Translation

Director, Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures
• Russell Ganim

Graduate degree: M.F.A. in comparative literature—translation
Faculty: https://clas.uiowa.edu/dwllc/mfa-literary-translation/
Faculty:
Website: https://clas.uiowa.edu/dwllc/mfa-literary-translation/
Website:

Beginning with the country's first translation workshop over 50 years ago, literary translation has long been an integral part of the conversation about writing at the University of Iowa. The M.F.A. program in comparative literature—translation combines creative practice, international literature in-the-making, with training in world languages, literatures, and theory. The focus of the program is on creating translations into English that convey both the distinctness of the original and the immediacy of contemporary language.

The translation program enjoys close relationships with the University's program in comparative literature; M.F.A. programs in creative writing (fiction, poetry, and Spanish creative writing), nonfiction writing, and playwriting; and the International Writing Program. Faculty members from departments in the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures provide resources for the translation program and often serve as language mentors and committee members for M.F.A. students in translation. The program also sponsors residencies for renowned translators who facilitate a five-week translation workshop during their stay.

The translation program is administered by the Division of World Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

Resources
Student translators in the M.F.A. program publish Exchanges, a journal of literary translation. A vibrant source of international writing in translation, the journal provides hands-on editing and online publishing experience as well as an occasional venue for the editors' own works. The M.F.A. program regularly hosts and cohosts conferences, invites speakers from around the world for readings and short-term residencies, and is a constituent unit of the Virtual Writing University.

Programs

Graduate Program of Study
• Master of Fine Arts in Comparative Literature—Translation

Courses

Translation Courses

TRNS: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.

TRNS:1620 Bhagavad Gita: Essential Teachings of Indian Religion 3 s.h.
Students read the Bhagavad Gita and discuss its interpretations and use in classical and modern religious, literary, and political contexts; composed around 2000 years ago, it is the best known and most influential religious text in Indian history and concisely addresses war and peace, duty and righteousness, renunciation, devotion, and the nature of the universe; its been read, debated, and discussed by ancient philosophers, modern religious teachers, and political figures such as Mahatma Gandhi, the father of modern Independent India. Same as RELS:1620, SOAS:1620.

TRNS:2000 Translation and Global Society 3 s.h.
Contexts and functions of translation in the age of globalization; how translations are produced, received, and utilized in various contexts; effects of globalization on ethics, aesthetics, and politics of translation; how we understand cultures when they are received or transmitted through translation; effects of these exchanges on the English language.

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

TRNS: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:2248, COMM:2248, GRMN:2248, HIST:2248, IS:2248, LING:2248, WLLC:2248.

TRNS:3179 Undergraduate Translation Workshop I 3 s.h.

TRNS:3189 Undergraduate Translation Workshop II 3 s.h.
Continued training through translation exercises, discussion of translation works in progress; alternative strategies for translation projects. Prerequisites: TRNS:3179.

TRNS:3200 Literary Translation from German 3 s.h.
Workshop and seminar on translating from German to English; emphasis on literary translations and studying existing translations; special issues of German as a source language for translation into English. Requirements: prior completion of two German courses at the 3000 level or above. Same as GRMN:3200.
Translation in the broadest sense; originality, authority, authorship, accuracy, ownership, audience; issues problematizing differences between medium and message.