

## *Department of Comparative Literature*

### *Course Offerings Spring 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 0510P: Reading the Renaissance**

How do these works figure the renaissance as a cultural formation? Petrarch, Rime Sparse; Boccaccio, Decameron; Castiglione, Book of the Courtier; Erasmus, Praise of Folly; Thomas More, Utopia; Machiavelli, Prince, Mandragola; Wyatt and Ronsard (poems), Spenser, Faerie Queen and Shepherdes Calender, Cervantes, Don Quixote. Prof. Foley. Tues./Thur. 10:30-11:50am.

#### **COLT 0711H: The Arabic Novel, from Realism to Fantasy**

This course offers students both a foundation in the “classics” of Arabic fiction and a foray into recent experimentations with form and language. We’ll spend the first half of the semester with Egyptian Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz, tracing his evolution from Victor Hugo-esque chronicler of life in Cairo to Faulknerian experimentalist. We’ll then examine the works of authors who deem themselves “post-Mahfouzian,” including Gamal al-Ghitani, Sonallah Ibrahim, Elias Khoury, and Hanan al-Shaykh. Students will emerge with a transnational, inclusive understanding of the Middle East glimpsed through the region’s literature. No Arabic necessary; students with Arabic may read in the original. Prof. Drumsta. Tues./Thur. 9-10:00am.

#### **COLT 0810I: Tales and Talemakers of the Non-Western World**

Examines many forms of storytelling in Asia, from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the *Arabian Nights Entertainments* to works of history and fiction in China and Japan. The material is intended to follow the evolution of non-western narratives from mythological, historical and fictional sources in a variety of cultural contexts. Topics will include myth and ritual, the problem of epic, tales of love and the fantastic, etc. DPLL. Prov. Levy. Wed./Fri. 1-1:50pm.

#### **COLT 0810O: Civilization and Its Discontents**

Investigates the age-old tension between order and chaos as a central dynamic in the making and interpretation of literature. Texts will be drawn from drama, fiction and poetry from Antiquity to the present. Authors include Sophocles, Shakespeare, Racine, Beckett, Prevost, Bronte, Faulkner, Morrison, Blake, Whitman, Dickinson, and Rich. Prof. Weinstein. Tues./Thur. 10:30-11:50am.

#### **COLT 0811Z: Paradise, Periphery, Prison?: The Island in the Western Imaginary**

Paradise, periphery, or prison? The representation of the island has been described as imaginary and not actual, mythological and not geographical. Examines the fascination with islands in the western cultural imaginary. Selective readings from literature, film and historical texts focus on ways in which island spaces have been represented in diverse social, national, imperial contexts as well as the effect of such projections on the native islanders, their visitors and often subjugators. Authors may include Homer, Plato, Marco Polo, Mandeville, Darwin, Defoe, Tournier, Kincaid, Kafka, Durrell, Seferis; theoretical works drawn from critical geography, postcolonialism, and the field of island studies. Open only to first-year students. Prof. Calotychos. Mon./Wed./Fri. 2-2:50pm.

#### **COLT 0812B: What is Colonialism? - Archives, Texts and Images**

Through a close reading of a variety of texts and images from 16th-19th century we will study the transformation of lands and people into appropriable objects and the formation of political regimes in and through different colonial projects. We will follow the encoding of slavery in literary works, in the corpus of

laws, in travelers' visual renditions and in the bodies of people. We will use the archive as a source and a site for the production of knowledge. Students will create small textual and visual archives around different topics, and will use them in writing their final work. DPLL. Prof. Azoulay. Mon./Wed./Fri. 10-10:50am.

### **COLT 1411B: Theater and Revolution**

This class explores how theater and dramatic literature question and shape our understanding of "revolution" as a radical turn, incisive rupture, and profound shift in the way we perceive and organize our social and cultural life. How does drama accompany revolutionary movements, and how do revolutions compel political theater to transform itself? Readings include Aristophanes's *Lysistrata*, Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, Büchner's *Danton's Death*, Brecht's *Life of Galileo*, and Parks's *The America Play*. We will analyze plays and performances, write our own dramatic scenes, and discuss key concepts of theater theory and practice. Prof. Johannssen. Mon./Wed./Fri. 11-11:50am.

### **COLT 1420F: Fantastic and Existentialist Literatures of Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil**

Jorge Luis Borges proclaimed that South American writers can "wield all themes" without superstition, with irreverence. This course examines the ways in which 20th century writers from Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil appropriated European fantastic and existentialist fictions, taking them in new directions. Readings, in English or original languages, include Borges, Cortázar, Onetti, Lispector. Prerequisite: previous college literature course(s). Enrollment limited to students with a semester level of 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12 or 13. Prof. Merrim. Tues./Thur. 2:30-3:50pm.

### **COLT 1422H Mediterranean Fictions: On Debts, Crises, and the Ends of Europe**

Interested students must register for MRGK 1230

Sun-drenched, seductive, and timeless, the Mediterranean is an appealing location from which to ponder Europe's debt to this cradle of western civilization. Recently, an economic debt crisis in Greece and the region stoked fears that a peaceful, unified Europe will come undone or else be rehabilitated. The word 'crisis' itself hinges on a making a crucial decision, often in marking the turning point of a disease. This course examines representations of this moment through literature, film, history—but also in anthropology, journalism, and art—and in relation to other twentieth-century Mediterranean texts that also anticipated seismic shifts on the continent. WRIT Prof. Calotychos TTh 1pm-2:20pm

### **COLT 1431B: Modern Arabic Poetry, Between Tradition and Innovation**

An advanced course with readings in modernist Arabic poetry, beginning with the so-called neo-classical poets and proceeding through the formal and thematic innovations of Romanticism and Modernism, from Egypt to Iraq and beyond. We will examine such recurring themes as love, loss, and longing; war, exile, and homeland; cultural heritage (*turath*) and creative innovation (*ibda'*); gender and genre. All readings in Arabic; at least four years Arabic language study (or equivalent) required for enrollment. Poems by Shawqi, Mutran, Abu Shadi, Jibran, Abu Madi, al-Sayyab, al-Mala'ikah, al-Bayati, 'Abd al-Sabur, Sayigh, Ziyad, Tuqan, Darwish, Hawi, al-Khal, Adunis, Qabbani, al-Maghut, Mersal, and others. Pre Requisites: At least three years of Arabic language study. Prof. Drumsta. Tues./Thur. 6:40-8:00pm.

### **COLT 1710C: Literary Translation**

Exercises and investigations in the history, theory, and practice of literary translation. Prerequisite: at least one foreign-language course in literature at 1000-level (or equivalent). Prof. Nakayasu. Wed. 3-5:30pm.

### **COLT 1813N: Early Modern Women's Writing**

Interested in women writers, feminism? If so, it's vital to understand their early modern origins. This course explores the rich feminist tradition enacted in the often edgy texts of women writing on the cusp of modernity. We study writers from England, France, Latin America, North America, and Spain, focusing on self-fashioning, gender and sexuality, love and marriage, imagined worlds, religion, eccentricity, and writing and fame. Authors

include Anne Bradstreet, Margaret Lucas Cavendish, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Mme de Lafayette, María de Zayas. Enrollment limited to 20. Texts and class in English. Prof. Merrim. Fri. 3-5:30pm.

### **COLT 1814X: Faulkner**

In examining Faulkner's major works from the early stream-of-consciousness novels through the history-driven and race-inflected texts of the 30s and 40s, this course will evaluate Faulkner's practice as a writer working both in and against Southern culture, and as Modernist writing within an international context. Issues include narrative experimentation, race, class, gender, and the evolution of Faulkner's work. Enrollment limited to students with a semester level of 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12 or 13. Prof. Weinstein. Tues./Thur. 1-2:20pm.

### **COLT 1815: Kafka and the Philosophers (GRMN 1892)**

Interested students must register for GRMN 1892

Kafka's writings take as a central concern the philosophical interpretability of what we call literature. What is one to make, for instance, of a text that begins with a protagonist awakening one morning to realize that he has been transformed into a monstrous vermin? Or another awakening protagonist unexpectedly detained by officers waiting in his apartment? For Kafka, "correct understanding of something and misunderstanding of the same thing are not entirely mutually exclusive." We will study some of Kafka's greatest texts alongside key attempts at interpreting Kafka philosophically, including Benjamin, Adorno, Derrida, Deleuze/Guattari, and Agamben. In English; diverse fields welcome. Prof. Richter. Mon. 3-5:00pm.

### **COLT 1815A: Apocalypse**

The End of the World is central to the Abrahamic faiths. From the Jewish sources, through Christian and Islamic tradition and until the present day, the idea of the End of World is decisive for the understanding of major events in history, such as the birth of Islam or Modernity. Through readings across the religious and the secular traditions starting with the Torah and ending with Steve Bannon and ISIS. Prof. Azzam. Mon./Wed./Fri. 12-12:50pm.

### **COLT 1815B: Figures of the Contemporary**

Interested students must register for HISP 1331B

Recent years have seen a surge of interest in contemporary fiction, just as fiction itself has turned its attention to the question of how to be, and what it means to be, contemporary. In this course we will focus on the work of four of the most significant and compelling Latin American authors of our present moment—César Aira (Argentina), Alejandro Zambra (Chile), Valeria Luiselli (Mexico), and Yuri Herrera (Mexico)—exploring the ways in which their fiction crosses frontiers of time and space to map out new configurations of the contemporary. Readings will be complemented by films and theoretical texts. Prof. Clayton MWF 12pm-12:50pm

### **COLT 2540K: Théories et fictions des Lumières**

Interested students must register for FREN 2150E

This course seeks to examine the idea of "Lumières" in Eighteenth-century France through the reading of some of the major authors of the period. Focusing on the relationship between theory and fiction we will analyze the concepts central to the French Enlightenment: happiness, progress and freedom as they are formulated both in fiction (novels and plays) and in theoretical texts. Readings will include major texts by Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, as well as other writers and philosophes. Conducted in French. Prof. Ourida Mostefai Mon. 3-5:20pm

### **COLT 2520F: Theories of the Lyric**

Through readings of recent critical discussions of the lyric genre, we will explore more general methodological problems of literary theory. Questions to be raised include: the role of form, structure and tropes in analyzing poetry; problems of subjectivity and voice; the relation between poetry, history and politics; the function of reading; and the problematic "objectivity" of criticism. Readings from Jakobson, Benveniste, Jauss, Benjamin,

Johnson, De Man, Lacoue-Labarthe, Agamben, Badiou and Derrida. Focus on poets Hölderlin, Baudelaire and Celan. Prof. Bernstein. Thur. 4-6:30pm.

**COLT 2520H: Scales of Historiography**

Interested students must register for HMAN 2400F

This seminar explores the construction of new geographies and timescales of historical narration during the late nineteenth- and twentieth-century periods of social upheaval (displacement, colonialism, war). We will explore debates over cosmological, geological, and ecological timescales and affective histories across a set of genres and disciplines (e.g., genealogy, Classics, religion, geohistory). Some emphasis will be on China, Taiwan and Europe, but with an attention to how they were related to other parts of Asia, Africa, and the Americas. Prof. Chin and Prof. Nedostup. Mon. 12:30-3:00pm.

**COLT 2650R: The New Foucault: Between Antiquity and Neoliberalism**

Since the publication and translation of his final lectures, a “new” Foucault has emerged, requiring a radical revision in our understanding of his work. Moving beyond his study of sexuality and biopolitics, Foucault turned to antiquity in order to investigate the diverse practices by which the self has been constituted and obliged to bear truth burdens. The exercise of political power is intimately connected with these exercises. In the seminar, we will read Foucault’s last works on truth-telling and the hermeneutics of the subject, in the dual context of emergent neo-liberalism and a new understanding of antiquity. Prof. Haynes. Mon. 3-5:30pm.

**COLT 2720D: Translation: Theory and Practice**

This seminar will address the theory and practice of translation, and their place in the Humanities. Essays by translators, authors and scholars will be drawn from a range of languages and contexts, as will literary and historical texts. Each participating student will work on a substantial translation project over the course of the semester. The seminar is open only to graduate students; a strong knowledge of at least one language other than English is required. Prof. Whitfield. Thur. 12-2:30pm.

**COLT 2990: Thesis Preparation**

For graduate students who have met the tuition requirement and are paying the Registration Fee to continue active enrollment while preparing a thesis.