

COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Comparative Literature is a joint Bryn Mawr and Haverford program that draws on the diverse teaching and research interests of the faculty at the two colleges, especially but not exclusively those in our many departments of language and literature. The study of Comparative Literature situates literature in an international perspective; examines transnational cultural connections through literary history, literary criticism, critical theory, and poetics; and works toward a nuanced understanding of the socio-cultural functions of literature. The close reading of literary texts and other works from different cultures and periods in their original language is fundamental to our enterprise. Interpretive methods from other disciplines that interrogate cultural discourses also play a role in the comparative study of literature; among these are anthropology, philosophy, linguistics, religion, history, music, the history of art, visual studies, film studies, gender studies, Africana studies, Latin American and Iberian studies, and East Asian studies.

Our students have gone on to do graduate work in comparative literature and related fields; pursued advanced degrees in business, law, medicine, and journalism; and undertaken careers in translation, publishing, international business, diplomacy, and non-governmental organizations.

Learning Goals

Students should make use of these skills in the senior thesis and oral exam, which should also demonstrate the capacity to:

- evaluate and discuss the merits of a critical or methodological approach.
- complete an independent scholarly project.
- bring together and analyze critically, in light of certain central issues and themes, a selection of works of literature and criticism read over the four years.

Requirements for Honors

Students who, in the judgment of the Comparative Literature Steering Committee, have done distinguished work in their comparative literature courses and in the Senior Seminar will be considered for departmental honors.

Prizes

The Laurie Ann Levin Prize is awarded annually to the senior major(s) whose work merits recognition for intellectual achievement, as demonstrated in the senior thesis.

Faculty

Two co-chairs, one at each college, and a Bi-College steering committee administer the program. The committee generally includes those faculty members most often involved in teaching the introductory course and the senior seminar.

Major Requirements

- COML B200 Introduction to Comparative Literature, normally taken by the spring of the sophomore year.
- Six advanced literature courses in the original languages (normally at the 200 level or above), balanced between two literature departments (of which English may be one): at least two (one in each literature) must be at the 300-level or above, or its equivalent, as approved in advance by the advisor. These courses may not all be tagged as

COML, and students are encouraged to go to individual languages and literatures pages to find courses, and discuss these with the major advisor.

- One course in critical theory.
- Two electives in comparative literature.
- COML B398 Theories and Methods in Comparative Literature
- COML B399 Senior Seminar in Comparative Literature

*In the case of languages for which literature courses in the original language are not readily available in the Tri-Co, students may be allowed to count a course taught in English translation for which they do at least part of the reading in the original language.

Minor Requirements

Requirements for the minor are COML B200 Introduction to Comparative Literature and COML B398 Theories and Methods in Comparative Literature, plus four additional courses—two each in the literature of two languages. At least one of these four courses must be at the 300 level. Students who minor in comparative literature are encouraged to choose their national literature courses from those with a comparative component.

Note: Both majors and minors should work closely with the co-chairs of the program and with members of the steering committee in shaping their programs.

COML B200 Introduction to Comparative Literature (1 Unit)

This course explores a variety of approaches to the comparative or transnational study of literature through readings of several kinds: texts from different cultural traditions that raise questions about the nature and function of storytelling and literature; texts that comment on, respond to, and rewrite other texts from different historical periods and nations; translations; and readings in critical theory.

COML B213 Theory in Practice: Critical Discourses in the Humanities (1 Unit)

What is a postcolonial subject, a queer gaze, a feminist manifesto? And how can we use (as readers of texts, art, and films) contemporary studies on animals and cyborgs, object-oriented ontology, zombies, storyworlds, neuroaesthetics? By bringing together the study of major theoretical currents of the 20th century and the practice of analyzing literary works in the light of theory, this course aims at providing students with skills to use literary theory in their own scholarship. The selection of theoretical readings reflects the history of theory (psychoanalysis, structuralism, narratology), as well as the currents most relevant to the contemporary academic field: Post-structuralism, Post-colonialism, Gender Studies, and Ecocriticism. They are paired with a diverse range of short stories across multiple language traditions (Poe, Kafka, Camus, Borges, Calvino, Morrison, Djebbar, Murakami, Ngozi Adichie) that we discuss along with our study of theoretical texts. We will discuss how to apply theory to the practice of interpretation and of academic writing, and how theoretical ideas shape what we are reading. The class will be conducted in English, with an additional hour taught by the instructor of record in the target language for students wishing to take the course for language credit.

COML B216 Dreaming and Fictional Narrative in Comparative Context (1 Unit)

Is the sleeping you still “you”? How does your dream-self relate to your “real world” self? In this course we will examine the relationship between dreams and other acts of imagination represented in fiction, drama, film, and other related arts. How do dreams engage questions of the distinctions between reality and fiction? Following the philosopher Zhuangzi’s dream of the butterfly: if there is a clear distinction, can we know which side of that distinction we are on? In this course, we will look at the ways that different authors have used dreams to explore topics such as: the relationship between true and false, dreams as expressions of innermost desire, dreams as predictions of the future, and dreams as interpretations of experiences. Surveying classical and contemporary fiction, drama, film, and graphic novels from Chinese, American, and other national languages and traditions, we will apply ideas developed in philosophy and critical theory to examine how authors have explored this tradition. Theoretical topics include: narrative theory, time and memory, epistemic injustice. All texts are read in English translation, but students who can read the original language are encouraged to do so when possible. EALC or COML majors have the option to take it as 316 with permission of instructor.

COML B217 Lovesick (1 Unit)

Love has often been compared to some kind of sickness. In this class, we will explore this traditional discourse on love from different angles: how sick is love? What kind of sickness are we talking about? Is there a cure to love? Is love always delusional? Is there always a touch of sacrifice in love? In order to answer these questions, we will read books, a graphic novels, and watch movies belonging to a variety of cultures and times. Authors include: Ovid, Mme de La Fayette, Charles Burns.

COML B316 Dreaming and Fictional Narrative in Comparative Context (1 Unit)

Is the sleeping you still “you”? How does your dream-self relate to your “real world” self? In this course we will examine the relationship between dreams and other acts of imagination represented in fiction, drama, film, and other related arts. How do dreams engage questions of the distinctions between reality and fiction? Following the philosopher Zhuangzi’s dream of the butterfly: if there is a clear distinction, can we know which side of that distinction we are on? In this course, we will look at the ways that different authors have used dreams to explore topics such as: the relationship between true and false, dreams as expressions of innermost desire, dreams as predictions of the future, and dreams as interpretations of experiences. Surveying classical and contemporary fiction, drama, film, and graphic novels from Chinese, American, and other national languages and traditions, we will apply ideas developed in philosophy and critical theory to examine how authors have explored this tradition. Theoretical topics include: narrative theory, time and memory, epistemic injustice. All texts are read in English translation, but students who can read the original language are encouraged to do so when possible.

COML B324 Version Control: Surface, Depth and Literature (1 Unit)

“Version Control” is a semester-long course in Comparative Literature that explores the way we read and interpret texts. Are texts hiding their true meanings under a surface layer of plot? Is a story a riddle that we have to overcome in order to understand it? As Rita Felski wrote: “the professional reader, whether critic or detective, presses below distracting surfaces to the deeper meaning of signs” (Felski, “Suspicious” 224). What are the hazards of pressing below the surface? We will address this and other questions this semester through the close reading of a variety of texts that make this question central to their plots. We read literary texts where multiple—and often contradictory—levels of story are held in suspension; texts that use images and texts together to tell their story; and, finally, we will look intra-textually at adaptations of literary texts.

COML B398 Theories and Methods in Comparative Literature (1 Unit)

This course, required of all senior comparative literature majors in preparation for writing the senior thesis in the spring semester, has a twofold purpose: to review interpretive approaches informed by critical theories that enhance our understanding of literary and cultural texts; and to help students prepare a preliminary outline of their senior theses. Throughout the semester, students research theoretical paradigms that bear on their own comparative thesis topics in order to situate those topics in an appropriate critical context. This is a required for majors and minors.

COML B399 Senior Seminar in Comparative Literature (1 Unit)

Thesis writing seminar. Research methods.

CSTS B219 Poetic Desires, Queer Longings (1 Unit)

This course places poetry that considers love and desire from Greco-Roman antiquity in conversation with modern poetry and critical theory (queer, feminist, and literary). How are the roles of lover and beloved constructed through gender? How does queer desire and sexuality manifest in different cultural contexts? How have poets sought to express desire through language, and in what ways does language fail to capture that desire? Students in this course will face the difficulties of articulating desire head-on through both traditional literary analysis papers and a creative writing project. Texts will include love poetry by Sappho and Ovid, Trista Mateer’s *Aphrodite Made Me Do It*, Anne Carson’s *Eros the Bittersweet*, and Audre Lorde’s “The Uses of the Erotic.”

CSTS B238 Classical Traditions & Science Fictions (1 Unit)

What might ancient classics say about the modern world? In this course we explore intersections between ancient, Greco-Roman texts and the genre that is most characteristic of the modern, technoscientific world, science fiction. Raising questions about genres and traditions; the role of the ‘humanities’ in relation to ‘technology’; and ways of discovering and evaluating ‘knowledge’, we consider the possibility that, although antiquity and the present day differ, at base ancient literature has given science fiction its profound sense of wonder about the world. Texts from authors such as Sappho, Sophocles, and Plato; Lucretius, Ovid, and Apuleius; Shelley, Borges, Dick, and Eco; Le Guin, Morrison, Atwood, and Edson; Cameron, Cronenberg, and Demme; and Benjamin, Baudrillard, Haraway, and Hayles.

CSTS B274 Greek Tragedy in Global Cinema (1 Unit)

This course explores how contemporary film, a creative medium appealing to the entire demographic spectrum like Greek drama, looks back to the ancient origins. Examining both films that are directly based on Greek plays and films that make use of classical material without being explicitly classical in plot or setting, we will discuss how Greek mythology is reconstructed and appropriated for modern audiences and how the classical past continues to be culturally significant. A variety of methodological approaches such as film and gender theory, psychoanalysis, and feminist theory will be applied in addition to more straightforward literary-historical interpretation.

CSTS B375 Interpreting Mythology (1 Unit)

The myths of the Greeks have provoked outrage and fascination, interpretation and retelling, censorship and elaboration, beginning with the Greeks themselves. We will see how some of these stories have been read and understood, recounted and revised, in various cultures and eras, from ancient tellings to modern movies. We will also explore some of the interpretive theories by which these tales have been understood, from ancient allegory to modern structural and semiotic theories. The student should gain a more profound understanding of the meaning of these myths to the Greeks themselves, of the cultural context in which they were formulated. At the same time, this course should provide the student with some familiarity with the range of interpretations and strategies of understanding that people of various cultures and times have applied to the Greek myths during the more than two millennia in which they have been preserved. Preference to upperclassmen, previous coursework in myth required.

EALC B200 Major Seminar: Methods and Approaches (1 Unit)

This course is a writing intensive course for EALC majors and minors to introduce some foundational ideas and concepts in the study of East Asia. Beginning with close readings of primary source texts, students are introduced to the philosophy and culture of China, and its subsequent transmission and adaptation across the vast geographical area that is commonly referred to as "East Asia." Students will gain familiarity with methods in this interdisciplinary field and develop skills in the practice of close critical analysis, bibliography, and the formulation of a research topic. Required of EALC majors and minors. Majors should take this course before the senior year.

EALC B240 Topics in Chinese Film (1 Unit)

This is a topics course. Course content varies.

EALC B281 Food in Translation: Theory and Practice (1 Unit)

This semester we will explore the connections between what we eat and how we define ourselves in the context of global culture. We will proceed from the assumption that food is an object of culture, and that our contemplation of its transformations and translations in production, preparation, consumption, and distribution will inform our notions of personal and group identity. This course takes Chinese food as a case study, and examines the way that Chinese food moves from its host country to diasporic communities all over the world, using theories of translation as our theoretical and empirical foundation. From analyzing menu and ingredient translations to producing a short film based on interviews, we will consider the relationship between food and communication in a multilingual and multicultural world. Readings include theoretical texts on translation (Apter), recipe books and menus, Chinese and Chinese-American literature (Classic of Poetry, Mo Yan, Hong Kingston). Films include Ian Cheney's "Searching for General Tso," Wayne Wang's "Soul of a Banquet" and "Eat a Bowl of Tea," Ang Li's "Eat Drink Man Woman," and Wong Karwai's "In the Mood for Love."

EALC B315 Spirits, Saints, Snakes, Swords: Women in East Asian Literature & Film (1 Unit)

This interdisciplinary course focuses on a critical survey of literary and visual texts by and about Chinese women. We will begin by focusing on the cultural norms that defined women's lives beginning in early China, and consider how those tropes are reflected and rejected over time and geographical borders (in Japan, Hong Kong and the United States). No prior knowledge of Chinese culture or language necessary.

EALC B355 Animals, Vegetables, Minerals in East Asian Literature & Film (1 Unit)

This semester, we will explore how artists question, explore, celebrate, and critique the relationships between humans and the environment. Through a topics-focused course, students will examine the ways that narratives about environment have shaped the way that humans have defined themselves. We will be reading novels and short stories and viewing films that contest conventional binaries of man and animal, civilization and nature, tradition and technology, and even truth and fiction. "Animals, Vegetables, Minerals" does not follow chronological or geographical frameworks, but chooses texts that engage the three categories enumerated as the major themes of our course. We will read and discuss animal theory, theories of place and landscape, and theories of modernization or mechanization; and there will be frequent (and intentional) overlap between these categories. We will also be watching films that extend our theoretical questions of these themes beyond national, linguistic, and generic borders. You are expected to view this course as a collaborative process in which you share responsibility for leading discussion. There are no prerequisites or language expectations, but students should have some basic knowledge of East Asian, especially Sinophone, history and culture, or be willing to do some additional reading (suggested by the instructor) to achieve an adequate contextual background for exploring these texts.

ENGL B213 Global Cinema (1 Unit)

This course introduces students to one possible history of global cinema. We will discuss and analyze a variety of filmmakers and film movements from around the world. Students will be exposed to the discipline of film studies as it is specifically related to the cinema of East Asia, South Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. We will study these works with special emphasis on film language, aesthetics, and politics, as well as film style and genre. Along the way, we will explore a number of key terms and concepts, including colonialism, postcolonialism, form, realism, surrealism, futurism, orientalism, modernity, postmodernity, hegemony, the subaltern, and globalization. Filmmakers will include, among others, Wong Kar-wai, Satyajit Ray, Shirin Neshat, Fernando Mereilles, Agnès Varda, and Werner Herzog.

ENGL B217 Narratives of Latinidad (1 Unit)

This course explores how Latina/o writers fashion bicultural and transnational identities and narrate the intertwined histories of the U.S. and Latin America. We will focus on topics of shared concern among Latino groups such as struggles for social justice, the damaging effects of machismo and racial hierarchies, the politics of Spanglish, and the affective experience of migration. By analyzing a range of cultural production, including novels, poetry, testimonial narratives, films, activist art, and essays, we will unpack the complexity of Latinidad in the Americas.

ENGL B237 Cultural Memory and State-Sanctioned Violence in Latinx Literature (1 Unit)

This course examines how Latinx literature grapples with state-sanctioned violence, cultural memory, and struggles for justice in the Americas. Attending to the histories of dictatorship and civil war in Central and South America, we will focus on a range of genres—including novels, memoir, poetry, film, and murals—to explore how memory and the imagination can contest state-sanctioned violence, how torture and disappearances haunt the present, how heteropatriarchal and white supremacist discourses are embedded in authoritarian regimes, and how U.S. imperialism has impacted undocumented migration. Throughout the course we will analyze the various creative techniques Latinx cultural producers use to resist violence and imagine justice.

ENGL B294 Iranian Cinema: Before and After the Revolution (1 Unit)

One of the most celebrated global cinemas to date, Iranian cinema has been recognized in film festivals around the world for its unique aesthetic vision, political complexities, and social import. This course will expose students to major masterpieces of Iranian cinema both prior to and after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Along the way, students will learn to meaningfully engage topics such as film form, colonialism, imperialism, labor migration, realism, expressionism, and issues concerning the politics of gender, race, ethnicity, and religion.

ENGL B391 Literary Approaches to the Quran (1 Unit)

The Qur'an, the central holy scripture of Islam, has a long history of being studied as much for its literary and broadly aesthetic qualities as for its divine guidance. This course will engage in a sustained analysis of the history of the study of the Quran as literature, including the recitational practices associated with it, practices that have historically been considered antithetical to the project of modern literature, since they challenge the hegemony of literacy and written textuality. Students will also learn about the Quran and the Quranic interpretive tradition in relation to key fields within literary studies, such as postcolonial theory, African American studies, and American studies. In doing so, this course will also open up space to examine and interrogate the secular basis of the modern humanities. Readings will include work by Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Malcolm X, Edward Said, and others.

FREN B207 Ouvrir la voix: Introduction aux études francophones (1 Unit)

This course provides students with an overview of foundational concepts, methods and texts relevant to Francophone Studies. We will engage with past and present debates relating to identity, diversity, nation and empire in the colonial and postcolonial contexts and explore the specificity of Francophone Studies with regards to the field of postcolonial studies. While focused on literature, the course will also explore other forms of cultural production (movies, graphic novels, political speeches, etc.) from sub-Saharan Africa, the Maghreb, the Caribbean and Vietnam. The course will train students in literary analysis and develop their ability to speak and write critically in French. Prerequisites: FREN 102 or 105.

FREN B229 Monstres et Merveilles (1 Unit)

Sous leurs dehors simples, les contes merveilleux ont fasciné les critiques littéraires comme les spécialistes du folklore. Ces derniers ont tenté de définir leur structure primordiale et de les classer selon des motifs universels. Nous nous inspirerons à la fois de l'analyse structurale et de l'analyse symbolique pour réenchanter des contes devenus parfois trop familiers. Pour y voir plus clair, nous lirons plusieurs versions d'un même conte. A la fin du cours, vous pourrez répondre à ces questions : quel est le rapport entre Cendrillon et les cendres ? Pourquoi le chaperon du Petit Chaperon Rouge est-il rouge ? Le devoir final sera un conte que vous écrirez vous-même.

FREN B302 Le printemps de la parole féminine: femmes écrivains des débuts (1 Unit)

This study of selected women authors from Latin CE-Carolingian period through the Middle Ages, Renaissance and 17th century—among them, Perpetua, Hrotswitha, Marie de France, the troubairitz, Christine de Pisan, Louise Labé, Marguerite de Navarre, and Madame de Lafayette—examines the way in which they appropriate and transform the male writing tradition and define themselves as self-conscious artists within or outside it. Particular attention will be paid to identifying recurring concerns and structures in their works, and to assessing their importance to women's writing in general: among them, the poetics of silence, reproduction as a metaphor for artistic creation, and sociopolitical engagement. Prerequisite: two 200-level courses or permission of instructor.

FREN B312 Advanced Topics in Literature (1 Unit)

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Prerequisites: two 200-level courses.

FREN B325 Topics: Etudes avancées (1 Unit)

An in-depth study of a particular topic, event or historical figure in French civilization. This is a topics course. Course content varies. The seminar topic rotates among many subjects: La Révolution française: Histoire, littérature et culture; L'environnement naturel dans la culture française; Mal et valeurs éthiques; Le Cinéma et la politique, 1940-1968; Le Nationalisme en France et dans les pays francophones; Étude socio-culturelle des arts du manger en France du Moyen Age à nos jours; Crimes et criminalité; Ecrire la Grande Guerre: 1914-10; Le "Rentrée Littéraire"; Proust/Baudelaire; L'Humain et l'environnement.

FREN B326 Etudes avancées (1 Unit)

An in-depth study of a particular topic, event or historical figure in French civilization. This is a topics course. Course content varies.

FREN B350 Voix médiévales et échos modernes (1 Unit)

A study of selected 19th- and 20th-century works inspired by medieval subjects, such as the Grail and Arthurian legends and the Tristan and Yseut stories, and by medieval genres, such as the roman, saints' lives, or the miracle play. Among the texts and films studied are works by Bonnefoy, Cocteau, Flaubert, Genevoix, Giono, and Gracq.

GERM B223 Topics in German Cultural Studies (1 Unit)

This is a topics course. Course content varies. Taught in English.

GERM B245 Interdisciplinary Approaches to German Literature and Culture (1 Unit)

This is a topics course. Taught in German. Course content varies. Previous topics include, Women's Narratives on Modern Migrancy, Exile, and Diasporas; Nation and Identity in Post-War Austria.

HART B110 Introduction to Medieval Art and Architecture (1 Unit)

This course takes a broad geographic and chronological scope, allowing for full exposure to the rich variety of objects and monuments that fall under the rubric of "medieval" art and architecture. We focus on the Latin and Byzantine Christian traditions, but also consider works of art and architecture from the Islamic and Jewish spheres. Topics to be discussed include: the role of religion in artistic development and expression; secular traditions of medieval art and culture; facture and materiality in the art of the middle ages; the use of objects and monuments to convey political power and social prestige; gender dynamics in medieval visual culture; and the contribution of medieval art and architecture to later artistic traditions. This course was formerly numbered HART B212; students who previously completed HART B212 may not repeat this course.

HART B235 Critical Approaches to Visual Representation: Identification in the Cinema (1 Unit)

This course is writing intensive. An introduction to the analysis of film and other lensed, time-based media through particular attention to the role of the spectator. Why do moving images compel our fascination? How exactly do spectators relate to the people, objects, and places that appear on the screen? Wherein lies the power of images to move, attract, repel, persuade, or transform their viewers? Students will be introduced to film theory through the rich and complex topic of identification. We will explore how points of view are framed by the camera in still photography, film, television, video games, and other media. Prerequisite: one course in History of Art at the 100-level or permission of the instructor. Enrollment preference given to majors and minors in History of Art and Film Studies. Fulfills Film Studies Introductory or Theory course requirement. This course was formerly numbered HART B110; students who previously completed HART B110 may not repeat this course.

ITAL B216 Body and Mind (1 Unit)

In this course, we will explore representations of the relationship between body and mind, starting from 19th-century Russian novels that conceptualize love as a physical ailment and ending with the history of Alzheimer's disease. Talking about the relationship between body and mind will allow us to investigate how gender roles and models of womanhood and masculinity shaped the evolution of modern sciences, from psychiatry to obstetrics. Investigating how bodies have been (and continue to be) read, we will discuss systems created to police societies by cataloguing bodies, from Lombroso's phrenology to modern fingerprinting and face recognition softwares. Finally, we will consider how our understanding of the relationship between body and mind has changed over time. Many of the theories we will discuss during the semester are now considered outdated pseudo-science - but how can we conceptualize the difference between science and pseudo-science? As new categories and disease designations appear to substitute the old ones, which are the implications of creating a label for a constellation of existing symptoms? The course will be taught entirely in English. There will be an optional hour in Italian for students of Italian.

ITAL B228 Creating Classics: A Visual Workshop on Pasolini & Greek Drama (1 Unit)

Is the reception of what we call "Classical Antiquity" a passive exercise of memory, inheritance, and recurrence? Or can it be a truly creative action, a kind of reclaiming, even a subversion of inherently exclusionary ideas and media? And what happens when we try to actively take part in this dialogue with a past that was transmitted to us as important, foundational, original, and authoritative? Rooted in the perspectives of trans-codification, trans-historical tradition, and cultural trans-lation, this course attempts to address such questions both in theory and practice. It starts with a seminar, devoted to the analysis and discussion of primary sources from the ancient Mediterranean and their afterlives in modern media. It then turns into a workshop that is both scholarly and creative.

ITAL B302 Italo Calvino Transnational Writer (1 Unit)

Italo Calvino is one of the best-known Italian writers in the world - but in addition to being the author of numerous novels and short stories, Calvino was a translator, and editor and – perhaps most importantly – a reader. His activity provides us with a window into the Italian editorial landscape and its connection with foreign literary markets and traditions. Analyzing Calvino's letters to his colleagues at the publishing house Einaudi, his famous *risvolti*, introductions, and book reviews, we will reflect on the journey of texts from their selection and translation, to their publication, to their promotion and reception. We will discuss books as complex and stratified objects, reflecting on how editorial choices shape the reception and interpretation of a text. In exploring Calvino's engagement with other people's books, we will focus on the international dimension of his work, his personal and professional connections with France - where he lived for several years - with South America, Russia, and the United States. Such an emphasis on Calvino as a transnational reader and writer reflects and illuminates the peculiarity of the Italian editorial and literary ecosystem, in which translation has a central role.

ITAL B315 A Gendered History of the Avant-Garde (1 Unit)

The very concept of 'avant-garde' is steeped in a masculine warlike imagery, and the founding manifesto of Futurism even glorifies 'contempt for the woman'. Yet, feminine, queer, androgynous, and non-binary perspectives on sexual identity played a central role – from Rimbaud to current experimentalism – in the development of what has been called 'the tradition of the new'. In this seminar we will explore such a paradoxical anti-traditional tradition through texts, images, sounds, and videos, adopting a historical perspective from early 20th century movements to the Neo-Avant-Garde. We will unearth the stories and works of great experimentalists who have been neglected because of their gender. We will deal with poems made up entirely of place names, of recorded noises, of typographical symbols. Taking advantage of the college's collection and library, we will try to read texts with no words, surreal stories, performances, objects, and we will make our own avant-garde experiments. Course taught in English, no previous knowledge of Italian required.

ITAL B325 Literature and Film, Literature into Films and Back (1-10 Unit)

This course is a critical analysis of Modern Italian society through cinematic production and literature, from the Risorgimento to the present. According to Alfred Hitchcock's little stories, two goats were eating the reel of a movie taken from a famous novel. "I liked the book better," says one to the other. While at times we too chew on movies taken from books, our main objective will not be to compare books and films, but rather to explore the more complex relation between literature and cinema: how text is put into film, how cultural references operate with respect to issues of style, technique, and perspective. We will discuss how cinema conditions literary imagination, and how literature leaves its imprint on cinema. We will "read" films as "literary images" and "see" novels as "visual stories". Students will become acquainted with literary sources through careful readings; on viewing the corresponding film, students will consider how narrative and descriptive textual elements are transposed into cinematic audio/visual elements. An important concern of this course will be to analyze the particularity of each film/book in relation to a set of themes -gender, death, class, discrimination, history, migration- through close textual analysis. We shall use contemporary Film theory and critical methodology to access these themes.

POLS B381 Nietzsche (1 Unit)

This course examines Nietzsche's thought, with particular focus on such questions as the nature of the self, truth, irony, aggression, play, joy, love, and morality. The texts for the course are drawn mostly from Nietzsche's own writing, but these are complemented by some contemporary work in moral philosophy and philosophy of mind that has a Nietzschean influence.

RUSS B220 Chernobyl (1 Unit)

This course introduces students to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, its consequences, and its representations across a range of cultures and media through a comparative lens and as a global phenomenon. Culture meets ecology, science, history, and politics. Students will contribute to a digital exhibition and physical installation. Taught in translation. No knowledge of Russian required.

RUSS B232 Coal, Oil, Nuclear: Narrative Afterlives (1 Unit)

Coal. Oil. Nuclear energy. These items give shape to our everyday lives in countless ways. They impact our health, our politics, and our very survival on earth.. Nevertheless, because these resources permeate nearly every aspect of our existence, the human mind can struggle to comprehend them in their totality. In this course, we'll explore texts that engage with our environment to help us bring humans' relationship to these materials into focus. Scientific, historical, and economic studies tend to focus on their scale and widespread impact. Reading stories, watching

RUSS B233 Experimental Literature; or, Weird Stuff (1 Unit)

Stuck in a reading rut? Is the strange, the peculiar, the mind-shattering, the paradigm-shifting calling? Texts that imagine and generate changed perspectives, cultures, and lives? Reading a wide variety (multiple literatures, 20th- and 21st-centuries), we'll investigate—gravely and playfully—what experimenting with/in literature means as well as experimental literature's capacity in representing cultural margins. In particular, in which ways can experimental literature intersect with atypical attitudes and values, alternative lifestyles, and issues such as nature and land, Indigeneity, and gender? What makes the experimental enter the mainstream, and can they interact fruitfully? What happens at the very margins when writers use unusual techniques and styles? Let's get weird. (Catch the Oulipo constraint in here?) Note: Taught in English. No knowledge of Russian language/culture necessary. Open to all.