

# COMPARATIVE LITERATURE (PHD)

Department Website (<http://as.nyu.edu/complit/>)

NYSED: 08266 HEGIS: 1503.00 CIP: 16.0104

## Program Description

In the Department of Comparative Literature, we examine the range of literature, its transmission, and its dynamic traversal of linguistic, geographic, cultural, political, and disciplinary boundaries. Our students adopt a global perspective and interdisciplinary outlook as they pursue work in various languages, traditions and academic fields. Faculty members offer courses embracing the ancient and modern periods of world literature, exploring critical, theoretical, and historical issues, as well as problems of representation in the broadest sense. This type of analysis expands the field of literature to include a wide variety of cultural practices – from historical, philosophical, and legal texts to artifacts of visual and popular culture – revealing the roles literature plays as a form of material expression and symbolic exchange. Admitting an average of six fully-funded students a year into its doctoral program, the department provides an intimate intellectual setting in which students work closely with core faculty while exploring the considerable resources offered by other NYU departments and by universities participating in the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium (Columbia University, CUNY, Princeton University, Rutgers University, Stonybrook, Teachers' College - Columbia, Fordham University, and The New School for Social Research).

Graduate students play a vital role in the life of the department, notably through the organization of the Comparatorium (<https://as.nyu.edu/complit/graduate/comparatorium.html>), a regular colloquium featuring graduate student and faculty work in progress, and through organizing and participating in conferences which attract the participation of graduate students and faculty from across the nation and around the world. Recent conferences hosted by the department include "On Limits" (A. Kiarina Kordela, keynote speaker), "Lucretius and Modernity" (Catherine Wilson, keynote speaker), "Anachronic Shakespeare" (Samuel Weber, keynote speaker), "Posthuman Antiquities" (Adriana Cavarero and Claudia Baracchi, keynote speakers), "Re-Mediating the Archive: Image, Word, Performance," and "On Reproduction" (Étienne Balibar, keynote speaker). In 2014, the department hosted the ACLA conference, "Capitals" (Judith Butler, plenary address). Graduate Certificate in Poetics and Theory symposia have provided publication opportunities for graduate students including *Flirtations: Rhetoric and Aesthetics This Side of Seduction*, ed. Daniel Hoffman-Schwartz, Barbara Natalie Nagel, and Lauren Shizuko Stone (Fordham University Press, 2015), and *Lucretius and Modernity*, ed. Jacques Lezra and Liza Blake (Palgrave, 2016).

## Admissions

All applicants to the Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) are required to submit the general application requirements (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc.html>), which include:

- Academic Transcripts (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/academic-transcripts.html>)
- Test Scores (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/test-scores.html>) (if required)

- Applicant Statements (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/statements.html>)
- Résumé or Curriculum Vitae
- Letters of Recommendation (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/nyu-as/gsas/admissions/arc/letters-of-recommendation.html>), and
- A non-refundable application fee (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc.html#fee>).

See Comparative Literature (<https://gsas.nyu.edu/admissions/arc/programs/comparative-literature.html>) for admission requirements and instructions specific to this program.

## Program Requirements

The PhD requires students successfully complete 72 credits of coursework of which 40 credits are in Comparative Literature, and 32 credits are outside of the department as electives relevant to the student's research and teaching goals. The program offers a concentration in Medieval and Renaissance Studies (see below for concentration requirements).

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Major Requirements</b>		
COLIT-GA 1400	Sem in Lit:Rsch Mthds Tchngs:	4
COLIT-GA 2000	Advanced Writing Seminar <sup>1</sup>	8
COLIT-GA 3991	Thesis Research	1-8
One course in literature and/or theory from a non-U.S./Western European context		4
Once literary criticism/theory class before 1800		4
Once contemporary (20th century) literary criticism/theory course		4
One pre-1800 literature course		4
<b>Electives</b>		
Other Elective Credits		40
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>72</b>

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This course is taken twice in two consecutive terms.

## Medieval and Renaissance Studies Concentration

The concentration in Medieval and Renaissance Studies is interdisciplinary in nature and creates a framework and community for diverse approaches to the study of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. It complements doctoral students' work in their home departments with interdisciplinary study of the broad range of culture in the medieval and early modern periods, as well as of the theories and methods that attend them. The concentration is designed to train specialists who are firmly based in a traditional discipline but who can work across disciplinary boundaries, making use of varied theoretical approaches and methodological practices. The concentration consists of twenty credits distributed under the following courses: MEDI-GA 1100 Proseminar in Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Late Latin and Early Vernaculars, MEDI-GA 2100 Studies in Late Latin and Early Vernaculars: or other approved course, and MEDI-GA 2000 Medieval & Renaissance Workshop, 2 credits per semester taken twice in an academic year. Students must also take one approved course in the area of Medieval and Renaissance Media: Visual and Material Cultures, and one approved course in a medieval or early modern topic. At least one course, not counting either the Proseminar or Workshop, must be taken outside a student's home

department. In addition, students pursuing the concentration will present a paper at least once either in the Workshop or in a conference offered by the Medieval and Renaissance Center.

## Additional Program Requirements

### Foreign Language Proficiency

Students must prove proficiency in three non-English languages or two non-English languages and, substituting for the third language, three doctoral level courses in a nonliterary discipline. There are several ways to prove language proficiency, including passing a translation exam, which NYU administers three times a year.

### Qualifying Paper

Once a student has completed 32 credits of course work and satisfied the language requirements, a qualifying paper must be submitted to and approved by a committee of two faculty members. The paper is meant to be one which the student has already submitted for a seminar and would like to return in order to polish the argument to a “publishable” standard.

### Comprehensive Exams (Written and Oral)

Once all course work and language proficiency has been satisfied, students are required to pass a comprehensive exam. This PhD examination consists of a comprehensive, written take-home examination on three topics chosen by the candidate, in consultation with a faculty committee: one topic is literary criticism and theory, a second topic includes the candidate’s major or teaching field, and the third is in a nodal field of critical, historical, generic, or period interest. The written examination is taken after the required course Thesis Research, COLIT-GA 3991, in which the topics for the exam are prepared. The written examination is followed within the next semester by an oral examination given by the same faculty committee of three, on the preliminary dissertation prospectus prepared by the candidate. The revised prospectus is then submitted, usually within six weeks, for final approval by its three readers. Following the exams, doctoral candidates should be prepared to write a thesis which must be concerned with comparative issues of language, discipline, or culture. The PhD thesis must be approved by an adviser and two major readers; after completion and acceptance of the thesis, two further readers are invited to complete the oral defense jury.

### Dissertation Defense, Submission and Approval

Students must successfully defend their dissertation, and submit for approval.

### Departmental Approval

All Graduate School of Arts & Science doctoral candidates must be approved for graduation by their department for the degree to be awarded.

## Sample Plan of Study

Course	Title	Credits
<b>1st Semester/Term</b>		
COLIT-GA 1400	Sem in Lit:Rsch Mthds Tchnqs:	4
COLIT-GA 2502	Revisiting The Western Classics:	4
Foreign Language		4
Other Elective Credits		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>2nd Semester/Term</b>		
COLIT-GA 2890	Studies in Lit Theory:	4
COLIT-GA 3630	Topics in African Lit	4

Foreign Language		4
Other Elective Credits		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>3rd Semester/Term</b>		
COLIT-GA 2956	Topics:	4
Restricted Electives		4
Foreign Language		4
Other Elective Credits		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>4th Semester/Term</b>		
Major Requirement		4
Major Requirement		4
Other Elective Credits		4
Foreign Language		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>5th Semester/Term</b>		
COLIT-GA 2000	Advanced Writing Seminar	4
Foreign Language		4
<b>Credits</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>72</b>

Following completion of the required coursework for the PhD, students are expected to maintain active status at New York University by enrolling in a research/writing course or a Maintain Matriculation (MAINT-GA 4747) course. All non-course requirements must be fulfilled prior to degree conferral, although the specific timing of completion may vary from student-to-student.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will have:

1. Detailed and comparative knowledge of at least two national or linguistic traditions.
2. A sophisticated theoretical approach to the interpretation of literary and artistic forms.
3. The ability to conduct original research in original languages leading to the design and implementation of a significant contribution to the field.

## Policies

### NYU Policies

University-wide policies can be found on the New York University Policy pages (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/nyu/policies/>).

### Graduate School of Arts and Science Policies

Academic Policies for the Graduate School of Arts and Science can be found on the Academic Policies page (<https://bulletins.nyu.edu/graduate/arts-science/academic-policies/>).