

Department of Comparative Literature
Course Offerings Fall 2018

Notes: Because courses in Comparative Literature are general rubrics under which a variety of topics are offered, students may repeat courses provided that the topics are different. Also, this list does not include thesis preparation or independent study courses. Please see Banner for them.

COLT 0510C: The World of Lyric Poetry

Lyric poetry is the prime mode for conveying emotion in many cultures, from ancient times to the present day. This course will survey the variety of forms and themes from the earliest texts from Greece, Rome, China and Japan, then the glories of the Renaissance and the Tang Dynasty, then move to the challenges for lyric expression in the modern world. Enrollment limited to 19 first year students. Prof. Dore J. Levy. TTh 9:00-10:20

COLT 0510K: The 1001 Nights

Explores the origins, performance, reception, adaptation, and translation of the *1001 Nights*, one of the most beloved and influential story collections in world literature. We will spend the semester in the company of genies, princes, liars, slaves, mass murderers, orientalists, and Walt Disney, and will consider the *Nights* in the context of its various literary, artistic, and cinematic afterlives. Prof. Elias Muhanna. MWF 10:00-10:50

COLT 0610D: Rites of Passage

Examines a seemingly universal theme—coming of age—by focusing on texts from disparate periods and cultures. Proposes that notions of "growing up" are profoundly inflected by issues of class, gender and race, and that the literary representation of these matters changes drastically over time. Texts from the Middle Ages to the present; authors drawn from Chrétien de Troyes, Quevedo, Prévost, Balzac, Brontë, Twain, Faulkner, Vesaas, Rhys, Satrapi and Foer. Enrollment limited to 19 first year students. Prof. Arnold Weinstein. TTh 1:00-2:20

COLT 0610Q: Before Wikipedia

How did humans organize knowledge before Wikipedia? This course explores the fascinating history of encyclopedic texts, archives, and databases in various cultural contexts. We consider issues of book history, the classification of knowledge, and the obsession to collect, compile, and document everything knowable and unknowable in both real and fictional encyclopedias. The use of Wikipedia in this course is not only tolerated but required. Students will be responsible for originating, composing, and curating new Wikipedia entries over the course of the semester. Prof. Elias Muhanna. MWF 2:00-2:50

COLT 0711J - The Art of Revolution in Latin America

This course considers the role of the arts—visual, literature, music, film, and performance—in Latin American social movements. We will study the work of artists and activists in the Mexican Revolution, Cuban Revolution, Nicaraguan Revolution, South American dictatorship resistances, and contemporary social movements such as the Chilean student movement and narco-trafficking. We will trace the use of the arts in organizing, social critique, collective action, and propaganda, and how they have shaped ideology and culture in Latin America and beyond. Prof. Elizabeth Gray, MWF 1:00-1:50

COLT 0812L: Stigma

People must navigate through life with damaged or spoiled identities, some much more so than others. To understand this more deeply, we will read classic works of social science (Du Bois, Arendt, Goffman, Cobb and Sennett) and major fiction (Hawthorne, Hardy, Hughes, Faulkner, Roth). Prof. Kenneth Haynes. TTh 9:00-10:20

COLT 0812M: Hamlet Post-Hamlet (ENGL 0150Z)

Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is perhaps the most widely read, performed, adapted, parodied and imitated literary text of the western tradition. In this seminar we will begin by reading/re-reading the play before turning to a number of appropriations of Shakespeare, both in the west and non-west, in order to address social and aesthetic issues including questions of meaning and interpretation, intertextuality and cultural translation. Enrollment limited to 19 first-year students.

Prof. Karen Newman, T 1:00-3:00

COLT 0812N: Film Classics: The Greeks on the Silver Screen (MGRK 0810)

This course examines the adaptation of classical Greek themes and figures in world cinema. Proceeding from classical texts (that will include *The Odyssey*, *The Iliad*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Medea*, *The Oresteia*), analysis of films focuses on the ways such texts are recast to comment upon very different cultural, socioeconomic, and political circumstances. How do such films aspire to be "classic" in their own right? What genres or modes follow such films' epic, or anti-epic, cycles? Considers Hollywood blockbusters (*Ulysses*, *Jason and the Argonauts*, *Troy*, *300*) as well as arthouse fare by Godard, Pasolini, Camus, Merchant, Cacoyannis, Dassin, the Coen brothers, Angelopoulos. Prof. Vangelis Calotychos, TTH 1:00-2:20

COLT 1210: Introduction to the Theory of Literature

An historical introduction to problems of literary theory from the classical to the postmodern. Issues to be examined include mimesis, rhetoric, hermeneutics, history, psychoanalysis, formalisms and ideological criticism (questions of race, gender, sexuality, postcolonialism). Primarily for advanced undergraduates. Lectures, discussions; several short papers.

Prof. Susan Bernstein and Prof. Peter Szendy MWF 11:00-11:50

COLT 1310K: History of the Romance Languages (FREN 1020B)

The Romance family is one of the most widely-spoken and politically important language families. The aim of this course is to introduce students to the history and linguistic characteristics of the Romance family. Our purpose is to learn the factors that led to the development of modern standard Romance languages, and provide an understanding of Romance structures and their linguistic relationships. The course covers language families; genetic relationships (family trees); typological comparison; internal versus external history; language contact and borrowing; Romance Pidgins and Creoles; Standard language versus dialect; social variation; concepts of Phonetics and Phonology; Morphology; Syntax; Semantics; Lexicon. Prof. Ourida Mostefai, TTH 10:30-11:50

COLT 1410S: Classical Tragedy

This course will read the great Greek tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and some Senecan tragedy. We will then read Renaissance and later tragedies that use the classical world as a setting, such as *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Julius Caesar*, and tragedies that rewrite classical themes, including O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*.

Prof. Molly Ierulli. MWF 9:00-9:50

COLT 14200: Proust, Joyce and Faulkner

A reading of three major Modernist authors, with a focus on the following issues: role of the artist, representation of consciousness, weight of the past. Texts include substantial portions of Proust's *Recherche*, Joyce's *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, Faulkner's *Sound and the Fury*, *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!* Prior background in these authors desirable, especially *Ulysses*.

Prof. Arnold Weinstein. TTh 10:30-11:50

COLT 1431D: Reading Modernist Poetry

The period between 1880 and 1950, generally known as the age of Modernism, saw profound changes at every level of Western society, including politics, war, religion, and art. In this course, we will examine how various poets in Europe and beyond responded to and helped shape these changes through their art. Emphasis will be on reading for form as well as theme and socio-historical context, and on poetry as performance. Authors may include Yeats, H.D., Hughes, Rilke, Lasker-Schüler, Celan,

Apollinaire, Césaire, Montale, Ungaretti, Blok, Akhmatova, Lorca, and Neruda. Knowledge of at least one non-English language highly recommended. Teaching Associate Felix Green, MWF 10:00-10:50

COLT 1341E: Loss in Modern Arabic Literature

This course examines the literary expression of and response to various forms of loss, including military defeat, diaspora, and prison confinement in Arabic poems, short stories, and novellas from the 20th century through the post-Arab Spring. We explore how texts reimagine social and political geographies through diverse poetic and narrative techniques to enrich our understanding of the region and of central debates in its literary tradition. Though the topics may seem quite grim, we will find that many of the readings render forms of loss into aesthetics of beauty or empowerment. No knowledge of Arabic necessary. Teaching Associate Gregory Halaby, MWF 12:00-12:50

COLT 1440T: Cinema's Bodies

The course explores the cinematic construction of bodies, female, male, animal and others. They are not standing alone as they are framed, cut, exposed, veiled, enlarged, distorted and gendered. The body is screened at the screen and composed into an imaginary image of beauty, death, sex, work. Cinematic devices like close-up, camera angle, light etc. transform bodies into the body of the film and its specific style, from which they can't be subtracted. This leads to the question of the spectator's body as screen for the filmic body and the many theoretical explorations to the embodied visions cinema entails and stimulates.

Prof. Gertrud Koch, MWF. N9:00-9:50

COLT 1710C: Literary Translation Workshop

The primary focus of this course is the practice of literary translation as an art. Using the workshop format, each student will complete a project by the end of the semester. Examples and theoretical texts will illuminate the historical, ethical, cultural, political, and aesthetic values that underlie every translation, keeping an eye towards opening up the field beyond inherited practices to consider the contemporary implications of our choices, intentions, and purposes in translation. Open to all levels. Heritage speakers are welcome, collaboration is permitted, and an open-spirited approach to this developing and fascinating practice is strongly recommended.

Prof. Sawako Nakayasu. Wednesdays 3:00-5:30

COLT 1810G: Fiction and History

How the historical fiction that has flourished over the past four decades challenges the notions of objectivity and totalization, while providing alternative viewpoints for the reconstruction and reinterpretation of the past. Authors considered include Grass, Doctorow, Delillo, García-Márquez, Allende, Danticat and Gordimer. Theoretical texts by White, LaCapra, Benjamin, Ricoeur, and Chartier. Films such as *The Official Story and Europa, Europa will be viewed and incorporated into the discussions. Prerequisite: two previous courses in literature. Enrollment limited to 25. Instructor permission required.* Prof. Luiz Fernando Valente. Mondays 3:00-5:30

COLT 1810N: Freud: Writer and Reader

A broad survey of Freud's writings, with particular emphasis on psychoanalysis' relevance to literary theory and cultural analysis. Readings include Freud's major works, as well as secondary sources focused on applications to literary studies.

Prof. Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg Mondays 3:00-5:30

COLT 1810X: Mirror for the Romantic: *The Tale of the Genji* and *The Story of the Stone*

In East Asian Buddhist culture, the mirror is a symbol of the mind in both its intellectual and emotional aspects. These masterworks detail the lives and loves of Prince Genji, cynosure of the medieval Japanese court and Jia Baoyu, the last hope of an influential Chinese clan during the reign of Manchus. We examine both works as well as the sources of Genji and literary aesthetics of the Tang dynasty. Prerequisites: **COLT 0710**, **RELS 0040 (0088)** or **0100 (0006)**, or permission of the instructor. Prof. Dore J. Levy. TTh 1:00-2:20

COLT 1812A: Literatures of Immigration

Why do people migrate? How do literary genres, including poetry, fiction, autobiography and memoir, characterize immigrant experiences? How is the experience of "coming from somewhere else" similar and different for each subsequent generation of immigrants? How does literature indicate the impacts of migration on the culture, politics and economics of the countries of immigration and emigration? How do literatures of immigration imagine the past, present and future of networks and communities of immigrants? Focusing on twentieth-century literary texts and the socio-historical context of mass migration, the first half of the course examines immigration literature in the U.S., the second half of the course explores literatures of immigration beyond the U.S., and the course concludes with an inquiry into immigration in our presently globalizing age. Prof. Vangelis Calotychos. Tuesdays 4:00-6:30

COLT 1813I: The Colonial and the Postcolonial Marvelous

A celebration and critique of the marvelous--as the strange, wondrous, magical, or unreal--as it has been wielded in Spanish American and related literatures (French Caribbean, Brazilian). We follow the marvelous from European exoticizing of the New World during the colonial period to its postcolonial incarnations in "magical realism" and beyond. We attend particularly to the political, ideological, social, and commercial implications of the marvelous in writers including Carpentier, Chamoiseau, Columbus, Esquivel, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, and García Márquez. Readings in English, though you may read texts in the original French, Spanish, or Portuguese. Prof. Stephanie Merrim and Prof. Esther Whitfield. TTh 2:30-3:50

COLT 1813O: Adventures of the Avant-Garde

In the early years of the twentieth century, a series of artistic movements rippled across the Western hemisphere, exploding conceptions of art and culture while reconfiguring international relations. Explores those movements, from their predecessors (Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé), through overlapping -isms (Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism, Vorticism, Expressionism, Dada, Surrealism), to avatars in the Americas. In keeping with the avant-garde's cross-pollinating spirit, we study texts from a variety of traditions, forms, and genres: from poetry through prose to manifestoes, from painting and photography to film, music, and dance, touching on questions of translation and translatability between languages, cultures, and art-forms. Enrollment limited to 25. Prof. Michelle Clayton. MWF 11:00-11:50

COLT 1815D: "Survivors": The Desert Island Myth in Literature and Culture

This new course will study the construction of the "Survivor" myth: the isolated castaway who survives a catastrophic shipwreck and recreates social, material and philosophical relations on a desert island. We will trace the Eastern sources of this myth in Ancient Egypt and Persia and in medieval Arabic texts (Sindbad the Sailor and Hayy Bin Yaqzan). Reading Robinson Crusoe as the modern archetype of this story of self-sufficiency we will see how this narrative of self-(re)invention has captured the imagination of so many writers by offering opportunities for reflection on origins, religion, politics, nature and culture. We will explore some of its most interesting adaptations in children's literature (Family Swiss Robinson) and film (Castaway). Colonialism, race, slavery and gender will be discussed. Readings will include fiction, poetry and film as well as some of the major philosophical analyses of Defoe's novel—(by Rousseau, Marx and Derrida); postcolonial critiques (by Derek Walcott, J.M. Coetzee and Patrick Chamoiseau) and re-genderings of the story (as "Female" Crusoes). Prof. Ourida Mostefai TTh 2:30-3:50

COLT 1815F: Memory, Commemoration, Testimony

In this course we will study problems of remembering and forgetting in a variety of texts including poetry, philosophy, psychoanalysis, memoirs, public monuments, memory studies and trauma theory. We will explore the roles of language and representation in dealing with the past, the temporality of the self, the operation of the unconscious, the memorial and the monument. We will also look at the politics of memory in relation to the cultural traumas of slavery, the Holocaust, Viet Nam and 9/11. Readings from Rousseau, Hegel, Wordsworth, Proust, Derrida and de Man; Freud, Caruth, Saidiya Hartman, Segalen; Arendt and Reznikoff. Prof. Susan Bernstein MWF 1:00-1:50

COLT 2821S: Historical Form

This course will explore formal approaches to historical writing. We will focus on the work of Hayden White, but also compare literary analyses of--and experiments with-- historical narrative outside the modern European tradition. For their final projects, students can work on a historical work or genre of their choice. Prof. Tamara Chin. Wednesdays 3:00-5:30

COLT 2821V: It's About Time: Temporalities of Waiting in Theory, Literature, and Film (HMAN 2400G)

This is a seminar on four forms of temporality: suspension, rupture, heterochronia, and coming to an end. These forms will be explored as pertaining to politics, theology, and experience. Agamben's reading of Paul (The Time That Remains) provides us with a conceptual grid, and "waiting for the Messiah" will be one of the modes of temporalization examined. Kafka's staging of delay in The Castle, Fritz Lang's invention of the filmic countdown, and the "checkpoint" in occupied Palestine will constitute major counterpoints. Students will work on collaborative assignments defined collectively and focusing on a specific event, text, or film. Profs. Peter Szendy and Adi Ophir, Th 3:00-5:30

COLT 2821Y: Archives: Imperial and Non-Imperial Histories, Practices and Theories (HMAN 2400J)

The seminar explores some theoretical, historical, material, practical, methodological and curatorial aspects of archives. Special attention will be given to archives' modes of operation in dis/placing people and objects, and the roles "documents" play in the co-constitution of "well-documented-objects" and "un-documented people." Students will be asked to work collaboratively in and with archives as sources and tools, and to experiment with creating archives of their own. The seminar involves one trip to Yale and some irregular hours, which are noted in the syllabus.

Prof. Ariella Azoulay, F3:00-5:00

COLT 2821Z: Objects of (and in) Animation (MCM 2120H)

The course focuses on the notion of animation as a general concept. This includes more than just the genre of animation films. It also includes the animation of objects that are neither organic nor alive: The animation of the machine. The technical object plays here an important role. The focus will be on the discussion of concepts of film as medium of animation per se and on different procedures of animating. Our debates here will cover: cartoon, the digital, experimental and animated effects in film. The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the animated character of film. Prof. Gertrud Koch, M 3:00-5:30

COLT 2830I: Histories of the Early Modern Body

This course will explore formal approaches to historical writing. We will focus on the work of Hayden White, but also compare literary analyses of--and experiments with-- historical narrative outside the modern European tradition. For their final projects, students can work on a historical work or genre of their choice. Prof. Karen Newman. Mondays 3:00 – 5:30

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