

# 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. The Department is committed to hosting relevant, boundary-breaking, and thought-provoking events. Recent speakers hosted by the department include Elisabeth Anker, Daphne A. Brooks, Xu Bing, Tamara Chin, Michael Hardt, R.A. Judy, Anahid Nersessian, Mark Christian Thompson, Ming Xie, McKenzie Wark, and Slavoj Žižek, among others.

## 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.

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Major Requirements</b>		
COLIT-GA 1400	Sem in Lit:Rsch Mthds Tchnqs:	4
COLIT-GA 2000	Advanced Writing Seminar <sup>1</sup>	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		44
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>72</b>

<sup>1</sup> This course is taken twice in two consecutive terms.

## 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 the department administers by appointment during the academic year.

### Qualifying Paper

Once a student has completed 32 credits of course work, 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 to in order to polish the argument to a "publishable" standard.

### Comprehensive Exams (Written and Oral)

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 generally taken in January of the third year, after completion of the Fall semester COLIT-GA 2000: Advanced Writing Seminar, 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 in the Spring semester COLIT-GA 2000: Advanced Writing Seminar. 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.

Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

Students are required to complete all coursework, language requirements, the qualifying paper, and the comprehensive exams before the end of their fourth summer in the program. Students are awarded a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) upon completion of all coursework and requirements (aside from dissertation and defense) and move to the dissertation writing stage of the program as doctoral candidates.

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
1st Semester/Term		
COLIT-GA 1400	Sem in Lit:Rsch Mthds Tchnqs:	4
Other Elective Credits	Example – Pre-1800 Literature Course to fulfill requirement	4
Other Elective Credits		4
Foreign Language		4
Credits		16
2nd Semester/Term		
Other Elective Credits	Example – Non-U.S./Western European Literature or Theory Course to fulfill requirement	4
Other Elective Credits		4
Other Elective Credits		4
Foreign Language		4
Credits		16
3rd Semester/Term		
Other Elective Credits	Example – Contemporary (20th century) Literary Criticism or Theory Course to fulfill requirement	4
Other Elective Credits		4
Other Elective Credits		4
Foreign Language		4
Credits		16
4th Semester/Term		
Other Elective Credits	Example – Pre-1800 Literature/Theory course to fulfill requirement	4
Other Elective Credits		4
Other Elective Credits		4
Foreign Language		4
Credits		16
5th Semester/Term		
COLIT-GA 2000	Advanced Writing Seminar	4
Credits		4
6th Semester/Term		
COLIT-GA 2000	Advanced Writing Seminar	4
Credits		4
Total Credits		72

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/>).