Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Director
  • Russell Ganim

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

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, 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
  • Department of Asian and Slavic Languages and Literatures: Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Sanskrit
  • Department of French and Italian: Arabic, French, Italian, Swahili
  • Department of German: German
  • Department of Linguistics: Linguistics
  • Department of Spanish and Portuguese: Portuguese, Spanish

The Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures also serves as the administrative home for 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 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.

The Autonomous Language Learning Network (ALLNet), administered by the Language Media Center in the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures, offers scholarship opportunities to learn critical and less commonly taught languages that are not currently taught at the University of Iowa. Any current university student, staff, or faculty member who is interested in pursuing language study to enhance their professional research or academic profile can apply for an ALLNet scholarship. With the support of the ALLNet staff, learners design their own study plans to learn basic language skills or improve upon existing skills in preparation for study or research abroad. Upon admission to the program, learners are provided with learning materials and tutorial sessions with a trained language and culture consultant.

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 provides a wide variety of facilities and services for traditional language laboratory work as well as for foreign language digital media production and computer-based activities. The LMC facilities include a 50-computer information technology center (ITC), two digital audio laboratories, a multimedia development studio, four One Button Studios for video production, 13 media viewing stations, and six small group collaboration spaces. The LMC also circulates a collection of over 3,000 foreign language (including American Sign Language) and English as a Second Language digital media materials.

Courses

Most Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures courses are offered by the division's departments and programs. They are listed and described in the corresponding General Catalog sections.
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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:1016 Classical Chinese Short Fiction 1 s.h.

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. Taught in English. Same as CLSA:1100, GHS:1100, GRMN:1100, GWSS:1100.

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WLLC:1200 Disabilities and Inclusion in Writing and Film Around the World 3 s.h.
Exploration of human experiences of disability and exclusion/inclusion as represented in recent international film and popular writing from Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East; how these experiences contribute to and reflect awareness of the challenges of disabilities as well as public policy; strategies that filmmakers and authors deploy to contain, complicate, and challenge cultural preconceptions of the disabled body; how disability intersects with other major identity categories (i.e., sexuality, nationality, race); tools for researching history, policy, and activism. Taught in English. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as DST:1200, GHS:1200, GRMN:1200.

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:1510 Ghost Stories and Tales of the Weird in Pre-Modern Chinese Literature 3 s.h.
Reading of Chinese literature concerning ghosts, marvells, and supernatural from the first millennium B.C.E. through the 1800s; readings analyzed against changing historical and religious contexts. Taught in English. Same as ASIA:1510.

WLLC:1600 Wonder Woman Unleashed: A Hero for Our Times 3 s.h.
Development of the woman warrior archetype in mythology (Athena/Minerva and Artemis/Diana), literature (Camilla from The Aeneid by Virgil), and history (Artemisia and Joan of Arc); focus on the development of Amazon narratives in Metamorphoses by Ovid, The Book of the City of Ladies by Christine de Pizzan, and On Famous Women by Boccaccio; students read Wonder Woman Chronicles and one or two critical studies on the subject, which may include The Secret History of Wonder Woman by Jill Lepore. Same as GWSS:1600.

WLLC:2001 Global Science Fiction 3 s.h.

WLLC:2050 Caucasus as a Crossroad of Civilization 3 s.h.
Exploration of past and current issues related to the Caucasus—a mountainous region located where Europe, the Middle East, and Asia meet—forming a geographical and cultural crossroad; topics include those related to women's rights, causes of poverty and ethnic conflicts, and foreign policy including terrorism in the region, the fight for freedom, and the struggle over natural resources. Taught in English. Same as RUSS:2050.

WLLC:2208 Classical Chinese Literature Through Translation 3 s.h.

WLLC:2222 Women in Premodern East Asian Literature 3 s.h.
Reading of East Asian literature portraying women from the first millennium B.C.E. through the 1800s; discussion of issues related to representations of women and conventional social, familial roles in premodern China, Korea, and Japan; cross-cultural comparison of different perceptions and portrayals of women in premodern East Asian literary traditions. Taught in English. Recommendations: completion of all ESL courses. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as ASIA:2222, GWSS:2222.

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. Taught in English. Same as ANTH:2248, ASIA:2248, CL:2248, CLSA:2048, COMM:2248, GRMN:2248, HIST:2148, IS:2248, LING:2248, TRNS: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. Taught in English. GE: Values and Culture. Same as GRMN:2550.

WLLC:2618 The Third Reich and Literature 3-4 s.h.
Nazi literature, literature of the Holocaust and the Opposition, and exile literature in English translation. Taught in English. GE: Values and Culture. Same as GRMN:2618.

WLLC:2620 Anne Frank and Her Story 3-4 s.h.
Analysis of the Diary of Anne Frank, its media adaptations, and related materials (e.g., fictionalizations, additional first-hand accounts); examination of Holocaust in the Netherlands, Belgium, and other countries outside Germany; anti-Semitism, discrimination, tolerance, resistance, identity formation, human aspiration and belief. Taught in English. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as GRMN:2620.

WLLC:3000 Big Ten Academic Alliance: Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures CourseShare 0-5 s.h.
Opportunity for students from universities across the Big Ten to participate in courses together; this course is a part of the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) CourseShare program.

WLLC:3090 Autonomous Language Learning Network (ALLNet) 0 s.h.
Autonomous language learning through learner goal driven instruction, and autonomous study through web-based and print resources; focus on development of language (e.g., speaking, listening, reading, writing) and cultural competency skills in target language.

WLLC:3131 Undergraduate Reading Workshop 3 s.h.
Analysis of different types of texts—theoretical, cultural, political, philosophical, literary, poetic—and exploration of varying ways to frame and read them. Same as CL:3131.
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 and English and Creative Writing 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:3210 Comparative Arts 3 s.h.
Cultural and aesthetic issues arising from side-by-side investigation of several art forms, including literature, cinema, painting, music, opera, architecture; periods, schools, styles, and their theories. Taught in English. Same as ASIA:3210, FREN:3210, IWP:3210, RUSS:3210, SPAN:3210.

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. Taught in English. Same as ASIA:3700, JPN:3700, TRNS:3700.

WLLC:4210 Slavery Museums, Memorials, and Statues in the United States, Europe, and the Global South 3 s.h.
Comparative study of museums, memorials, statues, performances, and artistic works that encapsulate the entangled history and memory of transoceanic slave trades and slavery in the United States, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Europe (France and the United Kingdom); critical tools to analyze public debates over politically charged monuments; exploration of transnational and political predicaments of the contemporary world; approaches include trauma theories, memory studies, history, postcolonial ecocriticism, cultural anthropology, heritage studies and museology, and Francophone cultural critique. Taught in English. Same as FREN:4210, MUSM:4310.

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; original research project. Requirements: GE CLAS Core International and Global Issues course.

WLLC:4801 Seminar in Comparative Literature 3 s.h.
Focus on comparative, interdisciplinary, theoretical, and/or inter-arts topic; topics vary; required for comparative literature major. Taught in English. Same as CL:4800, GRMN:4800, TRNS:4800.

WLLC:4990 Independent Study arr.
Special work arranged with faculty advisor.

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. Taught in English. Same as FREN:5000, GRMN:5001, SLA:5000, SPAN:5000.

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.

Comparative Literature Courses

CL: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). Requirements: first- or second-semester standing.

CL:1240 Major Texts of World Literature, Antiquity to 1700 3 s.h.
Reading and analysis of major literary texts from writing's origins to 1700 in the Mediterranean, Asia, and Africa; interrelationship of literature and history. GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts. Same as CLS:1040.

CL:1241 Major Texts of World Literature, 1700 to the Present 3 s.h.
Reading and analysis of major literary texts from 18th century to present in chronological sequence; emphasis on interrelationship of literature and history. Requirements: completion of GE CLAS Core Rhetoric. GE: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts.

CL:1510 Ghost Stories and Tales of the Weird in Pre-Modern Chinese Literature 3 s.h.
Reading of Chinese literature concerning ghosts, marvels, and supernatural from the first millennium B.C.E. through the 1800s; readings analyzed against changing historical and religious contexts. Taught in English. GE: Interpretation of Literature. Same as ASIA:1510.

CL:2001 Global Science Fiction 3 s.h.

CL:2030 Russian Comedy 3-4 s.h.
Introduction to the rich tradition of Russian and Soviet comedy in literature and cinema; students learn to analyze texts and film from Gogol's play, The Government Inspector, through Gaidai's classic film, Diamond Arm, and beyond; option to read original texts in Russian. Taught in English. Same as RUSS:2030.
CL: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. Taught in English. Same as ANTH:2248, ASIA:2248, CLSA:2048, COMM:2248, GRMN:2248, HIST:2148, IS:2248, LING:2248, TRNS:2248, WLLC:2248.

CL:2618 The Third Reich and Literature 3-4 s.h.
Nazi literature, literature of the Holocaust and the Opposition, and exile literature in English translation. Taught in English. GE: Values and Culture. Same as GRMN:2618.

CL:2666 Pact with the Devil 3-4 s.h.
Since early modern times, the pact with the devil has served as a metaphor for humankind's desire to surpass the limits of knowledge and power; students explore a variety of works from German, British, and Russian literature and culture from early modern time to the present, and critique different twists that fascination with the forbidden takes in regard to women. Taught in English. GE: Literacy, Visual, and Performing Arts. Same as GRMN:2666.

CL:2700 Romani (Gypsy) Cultures of Eastern Europe 3 s.h.
Aspects of culture shared by most Romá (Gypsies) around the world; samples of folklore from Europe; impact of Roma on European literature, music, and culture; readings in English; no previous knowledge of Russian or Romani required. Taught in English. GE: Diversity and Inclusion. Same as GRMN:2248.

CL:3131 Undergraduate Reading Workshop 3 s.h.
Analysis of different types of texts— theoretical, cultural, political, philosophical, literary, poetic—and exploration of varying ways to frame and read them. Same as WLLC:3131.

CL:3179 Undergraduate Translation Workshop 3 s.h.
Translation exercises, discussion of translation works in progress; alternative strategies for translation projects. Same as CLSA:3979, ENGL:3850, TRNS:3179.

CL:3203 Modern Japanese Fiction in Translation 3 s.h.
Introduction to modern Japanese literature from 1868 to present; focus on representative short stories, novels, and manga; the twin advent of modern Japanese language and the modern novel; rise of autobiographical "i-novel"; Japanese bundan (literary establishment), high modernity, and ero guro nansensu (erotic grotesque nonsense); stories of the war and its endless postwar; the neo-traditional and the avant-garde; literature of economic collapse and internationalization. Taught in English. Same as JPN:3203.

CL:3204 Traditional Japanese Literature in Translation 3 s.h.
Early Japanese literature from 7th to 19th centuries including prose, poetry, drama, and Buddhist texts; students bring traditional Japanese culture to life through practice with experiences ranging from calligraphy, letter folding, and layering kimono patterns to courtly contests and bookbinding. Taught in English. Same as JPN:3202.

CL:3222 City as Text/Text as City 3 s.h.
Ways of reading cities: how built environments are shaped by history; how European cities differ from American or postcolonial cities; how to map, inhabit, remember, touch, smell, and experience a city; what is a global city; what is a sustainable city; how city spaces are felt in terms of gender, class, race, and ethnicity; models that architects, planners, politicians, and designers use to create habitable spaces; how to think of texts as cities (i.e., as spaces where people congregate, meet, live); research paper that combines classic readings with independent research on a city of students' choice.

CL:3302 Russian Literature in Translation 1860-1917 3 s.h.
Survey of major works, figures, and trends of 19th- and early 20th-century Russian literature; age of the Russian novel; works of Turgenev (Fathers and Sons), Tolstoy (Confession), Dostoevsky (The Idiot, The Brothers Karamazov), and Chekhov (plays). Taught in English. Same as RUSS:3202.

CL:4100 Approaches to Critical Theory 3 s.h.
Introduction to major critical approaches in literary and cultural theory from a variety of traditions; studying existing models, students learn to think theoretically about language and society, and to orient themselves among existing theoretical discourses, interrogating the latter critically in terms of their own perspectives and theoretical needs; selections from influential works, shared class discussion, and presentations; no prior knowledge in the area of critical theory is presumed. Same as TRNS:4100.

CL:4203 Modern Chinese Writers 3 s.h.
Readings in modern and contemporary Chinese fiction; in English translation. Taught in English. Recommendations: sophomore or higher standing. Same as CHIN:4203.

CL:4700 Latin American Studies Seminar 3 s.h.
Examination of past, present, and future of Latin America; interdisciplinary. Taught in English. Same as ANTH:4700, HIST:4504, LAS:4700, PORT:4700, SPAN:4900.

CL:4800 Seminar in Comparative Literature 3 s.h.
Focus on comparative, interdisciplinary, theoretical, and/or inter-arts topic; topics vary; required for comparative literature major. Taught in English. Same as GRMN:4800, TRNS:4800, WLLC:4801.

CL:4900 Independent Study 3 s.h.

CL:5510 Comparative Stylistics 3 s.h.
Translation from English to French, including literary texts. Taught in English. Same as FREN:5020.