

**Department of Comparative Literature**  
**Course Offerings Spring 2019**

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 0610L: Murder Ink: Narratives of Crime, Discovery, and Identity

Examines the narrative of detection, beginning with the great dramatic whodunit (and mystery of identity) *Oedipus Rex*. Literary texts which follow a trail of knowledge, whether to establish a fact (who killed Laius?) or reveal an identity (who is Oedipus?) follow in Sophocles' footsteps. We read Sophocles' intellectual children. Readings include: *Hamlet*, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Woman in White*, and other classic novels and plays. We also analyse seminal films of the genre, including *Laura* and *Vertigo*. Will include the twentieth-century detective story, with particular attention to women writers and the genre of the female private eye. Prof. Molly Jerulli. MWF 11:00-11:50am

COLT 0711K: Arabic Voices Beyond the Middle East

This course introduces students to literature by Arabs writing outside of their country of origin and in relation to a new cultural landscape, in the US, Britain, Canada, and Brazil. We will explore, through poems, short stories, novels, films, and music, the themes of exile, assimilation, gender, sexuality and war in transnational and transcultural contexts. Authors include: Rawi Haje, Etel Adnan, Rabih Alameddine, Ahdaf Sueif, Saad Elkhadem Prof. Greg Halaby MWF 10-10:50am

COLT 0710Q: Odysseus in Literature and Film

Examines reincarnations of the Homeric figure of Odysseus in contemporary literatures and film as modernist figure, postcolonial subject, and existentialist hero. How is the Odysseus myth altered from culture to culture (Greece, Rome, Ireland, the Caribbean)? How is it re-visioned in different historical periods and from different perspectives (feminist, marxist, postcolonial) and genres (epic, poetry, the novel, film, drama)? Major authors include Homer, Virgil, Tennyson, Joyce, Kazantzakis, Cavafy, Seferis, Atwood, Walcott; criticism by Bakhtin, Edith Hall, Adorno, Derrida. Films include works by Angelopoulos, the Coen brothers; Singer's *Usual Suspects*, Mendes' James Bond offering *Skyfall*, and Kubrick's *2001: Space Odyssey*. Prof. Vangelis Calotychos MWF 2:00-2:50pm

COLT 0710X: Fan Fiction

What is imitation (sincerest form of flattery) to literary canons? Vergil's *Aeneid* appropriated Aeneas from the *Iliad*, Joyce's *Ulysses* modernized the *Odyssey*. Admiration as a source of inspiration is a major force in the evolution of fiction. "Fan Fiction" explores intriguing characters in greater detail and new contexts, allowing them new lives in contemporary imagination. This course presents pairs or sets of works that are explicitly linked by the intimate relation of imitation. Classic readings will be paired with their mostly contemporary updates, including *Pride and Prejudice/Murder at Pemberley*, *Heart of Darkness/State of Wonder*, and *Monkey/Tripmaster Monkey*. Prof. Dore J. Levy TTh 1:00-2:20pm

COLT0810G: Equity Law Literature Philosophy

Justice, rigorously applied, yields injustice. This paradox haunted Western aspirations toward legal and political justice from antiquity to the Renaissance. It necessitated the formulation of a complementary principle, equity, whose job it was to correct or supplement the law in cases where the strict application of it would lead to unfairness. In England, equity was enforced by a separate system of law, and it was a weighty, ambiguous term of great emotional force, with a particular appeal to Shakespeare. After its decline, Dickens and Kafka wrote two of the greatest literary works set in a world without equity. Prof. Kenneth Haynes. TTh 9:00-10:20am

COLT 0810M: Uncanny Tales: Narratives of Repetition and Interruption

What makes stories creepy? Close readings of short narratives with special attention to how formal and thematic elements interact to produce the effects of uncertainty, anxiety and incoherence peculiar to "the uncanny." Topics include: the representation of the self in images of the arts; the representation of speech;

instabilities of identity and spatial and temporal boundaries; doubles, monsters, automata and hybrids. Texts selected from: Walpole, Shelley, Hoffmann, Kleist, Poe, Dostoyevsky, Freud, Wilde, Cortazar, Kafka, Lovecraft. Prof. Susan Bernstein. MWF 12:00-12:50pm

COLT 1310L: Political Commitment in Modern Arabic Literature

Summary: This course will explore the history of and debates surrounding political consciousness and commitment in modern Arabic literature. We will ask how, why, and with what consequences Arab authors have challenged political realities with literary expression. The intimate connection between literature and social-political change has a long history in the Arabic tradition. We will begin in the mid-20th century when translations of Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of *la littérature engagée* entered Arabic, sparking a debate over the proper role of the arts in the newly independent Arab states. We will trace the diverse literary strategies by which authors, living under difficult political circumstances, expressed their criticisms and envisioned social and political justice. As we move through the 20th century and onwards, we will examine how the early socialist realist (distinct from social realism) trend of political commitment developed in a variety of directions. In the context of increased censorship, military defeat, and oppression, authors responded with new styles and themes, including alienation, despair, fragmentation, and self-criticism. We will mainly read novels, novellas, and short stories grounded in their political-historical contexts to complicate and enrich our understanding of the Arab world. Prof. Gregory Halaby. MWF 1-1:50pm

COLT 1310J: The Arab Renaissance

Explores the literature of the 19th-century "nahda," or Arab renaissance. Topics include the birth of the Arabic novel, encounters between Europe and the Middle East, neoclassicism, and the rise of Islamic modernism. We will read selections from the works of Shidyaq, Tahtawi, Zaidan, Shawqi, and Bustani, alongside historiographical and theoretical texts. At least three years of Arabic required. Prof. Elias Muhanna. Mondays 3:00-5:30pm

COLT 1330M: Transatlantic Surrealisms (Register for FREN 1330E)

"Surreal" refers to what is incongruous, uncanny, or downright bizarre. Those terms describe many poetic and artistic productions belonging to Surrealism, without for all that explaining the literary and theoretical underpinnings of the movement at its origins in the 1920s, or accounting for the international flowering of its ideas and its continued influence. The class will attempt to trace the complexities of Surrealism from its modernist prehistory, through "canonization," to diversification and waning in the 1960s. We will also study surrealism vis-à-vis the shift in cultural capital from Europe to the New World, and reverberations in subsequent artistic forms. Taught in English. Prof. David Wills Th 4-6:30pm

COLT 1411D: Antigones

As one of the most revised and interpreted works around the globe, Sophocles' *Antigone* invites a comparison of adaptations across cultural contexts and historical moments. This course studies several *Antigones* to examine how the play's exploration of citizenship, law, gender, family, and resistance to authority has shaped philosophical conceptions of tragedy and speaks to contemporary political issues. We will consider the ways *Antigone* is reimagined under apartheid laws in South Africa, the Mexican drug war, and in the age of ISIS. Reading across theoretical texts, poetry, visual art, and dramatic literature we will explore questions of form as they relate to adaptation and translation. The class is designed as a workshop where students will discuss numerous versions of *Antigone* and engage in adaptation, translation, and performance. Prof. Elizabeth Gray TTh 1-2:20pm

COLT 1430I: Poetry of Europe: Montale, Celan, Hill

The fifty years between the Second World War and the formation of the European Union was a period in which the meaning of "Europe" was placed under great strain. The class will examine the strains and debates about Europe within the lyric poetry of several literary traditions. It will take the form of close historical, formal, and critical readings of three books of poems in their entirety: Montale's *The Storm and Others* (1956), Celan's *No-One's Rose* (1963), and Hill's *Canaan* (1997). Enrollment limited to 25. Prof. Kenneth Haynes. Thursdays 4-6:30pm

COLT 1440S: Images d'une guerre sans nom: The Algerian War in Literature and Film (Register for FREN 1410R)

Not officially acknowledged as a war by France until recently, the Algerian War of independence remains, more than a half-century later, a contested battleground in the French national consciousness. Focusing on depictions of the Algerian War in literature and film we will investigate the many taboos that still endure, most notably around the question of violence and torture, and attempt to reassess the relative "invisibility" of this conflict. Readings will include films by Gillo Pontecorvo, Jean-Luc Godard, Alain Resnais, Agnès Varda, and works by Frantz Fanon, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Benjamin Stora, Claire Etcherelli, Assia Djebar, and Leïla Sebbar. Prerequisite: a course at the 600- or 700-level or equivalent proficiency. Contact the instructor to verify your proficiency if you have not taken French at Brown. Taught in French. Prof. Ourida Mostefai. W 3-5:30pm

COLT 1710D: Exercises in Literary Translation

Exercises and investigations in the history, theory, and practice of literary translation. Students pursue individual projects for translation workshops. Common exercises draw on Shakespeare translation, from classic translations in Europe to unique examples like Nyerere's Swahili Caesar and current projects like Shakespeare in Modern English or The Chinese Shakespeare. Prerequisite: one foreign-language course in literature at 1000-level (or equivalent). Prof. Stephen Foley. TTh 10:30-11:50am

COLT 1810X: Mirror for the Romantic PENDING IN Courses@Brown

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 Levy. TTh 10:30-11:50am

COLT 1814S: The Balkans, Europe's Other?: Literature, Film, History

Introduces the modern Balkans through a critical examination of literary and visual, historiographic and political, narratives. The course considers the contestation over a shared historical past and interreligious geographic space through common and divergent master narratives, motifs, myths, and recurring discourses. It also examines the region's aesthetic, religious, and political relation to Europe. Do the Balkans constitute a traumatized, "balkanized," self-colonized, abject modernity at Europe's edges, its inner alterity? Given the acclaim achieved by Balkan filmmakers since 1989, the course also asks how Balkan artists, caught in-between nationalism, Orientalism, Eurocentrism and globalization, assert agency and subjectivity and captivate our imaginations. Prof. Vangelis Calotychos. Tuesdays 4:00-6:30pm

COLT 1815C: War, Language and the Arts

War is all around us: in the many conflicts being waged around the world, but also in the ways we are addressed by political leaders and engage with one another. This course addresses the relationship between war and language, exploring war as conflict, metaphor, and art. Drawing primarily on Latin American and U.S. contexts - Cuba's "War on Imperialism," Argentina's "Dirty War," Mexico's "narco-wars" and the "War on Terror" - we will ask what is at stake in waging war on a personal, national and global stage, and what alternatives we might choose. Prof. Esther Whitfield. TTh 2:30-3:50pm

COLT 1815E: Literature of Empires (Register for CLAS 1120Z)

This course compares and contrasts the literatures of the ancient empires of East and West Asia (including the Mediterranean), with an emphasis on Chinese and Greco-Roman cultures. We will explore the literary discourses that grew up in support of and in opposition to imperialism and colonization; specific topics may include how empires use mythology, how tensions between centers and peripheries create imperial identities, how an empire assimilates a multiethnic past, the constitution of archives, and what "classic" means to different audiences. All readings will be in English. Prof. Tamara Chin and Prof. Joseph Reed. TTh 2:30-3:50pm

COLT 1815H : Troubled Origins: Accounting for Oneself (Nietzsche to Eribon) (Register for GRMN 1661C)

What does it mean to account for one's life by accounting for one's origins? Nietzsche, for one, expressed the

“uniqueness” of his existence “in the form of a riddle”: “As my father I have already died, as my mother I still live and grow old.” We will study literary and philosophical attempts at catching up with one’s troubled origins, including Nietzsche’s *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is* (self-interpretation); Freud’s “Selbstdarstellung” (self-portraiture); Kafka’s *Letter to Father* (paternal confessions); Derrida’s *Monolingualism of the Other* (native languages and lost origins); Eribon’s *Returning to Reims* (“class closet”). Undergraduates from diverse fields welcome. Prof. Gerhard Richter. W 3-5:30pm

COLT1815I: Torn Halves of Modernism

This course analyzes the constitutive contradictions of modernist works from a global perspective. We will address, for instance, tensions between the periphery and the metropolis, city and countryside, realism and modernism, aesthetic autonomy, commodification and political commitment. We will also examine these questions across various media: novels, poetry, photography, architecture and film. Readings include works by Dos Passos, Faulkner, Döblin, Manuel Maples Arce, Roberto Arlt, Patrícia Galvão. Prof. Tavid Mulder. MWF 9:00-9:50am

COLT 2650T: Foundations of Literary Theory (Register for POBS 2600C)

Designed to provide a solid foundation on the development of literary theory from its ancient roots in Plato, Aristotle, Horace and Plotinus to the contemporary period. Includes Kant, the Russian Formalists, Lukács, Jakobson, Bakhtin, Barthes, Derrida, Ricoeur, Said and others. Conducted in English. Prof. Luiz Valente. M 3-5:30pm

COLT 2821T: Gift and Debt

By alternating literary and philosophical approaches to gift and debt, we will try to gain a historical perspective on what Maurizio Lazzarato has called “the making of the indebted man” in our contemporary neoliberal era. Important landmarks for our approach will include: Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, Bataille’s *The Accursed Share*, Goethe’s *Faust I* and *Faust II*, and Derrida’s *The Gift of Time*. Prof. Peter Szendy. Wednesdays 3:00-5:30pm

COLT 2821U: Borders, Exiles, Language

This graduate seminar will examine literatures and concepts of borders, border crossings, and exile, with particular attention paid to ways in which linguistic, literary, and political questions intertwine. The concepts of refuge, sanctuary, hospitality, and statelessness will be investigated. Texts to be read include the Bible, classical texts on exile, as well as modern authors beginning with the Enlightenment and the Revolutionary era (Rousseau, Goethe). Critical readings by Hannah Arendt, Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben and others. Prof. Ourida Mostefai and Prof. Marc Redfield. Fridays 3:00-5:30pm

COLT 2821W: Heidegger and the Arts: Poetry, Painting, Sculpture (Register for GRMN 26610)

The work of Martin Heidegger remains one of the most consistently fascinating and challenging adventures in modern thinking. He saw his creative and intellectual life’s work as a contribution to the task of learning how to think after the end of conventional philosophy. Our graduate seminar will focus on the role that the arts play in his thought, especially poetry, painting, and sculpture. We will study, closely and patiently, some of the seminal texts that Heidegger wrote especially in the later phase of what he called his “paths of thinking” (“Denkwege”). In English. Open-minded graduate students from diverse fields welcome. Prof. Gerhard Richter. M 3-5:30pm