Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

Director
• Russell Ganim

Faculty: https://clas.uiowa.edu/dwllc/people
Website: https://clas.uiowa.edu/dwllc/

The Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures includes several academic units: the Departments of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures, French and Italian, German, Linguistics, and Spanish and Portuguese, and the programs in American Sign Language, Comparative Literature, Second Language Acquisition, and Translation. An undergraduate minor is offered in translation for global literacy and a graduate certificate in literary translation. In addition to providing administrative leadership for all of its units, the division fosters interdisciplinary scholarship in languages, literatures, and cultures. It encourages synergy and collaboration among its faculty and enhances opportunities for cross-cultural course development and research.

Undergraduate and graduate programs in the division serve students with varied interests and career aspirations. Students are educated to become global citizens who understand and are understood by diverse populations. They are trained to be critical thinkers and problem solvers who are also capable scholars, lucid writers, and proficient speakers.

The division offers instruction in numerous fields related to language, literature, and culture.

• American Sign Language Program: American Sign Language and Deaf Studies
• Department of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures: Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Sanskrit
• Department of French and Italian: Arabic, French, Italian, Swahili
• Department of Linguistics: linguistics
• Department of German: German
• Department of Spanish and Portuguese: Portuguese, Spanish

The Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures also serves as the administrative home for Comparative Literature, Literary Translation, Second Language Acquisition, and Translation.

The Department of Linguistics provides scientific study of familiar languages, as well as less well-known languages. The division’s Second Language Acquisition Program brings multidisciplinary resources together to examine the processes that underlie non-native-language learning. The Translation Program explores the literary, cultural, and historical contexts of work and their linguistic, aesthetic, and ideological dimensions while it builds skills for translating works from one language to another. The Comparative Literature Program addresses culture across regions and languages in relation to literature, social theory and philosophy, history, and other disciplines. The minor in Translation for Global Literacy introduces undergraduate students to the exploration of translation both as a practical application and as a tool for global literacy. The graduate Certificate in Literary Translation offers students the opportunity to develop stronger competencies in translation as a method of scholarly inquiry and pedagogy, and the advantage of the ongoing synergy between creative writing and literary translation.

Facilities

The Language Media Center (LMC) is an essential resource unit for faculty and students in the Division of World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. The LMC offers facilities and services for traditional language laboratory work as well as for foreign language video and computer-based activities. LMC facilities and services include a 50-computer information technology center (Windows and Macintosh), two digital audio laboratories, a multimedia development studio, a One Button Studio for video recording with Open Broadcaster Software (OBS), 13 media viewing stations, and six small-group rooms. The LMC also circulates a collection of over 3,000 foreign language, English as a Second Language, and American Sign Language digital media materials.

Courses

World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Courses

WLLC:1000 First-Year Seminar 1 s.h.
Small discussion class taught by a faculty member; topics chosen by instructor; may include outside activities (e.g., films, lectures, performances, readings, visits to research facilities, field trips). Requirements: first-semester standing.

WLLC:1100 Contraception Across Time and Cultures 3 s.h.
Methods and history of contraception and abortion; issues of unwanted pregnancy and birth control in fiction, film, and media around the world. Same as CLSA:1100, GHS:1100, GRMN:1100, GWSS:1100.

WLLC:1355 Approaches to Global Cultural Studies 3 s.h.
Framework for thinking about global perspectives on culture; examination of themes within a transnational context; analysis of cultural expression from national and linguistic contexts.

WLLC:2248 The Invention of Writing: From Cuneiform to Computers 3 s.h.
Invention of writing as one of the most momentous events in the history of human civilizations; how the use of written sign systems, notations, maps, graphs, encryptions, and most recently, computer programs have consequences that reach deeply into all aspects of people’s lives; how writing fascinates and delights, fosters reflexive thinking and facilitates development of complex societies, and gives rise to institutions of social power and control; students explore the invention of writing and its consequences in broad international and interdisciplinary context. Same as ANTH:2248, ASIA:2248, CL:2248, CLSA:2048, COMM:2248, HIST:2148, IS:2248, LING:2248.
WLLC:2550 Mardi Gras and More: Cultures of Carnival 3-4 s.h.
Literature and customs associated with carnival from antiquity through present day; readings on theories of carnivalesque (Mikhail Bakhtin, Peter Burke, and others); materials from three distinct carnival cultures—Renaissance Europe (Francois Rabelais, German carnival plays), 19th-century New Orleans, and present day Rio de Janeiro. GE: Values and Culture. Same as GRMN:2550.

WLLC:3185 Global Women's Cinema 3 s.h.
Introduction to contemporary women's cinema and feminist filmmaking from around the world; emphasis on post-1968 period and cinema produced outside the United States. Same as GWSS:3185.

WLLC:3191 International Literature Today 1,3 s.h.
English majors may apply this course to the following area and/or period requirement. AREA: Transnational Literature and Postcolonial Studies. PERIOD: 20th/21st-Century Literature. Same as ENGL:3595, IWP:3191.

WLLC:3700 Topics in Global Cinema 3 s.h.
Identification of new models and methods to investigate cinema's relationship to current global issues beyond traditional scholarly focus in Western Europe and the United States; exploration of an emerging field, moving away from the paradigm of national cinema and bringing together shared theoretical frameworks while acknowledging different historical and cultural contexts. Same as ASIA:3700, JPNS:3700, TRNS:3700.

WLLC:3834 Arab Spring in Context: Media, Religion, and Geopolitics 3 s.h.
Protest movements that started in Tunisia in 2011 and swept across North Africa and the Middle East transforming Arab and Islamic societies in radically different ways; function of social media, satellite television, communication technology; influence of religious leaders and groups on some protest outcomes; impact of wealth and geopolitics on social fabric of Islamic societies within and outside Arab countries. Same as IS:3834, JMC:3146, RELS:3834.

WLLC:4512 Topics in Global and Transnational Culture 3-4 s.h.
In-depth look at a theme in cultural expression arising from interactions between countries and regions; focus on contemporary or historical issues; use of materials ranging from literature and the visual arts to music, mass media, and more; general processes through which cultures are formed in mutual and uneven relationships; research project. Recommendations: completion of an international and global issues GE course. Same as ARAB:4512, GRMN:4512.

WLLC:5000 Teaching and Learning Languages 3 s.h.
Readings in pedagogical theory and practice, second language acquisition; experience designing activities for teaching and assessment with critiques based on current theories and approaches; development of reflective practices toward one's language teaching. Same as FREN:5000, GRMN:5001, SLA:5000, SPAN:5000.

WLLC:5300 The Humboldt Current: Travel, Science, and the Spatial Imagination in Latin America 3 s.h.
Travel writings of environmental studies pioneer and Prussian explorer, Alexander von Humboldt, who led a five-year expedition to South America, Mexico, and Cuba in the late 18th century; his writing ushered in an idea of nature central to the Latin American imagination; topics include "Humboldtian science", the scientific traveler's persona, and rhetoric of travel; Humboldt's mapping of the Orinoco, Mexico, and the Caribbean, negotiating the tradition of European cartography with indigenous spatial practices; contribution of Humboldt's travels to a spatial imagination in Latin America; students develop an original research project. Recommendations: one graduate-level course in colonial, 19th-century Latin American literature, and/or ecocriticism and theory (this last course could be taken in related departments, such as English). Same as CL:5300, FREN:5300, SPAN:5300.

WLLC:6320 Topics in Contemporary Critical Theory 3 s.h.
Focused discussion of critical discourses and paradigms that have contributed to development of contemporary literary and cultural theory.