. ADVISING

If you have taken a course in Comparative Literature and decided that you would like to pursue a Comparative Literature degree, or if you simply want to explore the possibility further, make an appointment with an undergraduate advisor. **Appointments** can be made on the Comparative Literature website or by visiting the student services coordinator in the Comparative Literature office in 2021 Tisch. If you have urgent questions, you may contact the Comparative Literature office at (734) 763-2351.

Feel free to make an appointment with a Comparative Literature undergraduate advisor any time you have questions about your program of study in Comparative Literature or the major in general . For general questions related to your work in LSA outside of our department, **LSA provides general advisors to every student in the college.** If you have questions regarding college matters (such as transfer credits or LSA graduation requirements) you should make an appointment with a general advisor in 1255 Angell Hall.

It is required that students see a Comparative Literature advisor at least twice in their career: once at the beginning, to declare the major, and once at the end. This final visit is called a senior audit. For the the senior audit, graduating seniors are required to see an undergraduate advisor in Comparative Literature in the first term of the senior year in order to complete a check of all the requirements.

However, we urge you to see an undergraduate advisor at least once per term to make sure that all of your requirements are being met and to keep current on department policies and procedures. To guarantee consistent, personal guidance, the Comparative Literature Department has appointed a Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) and one staff member as undergraduate advisors. Since they are fully informed about the department's offerings, they will also help you plan a coherent and fulfilling curriculum in Comparative Literature.

It's also a good idea to **talk to Comparative Literature professors** whose classes you have taken, because they will know something about your

talents and interests and will be able to offer good advice. Or you can ask the student services coordinator in the Comparative Literature office about talking to other students currently in the program.

### **3. DECLARING THE MAJOR**

If you decide you want to work toward a degree in Comparative Literature, you must meet with an undergraduate advisor to complete the Major Declaration Form. The date on this form guarantees that you complete the major under the departmental requirements in effect at that time, no matter what subsequent changes may be made to the requirements. It also gives the Department and the College a way of keeping track of our Comparative Literature majors.

This declaration form does not lock you into an unbreakable contract. If you change your mind, you simply fill out another form in a different department. Similarly, you can switch into Comparative Literature from another major.

### **4. USING THE COMPARATIVE LITERATURE WEBSITE**

Our department website includes information about the undergraduate program and resources for our major. You can check out announcements for the Undergraduate Comparative Literature Association and other undergraduate initiatives and setup an advising appointment. You will also find a general description of our department, faculty profiles and contact information, alumni information, a department calendar for special events, and other news related to the Department of Comparative Literature. To find our website go to <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/complit>

### **5. MINOR IN TRANSLATION STUDIES**

The Minor in Translation Studies gives students an opportunity to learn about diverse histories, theories, and practices of translation. You can fulfill the requirements through a flexible sequence of courses selected from

different departments, including at least one translation course in the Department of Comparative Literature.

The minor is intended for students who would like to build on LSA's language requirement to explore translation between languages; it is also designed with flexibility for students who would like to explore the concept of translation more broadly as an interaction between cultures, media, discourses, and disciplines. The minor can therefore be integrated into diverse programs of study.

The goals of the minor are:

- to make translation more visible to students in their courses, their communities, and in the world at large;
- to promote critical and creative reflection on translation, and encourage students to pursue various translation activities;
- to introduce students to a wide range of academic, creative, and career opportunities related to translation.

## Part II

# Designing a Degree in Comparative Literature

If, after reading this handbook, you decide you want to pursue a degree in Comparative Literature, we recommend that you talk with undergraduate advisors, your Comparative Literature instructors, and students who are further along in their Comparative Literature major about the courses you would like to take during the remainder of your time at Michigan. If you spend some time now planning which courses you might take over the next few semesters, you'll probably feel a lot more confident about making the most of the courses offered and graduating on time.

### 1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR

**Prerequisites.** The major in Comparative Literature requires students to complete training in at least one foreign language, necessary for the study of foreign literature courses at the 300 level and beyond.

**Major Program.** Students are required to take a minimum of 33 credits, according to the following plan.

- 24 credits. A complementary grouping of literature courses at the 300 level or above in a minimum of two languages (one of which may be English). At least 12 credits are required in each literature.
  - If a student chooses to work in English as one of the chosen languages, then a maximum of 18 credits of undergraduate courses in COMPLIT may be applied to the major, of which the maximum number of credits at the 200-level is six. Students may also combine with COMPLIT courses other elective courses in the national literature departments and related fields, in consultation with an undergraduate advisor.
- 3 credits. The senior seminar, COMPLIT 495, is required for all students in the major.
- 6 credits. COMPLIT courses at the 200 level or above. For those writing a senior thesis during the last term, COMPLIT 496 (3 credits) may be used.

**Please note:** Most courses for the major should be taken at the 300 level and above. 100-level courses do not count toward the major. Students cannot count more than 6 credits of 200 level COMPLIT courses toward a major in Comparative Literature.

## 2. HONORS SUBPLAN

To be eligible for an Honors subplan in Comparative Literature, students should have a cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.4, and a 3.5 grade point average in courses counting toward the major. Students who elect an Honors degree will write an Honors Thesis during the final year of their course work.

## 3. SELECTING COURSES IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

The yearly LSA Bulletin lists all of the department's courses, while the LS&A Course Guide gives you detailed descriptions of courses being offered in any particular semester and identifies what requirements that particular section fulfills. Not every course listed in the Bulletin is offered every term, and new courses are introduced on a regular basis. Therefore, we recommend you check the online version for the most up-to-date information when considering which courses you want to take:

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/cg/>

**COMPLIT 100. Global X (3-4).** (HU). *May be repeated for credit 2x.* This course explores elements of contemporary US American popular culture within a global framework. Richly contextualized, "Sports Culture," "Apocalypse," "Fairy Tales," or "Vampires" emerge in their complex historical and transnational dimensions. Through a careful selection of guest lectures, "Global X" serves as an introduction to Comparative Literature. *(does not count for the major)*

**COMPLIT 122. Writing World Literatures (4).** (FYWR). *May not be repeated for credit.* An intensive writing course focusing on multiple translations of works, asking students to consider how these translation reflect different cultural times and milieu as well as choices in language. Students work intensely with issues of composition, argument, and source material related to the creative texts. *(does not count for the major)*

**COMPLIT 140. First-Year Literary Seminar** *Enrollment restricted to first-year students, including those with sophomore standing.* (3). (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 6*

*credits.* A course in the LS&A First-Year Seminar Program. Led by a faculty member, this course is a study of selected topics in literature through classroom discussion and the writing of essays. (*does not count for the major*)

**COMPLIT 141 / HONORS 241. Great Performances (4).** (HU). *May not be repeated for credit.* What makes a "great" performance? This course considers the relation between tradition and innovation in performing "great" works in music, theatre, dance. Students attend live performances and explore the concept of performance from various historical, critical and creative perspectives; they also develop their skills in writing about performance. (*does not count for the major*)

**COMPLIT 200. Translation Across Disciplines (3).** *May not be repeated for credit.* This course introduces translation as a movement across languages, media, cultures, discourses, and disciplines. We will explore the following questions: Why and how should we think about translation? What is translation? Who translates? When and where do we encounter translation in our daily lives, in our communities, and in the world at large?

**COMPLIT 222 / GTBOOKS 212. Great Books in World Literatures (3).** (HU). *May not be repeated for credit.* Students will read great books of world literatures across temporal and geographic boundaries, to explore a central theme (for example, "Youth" or "Revolution" or "The City"). The course encourages students to appreciate the complexity of the texts in their diverse cultural contexts, and to reflect on the idea of "World Literature."

**COMPLIT 240. Literature Across Borders (3; 2 in the half-term).** (HU). *May not be repeated for credit.* Emphasizing international and interdisciplinary approaches to literary studies, this course introduces students to current topics in comparative literature. Readings come from Western and non-Western cultures and are considered within a variety of contexts. This course may be counted toward a concentration in the International Studies subplan in Comparative Culture and Identity.

**COMPLIT 241. Topics in Comparative Literature COMPLIT 240. (3; 2 in the half-term).** (HU). *May not be repeated for credit.* W. An introduction to the range of comparative literature through topics representative of the discipline. Subjects vary but might include literary periods or movements (e.g., symbolism), genres (e.g., comedy), themes (e.g., the Don Juan theme), influence across national boundaries, relations between literature and other disciplines.

**COMPLIT 260. Europe and Its Others (3).** (HU). *May not be repeated for credit.* This course is designed to introduce students to the pan-European origins of literary study and alternatives to them, and to increase their cultural fluency.

**COMPLIT 280. America and Its Others (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for credit 2x.*

Introduces students to the cross currents between the United States and other countries, to understand this tradition and alternatives to it, and to increase cultural fluency.

**COMPLIT 322. Translating World Literatures (3)(HU)(ULWR).** *May not be repeated for credit.* This course provides an opportunity for students to use their skills in a foreign language to think about the history, theory, and practice of translating literary texts, and to work on a translation project of their own choosing. To meet the Upper Level Writing Requirement, the course is structured around a series of critical and creative writing assignments. The course also includes a range of readings in translation studies, with an emphasis on the cultural function of translation and the role of the translator in cross-cultural communication.

**COMPLIT 340 / MODGREEK 340. Travels to Greece (3).** (HU). *May not be repeated for credit.* The course examines the literature of modern travel to Greece and the issues it raises about antiquity, modernity, ethnography, otherness, exoticism, orientalism, and Western identity. Readings include works by British, French, German, American, and Greek authors. Art, film, and the media are also used to provide different measures of comparison.

**COMPLIT 350. The Text and Its Cultural Context (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.* A comparative study of literature and some expository writing from diverse cultures, focusing on the interdependence of text and context.

**COMPLIT 362. Comparative Studies in Form and Genre (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. May be elected more than once in the same term.* This topics course provides a general introduction to comparative studies in form and genre. Subject matter might include comparative poetics or the study of the novel across national boundaries. It might include comparative studies of such literary forms as the epic, lyric, or sonnet. In each case, a basic understanding of the issues of form or genre would supplement the close examination of literary works.

**COMPLIT 364. Comparative Literary Movements and Periods (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. May be elected more than once in the same term.* This topics course offers an introduction to studies in literary movements and periods across national boundaries. Examples include the traditional literary periods such as Romanticism or Modernism as well as movements such as surrealism, dada, or futurism, to name only a few. In each case, a basic understanding of the issues concerning literary movement or period would supplement the close examination of literary works.

**COMPLIT 372. Literature and Identity (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. May be elected more than once in the same term.* This course explores the emergence

of literary works in relation to identity, tracing how literary and human kind relate and how this relation changes.

**COMPLIT 374. Literature and the Body (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits.* This course interrogates the corporeal context of literary creation and meaning. It focuses not only on the influence of gender, sex, ability, disability, and race within the world of the text but questions the relation between literary and bodily form.

**COMPLIT 376. Literature and Ideas (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. May be elected more than once in the same term.* This course offers a general consideration of the ways in which particular ideas have affected the creation and history of literature, whether considered in terms of the history of ideas or as the content of an individual work.

**COMPLIT 382. Literature and the Other Arts (3).** (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 9 credits. May be elected more than once in the same term.* This course focuses on a comparative study of at least two art forms, such as literature and painting, poetry and music, or drama and film.

**COMPLIT 384. Literature and Other Disciplines** *One course in literary studies. (3).* (HU). *May be repeated for a maximum of 9 credits. May be elected more than once in the same term.* Introduces students to the study of literature and its relation to other disciplines, such as anthropology, history, law, linguistics, philosophy, political science, psychology, and others. It poses general questions about the concerns shared by different disciplines as well as arguments between them. Introduces students to basic ideas about how literature connects with fields of knowledge distinctly defined and broadly conceived, contributing to fundamental discussions about how knowledge is formed and disseminated.

**COMPLIT 430. Comparative Studies in Fiction** *Upperclass standing. (3; 2 in the half-term).* *May be repeated for a maximum of 9 credits.* A cross-cultural study of the novel as narrative, social text, cultural document, etc.

**COMPLIT 432. Comparative Studies in Non-Fictional Prose.** *Junior Standing. (3).* (Excl). *May be repeated for credit for a maximum of 6 credits.* Advanced introduction to the comparative study of non-fictional prose.

**COMPLIT 434. Comparative Studies in Poetry.** *Junior standing. (3).* (Excl). *May be repeated for credit for a maximum of 6 credits.* Advanced introduction to the comparative study of poetry.

**COMPLIT 436. Comparative Studies in Drama.** *Upperclass standing. (3; 2 in the half-term).* (Excl). *May be repeated for credit for a maximum of*

9 credits. An examination of the genre across linguistic and national boundaries.

**COMPLIT 438. Comparative Studies in Film.**

*Junior standing. (3). (Excl). May be repeated for credit for a maximum of 6 credits. An advanced introduction to the comparative study of film.*

**COMPLIT 490. Comparative Cultural Studies** *Junior standing. (3). May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. An advanced introduction to comparative studies in culture and cultural theory.*

**COMPLIT 492. Comparative Literary Theory** *Junior standing. (3). May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. An advanced introduction to comparative studies in literary theory.*

**COMPLIT 495. Senior Seminar in Comparative Literature** *Senior standing and majoring in Comparative Literature. (3). May not be repeated for credit. F. The culmination of undergraduate work in comparative literature. Course consists of an overview of current literary theory; readings; and student presentations of seminar papers developed in a tutorial situation with the instructor.*

**COMPLIT 496. Honors Thesis** *Consent of instructor required. COMPLIT 495 and Honors major in Comparative Literature. Permission of instructor. (3). (INDEPENDENT). May not be repeated for credit. F, W, Sp/Su, Sp, Su. Tutorial for writing the honors thesis, a paper usually begun in the Comparative Literature Senior Seminar taken in a previous term.*

**COMPLIT 498. Directed Reading** *Permission of instructor. (1 - 4). (INDEPENDENT). May not be repeated for credit. F, W, Sp/Su, Sp, Su. Intended for students majoring in Comparative Literature or pursuing the Minor in Translation Studies, this course is individually developed by a student in consultation with an instructor who may be any associated faculty member of the Program.*

#### **4. SELECTING COURSES IN OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

Taking courses in other departments is an important part of your major in Comparative Literature. You will fulfill one of your language requirements by taking at least 12 credits in one of the national literature departments. In addition, you may consult with your undergraduate advisors if you want to select a course in a related field that is relevant to the “focus” or “theme” of your plan of study. With approval from the undergraduate advisor, you may count such courses (at the 300 level or above) toward literature courses in your second language. For example,

you may propose to take related courses in Afro-American and African Studies, Anthropology, American Culture, Art History, Classical Civilization, History, Judaic Studies, Near Eastern Studies, Medieval and Early Modern Studies, Museum Studies, Music, Political Science, Theatre & Dance, Screen Arts or other departments related to your area of interest.

## 5. STUDY ABROAD

We encourage students to pursue study abroad as part of their major in Comparative Literature. This is an opportunity to develop a better understanding of other languages, literatures, and cultures that are central to your studies in Comparative Literature. During your time abroad, you may also discover ideas for translation projects or research that can be developed into a topic for an Honors Thesis.

Although you are not obligated to study abroad through a program affiliated with the University of Michigan, you should know that credit will transfer most smoothly if you do. See the [Center for Global and Intercultural Study](#) (CGIS) in G155 Angell Hall.

Before you go abroad, you should have a clear understanding of how credit from study abroad are 1) transferred into the University of Michigan and 2) evaluated and accepted by the department of Comparative Literature for the major.

When transfer credits from another U.S. institution or a study abroad program are accepted by the Credit Evaluators at the Undergraduate Admissions Office, they appear on your transcript with a department name, a level, and an "X". For example, an English course from another U.S. university might appear as "English 201X," or a course on French literature taken through a study abroad program at the Sorbonne might appear as "French 301X." If you take a course in an officially sanctioned University of Michigan program through CGIS, it will appear as STDABRD XXX, with a brief title.

However, the fact that a course appears on your University of Michigan transcript does not necessarily mean that the Department will accept it for the major. Different countries and institutions have different academic norms, and what constitutes an upper-level course at one institution might not equal an upper-level course here.

We advise the following procedure for the smoothest study abroad experience.

**Before leaving the University of Michigan:**

- obtain as much information as possible about the program and the courses you want to take.
- Take the information to the LSA Credit Evaluators (Student Activities Building), who can tell you whether they think the credits will transfer to the University of Michigan and at what level (upper or lower). They can't make guarantees because they must wait for the official transcript, but they generally have a sense of what transfers.
- Schedule an appointment with an undergraduate advisor in Comparative Literature to discuss your plans for study abroad. Bring to this meeting the same information that you showed the LSA Credit Evaluators. The advisor will give you preliminary conditional approval for counting credits from courses you have selected toward your Comparative Literature major.

**Important:** Please note that this is a *conditional* approval. We cannot fully determine the level of a course until you have actually completed it. Thus, final determination of whether a course counts toward the Comparative Literature major will be made *after* you return.

**While you are abroad,** save all your documentation pertaining to courses that you would like to count toward your major (course descriptions, syllabus, transcripts, as well as copies of your own written work).

**When you return,** be sure to meet immediately with an undergraduate advisor to confirm approval of your coursework for the Comparative Literature major. Bring all the material from the courses in question to this

meeting. The advisor will not read or re-grade your work. S/he will use this material in order to determine whether the course you took counts toward the Comparative Literature major. Remember that different countries and institutions have different academic norms, and what constitutes an upper-level course at one institution might not equal an upper-level course here.

## **6. TRANSFERRING COURSES FROM OTHER US INSTITUTIONS**

The procedure for determining whether coursework done at other US institutions can be counted toward the Comparative Literature major is much like the procedure followed when a student studies abroad (see section 6 above).

When transfer credits from another U.S. institution or a study abroad program are accepted by the Credit Evaluators at the Undergraduate Admissions Office, they appear on your transcript with a department name, a level, and an "X". For example, an English course from another U.S. university might appear as "English 201X," or a course on French literature taken through a study abroad program at the Sorbonne might appear as "French 301X." However, the fact that a course appears on your University of Michigan transcript does not necessarily mean that the Department will accept it for the major. Different institutions have different academic norms, and what constitutes an upper-level course at one institution might not equal an upper-level course here.

Gather up all the information you can about the course/s that you would like to count toward your Comparative Literature major (for example: course description and syllabus at a minimum; exams, paper prompts, copies of your written work are helpful too). Make an appointment with the undergraduate advisor, and bring all of this material with you to the appointment. The advisor will not read or re-grade your work. S/he will use this material in order to determine whether the course you took counts toward the Comparative Literature major.

## **7. DIRECTED READING**

The Department of Comparative Literature offers course credit for independent study supervised by a faculty member, in areas where there are no regular course offerings. COMPLIT 498 (Directed Reading) is an opportunity for highly motivated and capable students to pursue a rigorous course of independent study not accommodated elsewhere in the Department. COMPLIT 498 does not fulfill College distribution requirements, and is intended for students who have demonstrated academic excellence and who can show appropriate preparation in courses previously taken.

Students should be aware that a Directed Reading requires careful planning. You write a proposal that must be approved by a full-time member of the faculty (who will serve as your faculty mentor) and by one of the undergraduate advisors. Ideally you should consult with your mentor during the semester *before* the proposed independent study, in order to develop a feasible course of study not already offered by the Department.

You need to design a syllabus that reflects the work involved in a regular course. A 3-credit Directed Reading should involve at least one hour of student-faculty contact plus an additional 8 hours of work per week. It is also possible to elect 1, 2, or 4 credit hours with an appropriate change in your workload. Since you will be asking a professor to donate a great deal of extra time and effort beyond their usual teaching load, you should be similarly committed to the course of study. Professors do not normally supervise Directed Readings during terms when they are on leave, nor do they supervise them in areas that fall outside of their area of specialization.

## **8. INTERNSHIPS**

Comparative Literature is one of the most versatile majors you can choose as an undergraduate at Michigan. We understand that a number of our majors receive opportunities to work in various internship placements, especially over the summer months, putting their linguistic training and their skills as writers and speakers to work in placements outside the classroom. Most businesses and organizations that allow internships require that students receive some academic credit for their work (the

students are not hired as regular employees of the company). The Department of Comparative Literature will allow students to register for one credit of COMPLIT 498 for an internship, under the following conditions:

- You must be a declared Comparative Literature major, and you cannot receive more than one credit for an internship. This credit cannot be used to fulfill the Department's program requirements.
- You must apply for the internship at least three weeks before beginning your internship, and to receive credit you must register for COMPLIT 498 with a faculty member in Comparative Literature in the term following your internship (this is typically done in the fall following spring or summer internship work).
- You are also required to submit a brief (circa 5 pp.) essay describing the kind of work you performed in your internship and talking a bit about what that work meant to you. You should also include contact information for your internship, along with any samples of your work.
- We ask that, when you have completed your internship, the organization for which you interned also submit a brief letter to the Department describing your work.
- Lastly, we ask that your supervisor write a letter of recommendation for you to be placed in your credentials file if you so choose.

## 9. PREPARING TO GRADUATE

As you near completion of your requirements, you should take the following steps, ideally in the next to last semester.

**Senior audit.** Make an appointment with the Comparative Literature student services coordinator so you can double-check your transcript to make sure you have fulfilled your major requirements. This senior audit authorizes the university to issue your diploma. *It is very important to make this appointment early in the fall term of your senior year* so that you have time to take courses you may need to graduate. If you plan to be studying away from the University your last semester, you can still do a senior audit before you go. You can also request an audit by contacting your advisor.

**LSA audit.** Make an appointment to see a general advisor in LSA to check your distribution requirements, and confirm that you have your 120 credits toward graduation. NOTE: You can still take part in the May graduation ceremonies even though you may be a few credits shy of your 120 total. The University allows you to complete coursework over a spring and/or summer term. A similar grace period exists for students graduating in August and December. You can apply for graduation online at <https://wolverineaccess.umich.edu/index.jsp>

## 10. THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

Students majoring in Comparative Literature are equipped to follow many different career paths. The broad, interdisciplinary nature of our undergraduate program helps prepare students for opportunities in fields as diverse as journalism, publishing, international relations, cultural studies, medicine, philosophy, education, public policy, film and entertainment, and the information industries of computer software and the World Wide Web. In addition, many students continue their education in graduate or professional programs.

Our program encourages students to think in new and imaginative ways and to evaluate ideas and problems from a broad critical perspective. Students in Comparative Literature develop skills in **analysis** (synthesizing themes from diverse sources, comparing/contrasting ideas, using theoretical approaches, understanding complex problems, offering diverse perspectives), **communication** (writing clearly, reading complex texts, editing/proofreading material, advocating/defending a position, presenting information logically), **language** (evaluating translations and original texts, perceiving word patterns and structures, comparing different languages, using and recognizing precise language, mastering more than one language), and **cross-cultural understanding** (understanding and interpreting other cultures, appreciating similarities and differences among cultures, developing a variety of perspectives). The person who is able to develop those talents will find uses for them in a wide range of occupational settings.

You may be getting advice from lots of people about your options after graduation, but if you still want more, check out the Career Center offices in the Student Activities Building (<https://careercenter.umich.edu/>). They have information about graduate schools, careers, how to write resumes, how to prepare for interviews, and much more. Also, remember that faculty in our department can advise on career options and graduate schools. Seniors can apply for scholarships like the Fulbright, Marshall, Rhodes, and Power. Students may also contact the International Institute to inquire about Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships.

A selected list of occupations pursued by students majoring in Comparative Literature offers a glimpse of the wide-ranging career paths available. This list was compiled from the experiences of Michigan students, as well as from national data:

- **Communication:** film maker, public opinion analyst, reporter/columnist, editor, public relations representative, freelance writer, literary/technical translator
- **Government and public service:** Homeless advocate, VISTA volunteer coordinator, foreign service officer, labor mediator, United Nations interpreter, paralegal, urban planner, legislative aide.
- **Business:** market research analyst, advertising copywriter, international lawyer, employee relations specialist, manager, sales representative, cross-cultural relations specialist, web designer.
- **Education and research:** professor, teacher (K-12), librarian, archivist, reading specialist, literacy tutor, language instructor, ESL tutor, student development professional, preservation specialist, grant writer.

## 11. CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS MAJORING IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

### Language 1

(courses taken in a foreign language; 12 credits minimum at 300-level or above)

- Course (term, number, title):

### Language 2

(courses taken in a second language, or a combination of courses in English, COMPLIT, and related departments; 12 credits minimum at 300-level or above)

- Course (term, number, title):

### Senior Seminar

(3 credits required)

- COMPLIT 495 (fall senior year)

### COMPLIT electives

(6 credits minimum; may include COMPLIT 496: Senior Thesis)

- Course (term, number, title):
- Course (term, number, title):

#### Please note:

Study abroad courses proposed for the major must be approved by the DUS.  
A maximum of 6 credits of 200 level COMPLIT courses may be counted toward the major.

# **III The Honors Thesis in Comparative Literature**

## **1. REGISTERING FOR THE HONORS THESIS**

A student usually writes an Honors Thesis in the winter term of his or her senior year, ideally right after taking the Senior Seminar (CL 495), the course in which plans for the thesis are generally formulated. The thesis course (CL 496) is an independent study class. The student will need to contact the student services coordinator in the Comparative Literature office for permission to register for CL 496. You will be registered under the independent study number of the faculty instructor (faculty member who has agreed to serve as Honors Thesis Advisor).

## **2. DESCRIPTION OF THE HONORS THESIS**

The Honors Thesis is a major essay, usually between 40-50 pages, focusing on a topic that reflects your interest in Comparative Literature. It should display evidence of substantial research, extended reflection and analysis, and grasp of the issues it raises. The thesis should not be merely a survey of relevant critical literature, nor a loosely assembled chronicle of your private musings on a given topic. You should think of it, rather, as a thoughtfully conceived and methodically presented contribution to a critical conversation. You should know the interpretive histories of the works you discuss: what have been the relevant issues, the hotly debated ideas, or the silences surrounding the works you are analyzing? How have these works been received or ignored? What are the issues most often raised in discussions about these works today? If your thesis is based in part on historical, cultural, or social events, or if you are pursuing an interdisciplinary topic, you should research these matters so that you can present your material in the most authoritative and compelling manner possible. Working with your Honors Thesis Advisor in CL 496, along with your work in previous classes and CL 495, should help you learn how to assemble and assess these materials.

## **3. HONORS THESIS ADVISOR AND SECOND READER**

It is important to choose an Honors Thesis Advisor early in your senior year, and certainly before you complete CL 495. Since an honors thesis advisor may, or ideally will, be a faculty member with whom you have taken a course, you should cultivate working relationships with faculty during visits to office hours. Your Honors Thesis Advisor may be any faculty member in Comparative Literature or in other departments at the University of Michigan. You may find it helpful to confer about your selection with undergraduate advisors, or with the faculty member teaching CL 495. You will meet regularly with your Honors Thesis Advisor, who will help you frame and pursue your research and assist you in drafting your thesis. You may also confer with your Honors Thesis Advisor about suggestions for a Second Reader, who will read and evaluate your thesis after it has been submitted. The Department of Comparative Literature will make the final selection and assist in arrangements for a Second Reader.

#### **4. STAYING IN TOUCH**

During your senior year, when you are spending a good deal of time doing work on your own for the Honors Thesis, it is possible to lose touch with professors and other students. This is counterproductive, since you may be missing crucial guidance at precisely the point when it is most important for your project. You should take responsibility for making sure that you are meeting regularly with your Honors Thesis Advisor. This kind of contact is most difficult, of course, when your work is not going well, but problems with your work make it all the more important that you continue to have conversations with faculty who can help. Students who have taken CL 495 together may find it helpful to meet informally during the following semester to support each other's work. The Department of Comparative Literature will also organize a brown-bag meeting in March, offering thesis-writers an opportunity to present and discuss their thesis topics.

## 5. DRAFTING THE HONORS THESIS

Each Honors Thesis Advisor has his or her own ideas about planning a thesis, but here are seven questions to keep in mind in the process of drafting your thesis.

**What is my title?** Early in the term in which the student writes the thesis, she/he should give the undergraduate advisor in Comparative Literature a working title. The title is something that you'll be tweaking throughout the writing process. The important thing is that the title accurately reflect what your thesis is about—not just in terms of topic but in terms of a **research problem**. Think of the title as a road map: for you as you write, and for your reader as s/he reads. As you realize what you're really writing about (probably about half-way through), the title may well change.

**What is my problem?** That is, the **research problem** to which you are responding, the question that your thesis seeks to answer. Other ways to think about it: it is the stone in your shoe, the grain of sand in the oyster that will generate the pearl that is the essay. The research problem is not the same as a "topic." A topic is a broad field, a theme; a problem is a precise *issue* within that topic area.

**So what?** What's at stake in my research problem? What are the implications of my problem? Why is this something important to study? This is *very important*.

**What is my method?** How will I approach this problem and try to solve it? You need to consider other scholars' work on which you are building, and with which your own project is in dialogue. This "method" question is very closely related to the next question...

**What have I read?** What books and articles have I learned from in this project? Any major things I haven't read yet and need to read soon? Develop a select bibliography of the works that have been most useful to you so far, the basic reading for your problem.

**What is my structure?** It's very important to have a mini-outline here, with a very brief (one-sentence) statement of *the work you think each section will do* in the Honors Thesis. Think of structure as a trajectory, a narrative if you like. There should be a feeling of connection between one section and the next, a connection controlled by your argument.

**What is my deadline?** You need a schedule. This is *crucial*. Ask your Honors Thesis Advisor about making a time-line for your thesis and break it down week by week, task by task.

## 6. RESEARCH FOR THE HONORS THESIS

As you do your research, you will need to keep track of what you find and where you find it. You may want to consider using some kind of bibliographic software. Not only will this save you a lot of sweat when the time comes to format the thesis, its bibliography, and footnotes (see below), it will also help you organize your notes as you work.

Some bibliographic software:

- Endnote. The cream of the crop but it costs money and is probably more than you need.
- RefWorks. Free and supported by the University of Michigan Library. <http://guides.lib.umich.edu/gradrefworks>
- Zotero. Free and supported by the University of Michigan Library. <http://guides.lib.umich.edu/zotero>
- EasyBib. Free <http://www.easybib.com/>
- NoodleBib. Free. <http://www.noodletools.com/index.php>

## 7. FORMATTING THE HONORS THESIS

**Theses are to be typed, double-spaced** (not one-and-a half-spaced), with at least one-inch margins on all sides of the page. Leave the right margin unjustified (only the left margin should be regular). Set your essays in 12 point type and avoid using exotic or peculiar type-faces – even for the title page. Use a single typeface for the entire thesis. Print your thesis on one

side of each page, and use a minimum 20 lb weight paper for the final copies.

**Pages should be numbered** at the top center or top right-hand corner of each page. The front matter before the Contents page should be on unnumbered pages. The front matter after the Contents page (this will include the “Short Titles” page(s) and, if applicable, the “Figures” page(s) should be numbered in small-case Roman numerals. The body of the thesis itself should be numbered with Arabic numbers. The first page of your “Short Titles” should be page “i.” The first page of the body of your thesis should be page “1.” If you wish, you may suppress the number on the first page of each new element of your thesis (“Short Titles,” “Figures,” “Notes,” “Works Consulted,” etc.

**Your thesis must be bound** (not simply stapled) in some form that will absolutely not come apart, even with frequent readings in the years to come. Consult the binders at any of the copy stores in the area regarding which form of binding is appropriate. Your thesis title and your name should be visible on the cover (or on a piece of paper placed beneath a clear plastic cover sheet). Don’t count this piece of paper as part of the front matter (see below); this page is not a formal title page.

## 8. PARTS OF THE THESIS

Make absolutely sure that your thesis contains all of these parts (except for those parts labeled “optional”).

**Title Page.** The title of your thesis comes first, centered, set in regular upper and lower cases. Subtitles go on a line below the main title. Below the title goes “by,” lower-cased, on a line by itself. Your name follows on a line by itself, centered. Insert below these five lines: A thesis presented for the B. A. degree / with Honors in / Comparative Literature / University of Michigan / April [current year].

**Dedication Page** (optional). No heading on this page. Keep this simple.

**Acknowledgement Page(s).** Head this Acknowledgements (underline as shown). Make this page double-spaced. List here, in paragraph form, all those who have helped you arrive at your completed thesis. The best way to get an idea of how to write this page is to look at some examples in books you have read in your research. This page may expand to include part of a second page, but it should not be longer than two pages.

**Abstract.** Head this Abstract (underline as shown). Make it single-spaced, but keep it set in 12 point type and your thesis typeface. This is one of the most important single pages of your thesis. Here you should give your reader a one-page (no more than 400 words) summary of your thesis. You should try to state the topic and what your argument about that topic is, and give a very brief structural overview of the sections into which your thesis might be divided and the conclusion(s) you reach.

**Contents Page.** Head this with the word CONTENTS (in full caps as shown). Put section titles flush left; put page numbers flush right. The first entry on your contents page will be your first Short Titles page, marked with a lower-case Roman numeral “i.” If your thesis has figures, you will have a “Figures” page entry that will also be part of your table of contents, marked with a Roman numeral. If your thesis has no subdivisions, you will simply put the short title of your thesis at the appropriate place in your table of contents. If your thesis has been divided into sections or chapters, list the titles followed by the first page (Arabic) number for each section/chapter. Next comes “Works Cited” (not in quotation marks; flush left) and the first page of your bibliography (flush right).

**Short Titles Page** (optional). Head this page Short Titles (underline as shown). Here will be, in correct bibliographic form, any texts that you cite more than five or six times in the text of your thesis. This page will differ in appearance from your regular bibliography only in that you will precede each entry with whatever the abbreviation for that text is (set in quotation mark or underlined, as appropriate). Follow each abbreviation with a colon (no space before the colon), two spaces after the colon, and then the full bibliographic entry for that text. You should also cite all of these texts in your list of “Works Consulted” at the end of your thesis. This page is

merely to assist your reader in quickly discovering the abbreviations you use for the text central to your thesis.

**Figures Page** (optional). If your thesis has figures (illustrations, maps, other images) you will need to list them on a separate page. Head this page “Figures” (but don’t put the word in quotation marks; underline it instead). Continue numbering it in lower-case Roman numerals. List each figure by some clear, short, descriptive “title” – generally the same as the title you assign to the figure on the page of the illustration itself. Follow that “title” with a comma, a space, and the number of the page upon which the illustration appears in your thesis.

**Thesis Text.** Make this double-spaced, and number pages at the top center or top right corner. You should also double-space block (indented) quotations. Your text should conform to academic style as described in the MLA Style Manual or The Chicago Manual of Style: both manuals are on reserve in the Comparative Literature Library. What is most important is to be consistent in following the academic style manual you have chosen.

**Footnotes** (at the bottom of the page) should be single-spaced. Endnotes (at the end of the thesis) may be single or double spaced. Either form of annotation is acceptable. Note numbers (foot or end) should be in 12 point type and should be superscripted at the appropriate point in the text.

**Works Consulted.** This is your bibliography, though you give it the title Works Consulted (underline as shown). Double space and number these pages (the numbers should be continuous with the thesis text itself). This title signifies that you’re putting works in this bibliography that you have read (or read in part) for your thesis, but that you do not necessarily cite in your notes. Be sure to follow the MLA or Chicago style manual in preparing your bibliography.

## 9. SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION OF THE HONORS THESIS

### **Deadline for submission**

Theses must be completed and submitted no later than **April 10**. By that day the student should have delivered one bound and/or electronic copy

to the Honors Thesis Advisor and Second Reader and one bound copy to the Comparative Literature office. The Department will keep one of these bound copies as part of its growing library of undergraduate theses; the student services coordinator will ask you to sign a permission form to donate your thesis to the Comp Lit Library. In addition, an electronic copy of the final thesis should be emailed to the student services coordinator by the deadline. To ensure sufficient time for faculty to read and evaluate theses, **late submissions of the Honors Thesis will not be accepted.**

### **Evaluation of the Thesis**

The Honors Thesis Advisor for CL 496 recommends a level of honors, determines a grade for the thesis itself, and submits a grade for the thesis course, taking into consideration all aspects of the research and writing. These grades may or may not be the same.

### **Second Reader**

The Honors Thesis Advisor may suggest names for a second reader, but the Chair of the Comparative Literature Undergraduate Committee will make the final decision and arrangements for a second reader, attempting to have at least one of the two readers be a faculty member with a joint appointment in Comparative Literature. The Second Reader will submit a report on the thesis and a recommendation for level of honors. Honors students will be notified by the Comparative Literature office when their theses are ready to be returned.

### **Level of Honors**

The Undergraduate Committee of the Comparative Literature Department meets at the end of Winter Term to recommend the final level of honors – Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors – with which the student will graduate. The Undergraduate Committee bases this decision upon the student's grades from the required Comparative Literature courses (495 and 496); the report from the two readers of the thesis; and both the overall and major undergraduate GPAs.

Department of Comparative Literature

**HONORS THESIS PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL**

Please complete this form and submit to the student services coordinator (Department of Comparative Literature, 2021 Tisch) **no later than December 1**. The signature of the faculty member on this form is notification that he or she has agreed to serve as your Honors Thesis Advisor and approved the preliminary proposal. This form must be turned in before you can register for CL 496 with the faculty member.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a 1-2 page description of the following:

1. The tentative topic of your Honors Thesis
2. An explanation of why you are interested in this topic
3. The questions you plan to address
4. The research you intend to pursue

**Approval from Honors Thesis Advisor**

I have discussed this preliminary proposal with the student and I agree to direct the Honors Thesis as described.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department of Comparative Literature

**HONORS THESIS PROGRESS REPORT**

Please complete this form and submit to the student services coordinator (Department of Comparative Literature, 2021 Tisch) **no later than January 15.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a thorough description of the following:

1. Working title of the Honors Thesis
2. Progress made in relation to your preliminary proposal
3. What research remains to be done
4. Explanation of your approach or methodology
5. Bibliography in progress
6. Timeline for completion, including due dates for drafts

Please remember that you are expected to submit a complete draft (pending final revisions) of the thesis to your Honors Thesis Advisor no later than March 28.

**Approval from Honors Thesis Advisor**

I have discussed this progress report with the student and approved the timeline for drafts, with a final deadline for submission of the finished Honors Thesis no later than April 10.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department of Comparative Literature

**CHECKLIST FOR THE HONORS THESIS**

- Meet with the faculty member teaching CL 495 to discuss your plans for an Honors Thesis.
- Look at Honors Theses on reserve in the Comparative Literature Library.
- Identify an Honors Thesis Advisor.
- Schedule preliminary meetings with your Honors Thesis Advisor to discuss ideas for your thesis and obtain a signature for your preliminary proposal.
- No later than December 1, submit the signed form for your **Honors Thesis Preliminary Proposal** to the Comparative Literature office.
- Register for CL 496.
- Schedule a meeting with your Honors Thesis Advisor for final approval of your proposal and to make a timeline for turning in drafts.
- No later than January 15, submit the signed form for your **Honors Thesis Progress Report** to the Comparative Literature office.
- In January, February, and March, schedule regular meetings with your Honors Thesis Advisor (at least once every two weeks).
- On the first Monday after Spring Break, email the working title of your Honors Thesis to the student services coordinator in the Comp Lit office.
- Prepare a 5-10 minute description of your topic to present at the Honors Thesis Brownbag, hosted by the Department of Comparative Literature in March.
- No later than March 28, submit a complete draft of your thesis to your Honors Thesis Advisor and schedule a meeting to discuss final revisions.
- Get approval from your Honors Thesis Advisor for your abstract.
- No later than April 10, give one bound and/or electronic copy of the final thesis to your Honors Thesis Advisor and Second Reader, and deliver one bound copy to the Comparative Literature office; email an electronic copy of your final thesis to the student services coordinator as well.
- Sign donation form for placing your Honors Thesis on reserve in the Comp Lit Library.

## Part IV

### Other Information

#### 1. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**How long does it take to fulfill requirements for a Comparative Literature degree?** Most students fulfill the major requirements in their last two years, by taking two or more courses required for the major each semester. Those who start earlier find they have more time and choice of courses.

**Does the order in which I take courses matter?** It is important to work on your language skills during your first two years, so that you are prepared to take more advanced literature courses in your language(s) for your major. The only course that all students majoring in Comparative Literature are required to take at a specific time is COMPLIT 495, the senior seminar offered in the fall semester of the senior year. For students who choose to write an Honors Thesis, COMPLIT 496 follows in the second semester of the senior year. With the exception of COMPLIT 495 and 496, the program allows you to take major requirements in the order that best suits you.

**Can I repeat a course for credit?** Some courses in Comparative Literature carry general titles under which varied topics may be offered. If you want to take a different topic under the same course number, you can take the course again for credit if you get departmental permission: be sure to contact the student services coordinator within the first two weeks of class to make this request. Refer to the LS&A Bulletin for a list of courses that cannot be taken more than once for credit. **Please note:** You cannot take the same course twice to get a better grade.

**What if courses are full?** If courses fill before you can get into them, indicate your desire to get in by signing up on a waitlist. This alerts the department to the overload and may result in other sections being opened. The student services coordinator monitors the waitlist for the upcoming term and when space becomes available in a course, students will be

moved off of the waitlist and into the course; you will be notified by email so that you can register for the course.

When you are waitlisted in other departments for language courses that you need to fulfill your major requirements, please contact the student services coordinator in Comparative Literature as soon as possible.

Sometimes a professor will issue an electronic override form, which gives you permission to register for the course. Bring that form to the Comparative Literature office. It will be entered into the database within 48 hours. Please remember that you still need to register for the course for you to be officially enrolled, but you must drop yourself from the waitlist before you can enroll.

Students are required to attend the first two meetings of the class in order to claim a place. Do not assume that your place will be held if, for some reason, you cannot make it to the first class meeting. Students are taken from the waitlist and given permission to register in chronological order or in consultation with the instructor. If a course is full, put your name on the waitlist and attend the first two meetings to try to get permission to register.

**What if I do not complete a course?** Occasionally you may not be able to complete the coursework because of extenuating circumstances. In such a case, ask the instructor to approve your taking an Incomplete. Incompletes are rare and not given automatically. They are not given, for instance, to students who don't feel ready to take the final exam, or to write a final paper. The professor must give permission in advance. The conditions for fulfilling an incomplete are as follows:

- All course work must be completed by the end of the fourth full week of the next fall or winter term of enrollment.
- Graduating seniors with an Incomplete must resolve the grade before the degree deadline and have the final grade reports to the senior auditors.

- An Incomplete is a tentative, not a final, grade. If the instructor does not submit a final grade by the end of the fourth week of the next fall or winter term, the course grade will lapse into an “E.” The “I” remains on the transcript after the grade is reported (for example: IB).
- The student may petition to extend this deadline by submitting an Extension Request Form to the Office of Academic Actions in 1255 Angell Hall. Extensions to the mid-point of the term are sometimes approved. Long-term extensions are extremely rare.

**What if I have to withdraw from college?** Emergency situations may necessitate a student’s withdrawal from the college either temporarily or permanently. Before making a definite decision, we suggest you talk to an advisor or counselor, to see what options are open to you. If you do decide to withdraw, you should leave in good standing so that if and when you return your transcript will be in order. Notify the Office of Academic Actions either in writing or in person. There is a disenrollment fee if you leave after the first day of class.

**What if I change my mind about my major?** You fill out a new Declaration Form with the undergraduate advisor of the Department with which you wish to study.

**What if I believe I was unfairly graded?** The first step is to discuss the grade with your instructor. If, after a thorough discussion of your work, you still feel unfairly graded, you may appeal through the grievance process established by the Comparative Literature department. You can find that information on our website or pick up a hard copy of the procedure from the students services coordinator.

## **2. UNDERSTANDING GRADES**

Grading reflects an evaluation of your work according to departmental guidelines. Most faculty agree on the criteria for grades; you will not be evaluated only on your opinions or effort, but rather on an identifiable set of standards. Different courses may differ in evaluating writing along with other components of your academic performance (attendance,

examinations, oral presentations, participation in discussion, etc). The descriptions that follow may help you translate the grades you receive from instructors for your essays. Each instructor will, of course, have his or her own specific set of grading guidelines that are your responsibility to understand.

**E** indicates an unacceptable essay that simply does not address the assignments, is unacceptably late, or is unacceptably shorter than the assigned length. It contains no thesis worth arguing and is poorly constructed.

**D** indicates a weak essay. It may lack a thesis, contain misreadings of texts and plot summaries without adequate analysis, or considerable structural, organization, and grammatical problems.

**C** indicates a satisfactory essay demonstrating a student's understanding of the text in question. It is an acceptable though not a particularly exciting essay. Its argument develops some aspects of the problem posed by the topic, but the topic may be understood in terms that are too broad or insufficiently complex. The essay may contain technical problems in organization or expression, and the thesis may be inadequately developed.

**B** indicates a good essay that addresses a particularly interesting and challenging problem and explores it in a well-organized, technically competent manner. It uses intelligent argument and judicious reference in support of a clear, complex thesis.

**A** indicates an excellent essay. The writer takes intellectual risks and has articulated exceptionally well-conceived ideas in lucid prose. The essay exhibits a thesis rich enough to lend itself to interesting development and support, understands in detail both the text and the problem posed by the topic, shows command of organizational and technical skills such as sentence- and paragraph-composition, and uses a Works Cited where appropriate.

### 3. PLAGIARISM

**Please read this section in its entirety. It constitutes a warning.** It has been developed by colleagues in the English Department and has been adapted here by their permission. The fact of its wide dissemination will make any assertions of ignorance less convincing in the future.

Instances of plagiarism:

1. Does not properly attribute words or idea to a source. That is, even if you're not quoting directly from a book you've read – a book that's helped you formulate ideas for your paper – you should nevertheless footnote a book at the point in the text where that other author's ideas helped shape your own essay. If pivotal terms or crucial turns in your argument derive to a significant extent from a conversation with a colleague or a point made in class, you should cite that conversation or class. If you look in the "Acknowledgements" section of almost any academic book (or in the footnotes of many academic articles), you will find models for occasions when this kind of citation is required. Acknowledgements signal that our ideas have grown from our work within a community. To fail to acknowledge the context for our ideas is in part to weaken that community.
2. Quotes from another author's writing without citing that author's work. This, of course, includes failing to cite material you take from the World Wide Web, as well as copying material from library books or your peer's papers.
3. Cites, with quotation marks, portions of another author's work, but uses more of that work without quotation marks and without attribution. This instance is the most common kind of plagiarism. If you're taking material from a source and rehashing it slightly, but not giving citation for that rephrased materials, you're still plagiarizing the work you're representing as your own. If you cite and surround with quotation marks only some of the words you've taken from a source, you also commit plagiarism, since you're taking words from another without fully acknowledging the extent of your borrowing. In an era of computer communities (on the internet and the World Wide Web), the whole idea of intellectual property is changing:

cutting and pasting without acknowledgement may be more the norm than the exception. Turning to an electronic source rather than a printed source does not change the rules of citation and acknowledgement when you are submitting an essay for a course however. When you turn in a paper for a course, you are entering a research community that is still quite strict about attribution and use of material and ideas from others.

4. Takes a paper, in whole or in part, from a site on the Web or a “library” of already-written papers.
5. Steals a paper from another student and then submits that paper as coursework.
6. Submits the same paper twice for two different assignments.
7. Takes the results of another’s research and attempts to pass those results off as his or her own work. This includes “citing” material from sources that have been gathered by another author. You can, of course, cite materials that you have found in another published text, but your citation should specify where you found the material, rather than simply giving that material’s original source.

**If you are caught plagiarizing, the Department’s usual policy is as follows:**

1. The instructor has the option to issue a warning, fail the assignment, or notify the Department.
2. If the Department is notified, you will fail the course.
3. Your case will be forwarded, with an explanatory letter and all pertinent materials, to the Dean of Student Affairs, Esrold Nurse.
4. You will be placed on academic probation (which does register on your transcript). If a student already on probation is caught plagiarizing, he or she is usually asked to leave the University.

Please understand that, in the intellectual community of the University, plagiarism is a form of stealing. It would be a good idea to bring up with your professor any questions you might have about attribution and use of materials and ideas from others.

## 4. COURSE EVALUATIONS

The Department has a policy that students should evaluate every course in Comparative Literature, every term. Students are asked to submit Online Course Evaluations during the last two weeks of classes. You will receive an email notification containing links to the online teaching evaluations or you can access teaching evaluations via Canvas by clicking settings in the yellow banner in the upper-right corner of the Canvas screen. The teaching evaluations link is in the left hand navigation. Your confidentiality will continue to be protected as with past practices.

The Office of Evaluations and Exams tabulates the information on the form and make it available along with summary sheets for the faculty and the department to use for reference. The summary scores of everyone who teaches for our department are kept in electronic files, and comments are collected and compiled into a report format. After the semester ends, the teacher of your class has the opportunity to review these anonymous written comments.

Evaluations are important because decisions on teaching assignments, promotions, nominations for awards, and salary increases all take into consideration the teacher's teaching ability, using these forms as one measure of performance. The teacher of your class uses your evaluation to gauge how well the class has gone and to make changes to the syllabus and the structure of the class for coming terms.

Applying critical analysis to both the process and content of education is an essential part of the academic culture. The course evaluation form is one context for you to use that skill. We hope that all students will use the course evaluation process to provide the instructor, the department, and the university with serious reflections on their classes.

## 5. GETTING TO KNOW FACULTY AND STAFF

**Faculty.** The Department of Comparative Literature has 18 faculty members with joint appointments. Our department website lists the primary interests and publications of our faculty. Most faculty members have their offices in other departments, where you can visit them during their posted office hours. You can also contact faculty by email to set up an

appointment, not only when you have a problem but also when you share a particular literary interest. Professors are generally very happy to talk with students who share their interests. Some faculty may be off campus with other teaching or research responsibilities for a semester or year, so check with the Comparative Literature office if you can't find the person you are looking for.

**Director of Undergraduate Studies.** The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) is a faculty member who coordinates and directs the undergraduate program in the department. The DUS can answer academic questions about your major, give you advice about course selection, help you plan for study abroad, approve special requests, and address issues pertaining to the undergraduate curriculum in Comparative Literature. The DUS also serves as faculty liaison for the Undergraduate Comparative Literature Club.

The DUS holds weekly office hours in 2021 Tisch. You can make an appointment to meet with the DUS by contacting the student services coordinator, or find out when it is possible to stop by during open office hours.

**Student Services Coordinator.** The student services coordinator is available in the Comparative Literature office to help you with practical questions about being a Comparative Literature major, including questions about courses, schedules, registration, overrides, transfer credit, submission of honors theses, and related issues. The student services coordinator also does major advising, and will schedule appointments for you to meet with the DUS as needed.

**Academic Program Specialist.** Provides administrative and calendar support to the Chair and Department Administrator. Provides support for the department's translation initiatives, including the Minor in Translation Studies and the Graduate Certificate in Critical Translation Studies. Also the office contact for the Accelerated Master's Degree Program in Transcultural Studies. Supports faculty HR processes including leave requests, award nominations, and reviews. First point of contact for students, faculty, visitors and phone inquiries to the department. Assists in

planning and coordinating meetings and other special events; processes p-card transactions related to these events. Maintains and updates department website, files, directories, bulletin boards, mailing lists, schedules and other information; sort mail; act as key operator for departmental copy and fax machines; maintain office supply inventory; schedule seminar/conference rooms; make deliveries to affiliated units and various University departments. Supervise work-study student(s) to assist in routine office functions.

**Chief Administrator.** The chief administrator is responsible for administrative staff and financial operations in the department.

## **6. PRIZES/AWARDS**

**1<sup>st</sup> Year Essay Prize.** The Department of Comparative Literature awards an annual prize for an outstanding student essay written for a First Year Course in Comparative Literature. Student essays of 3,000 words or fewer are eligible. GSI's may nominate up to two essays written for each section of a 100-level Comp Lit First Year Writing course that they have taught over the current calendar year.

**Senior Prize in Literary Translation.** The Department of Comparative Literature is pleased to invite graduating seniors in all departments at the University of Michigan to submit entries for our annual prize in literary translation. This prize is intended to encourage undergraduate students to develop projects (through previous coursework or on their own initiative) in translating a literary text originally written in another language into English.

## 7. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MAJORS AND MINORS

### 2017-2018 Academic Year

#### **Academic Program Specialist**

Katie Horne (kmhorne@umich.edu)

#### **Student Services Coordinator and Undergraduate Advisor**

Joseph Johnson (joecjohn@umich.edu)

#### **Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS)**

Professor Catherine Brown (dus-complit@umich.edu)

#### **Faculty Advisor for Translation Studies**

Professor Silke Weineck (smwei@umich.edu)

#### **Translation Studies Committee**

Professor Anton Shamma, chair

Professor Peggy McCracken

Professor Benjamin Paloff

Professor Yopie Prins

#### **Undergraduate Committee**

Professor Catherine Brown (DUS), chair

Professor Vassilis Lambropoulos (fall)

Professor Xiaobing Tang

Professor Antoine Traisnel (winter)

#### **Chief Administrator**

Judy Gray (judygray@umich.edu)

#### **Director of Graduate Studies**

Professor Christi Merrill (merrillc@umich.edu)

#### **Department Chair**

Professor Yopie Prins (complit-chair@umich.edu)