

Humanities (HUMN)

Interdisciplinary courses in the humanities have been created to foster the growth of a general, liberal education outside the confines of particular disciplines or departments. These courses, taught by faculty both within the Comparative Humanities program as well as from different departments in the humanities, are designed to introduce students to major writers, thinkers, and artists of various cultural traditions. Classes are limited in size so that students may share through discussion their reactions to the works studied, relate them to their own lives, and attempt to judge their relevance to the contemporary “globalized” world.

The program in comparative humanities approaches global traditions of ideas, history, literature, and art in an interdisciplinary fashion. Designed to reflect contemporary trends in humanistic scholarship, it examines issues and perspectives that conventional undergraduate disciplinary boundaries often preclude. These include the various ways in which, for example, the categories “Asia” and the “West” have been constructed and represented, and the historical and cultural shifts in the way knowledge has been classified. Inasmuch as language and culture are central to this interdisciplinary project, students who declare a major in the comparative humanities are required to satisfy a language requirement.

The major is especially suitable for students interested in broad study of the humanities and comparative studies, e.g., individuals otherwise focusing their education in the sciences and other non-humanities disciplines or students interested in advanced study of the humanities in graduate programs and seeking a balance of disciplinary and interdisciplinary studies for this purpose.

Students interested in the major are encouraged to contact the program director listed above as soon as possible to begin the advising process.

Comparative Humanities Major

The **major** consists of eight courses, a pass/fail oral examination and a demonstration of reading proficiency in a foreign language. The courses include:

HUMN 128	Myth, Reason, Faith ¹	1
HUMN 150	Art, Nature, Knowledge ¹	1
HUMN 250	Nihilism, Modernism, Uncertainty (May also be taught as UNIV 200) ¹	1
Two 300-level interdisciplinary humanities seminars ²		
Two 200-level or above comparative humanities or related humanities discipline courses ³		
HUMN 350 or HUMN 351	Senior Thesis Workshop ⁴ Honors Tutorial and Senior Thesis	1
Oral examination ⁵		

¹ These courses ground students in the broad outlines of world intellectual traditions. As W2 courses, HUMN 150 Art, Nature, Knowledge and HUMN 250 Nihilism, Modernism, Uncertainty teach analytical writing skills. All three courses teach information literacy skills through mandatory research assignments in close consultation with the instructor and library staff. Public-speaking skills are taught through the preparation for oral reports in HUMN 128 Myth, Reason, Faith and HUMN 150 Art, Nature, Knowledge and an oral exam following the completion of HUMN 150 Art, Nature, Knowledge.

² Courses encourage comparative studies across cultural, historical, and formal boundaries.

³ Approved by the student’s major adviser or program director.

⁴ Course gives students a chance to pursue focused research on a subject of particular interest to them. Discussion of the thesis topic must begin in the spring of the student’s junior year and the topic must have attained final approval by the faculty adviser by the end of September of the senior year. The thesis project may be submitted to the Honors Council for consideration as an honors thesis but this is not required in order to complete the major. Successful completion of the thesis requirement (including an oral defense) counts as the Culminating Experience in comparative humanities.

⁵ Intended as an integrative discussion covering all of the material in HUMN 128 Myth, Reason, Faith and HUMN 150 Art, Nature, Knowledge, must be taken after completing both of these courses. It is graded on a pass/fail basis and offered at the end of every spring semester. Students who fail the exam may re-take it when it is next offered.

In keeping with the program’s goal of exposing students to different modes of thought, the program asks students to demonstrate work in a foreign language in addition to the eight courses required for the major. Such competency can be attained by passing a one-credit course at the level of the fourth course or higher in a particular language sequence. Students also are encouraged to develop language competency elsewhere, as in summer school or abroad; however, all such programs must first be approved by the comparative humanities program director. Students whose native language is not English, or who are bilingual, are exempted from the language requirement.

Minor in Comparative Humanities

A **minor** in comparative humanities consists of five courses.

Select at least two of the following:

HUMN 128	Myth, Reason, Faith	
HUMN 150	Art, Nature, Knowledge	
HUMN 250	Nihilism, Modernism, Uncertainty	
300-level Humanities seminar ⁶		1
Humanities course ⁷		1

⁶ At least one 300-level Humanities seminar is required.

⁷ Remaining courses may be selected from all Humanities courses.

Faculty

Director: Katherine M. Faull

Professors: Katherine M. Faull, Slava I. Yastremski

Associate Professors: John C. Hunter, James Mark Shields

Visiting Assistant Professor: Nicholas Kupensky

Lecturer: Diane Jakacki

Courses

HUMN 100. The Humanities Now!. 1 Credit.

Offered Fall Semester Only; Lecture hours:3

A project based course in the humanities that introduces students to the digital humanities world through use of latest tools and methods of analysis. Open to first years and sophomores only.

HUMN 128. Myth, Reason, Faith. 1 Credit.

Offered Both Fall and Spring; Lecture hours:3

An introduction to the most significant works in the Western and Asian intellectual traditions, extending from ancient Mesopotamia through late medieval Europe and/or East Asia. Not open to students who have completed RESC 098 "Myth, Reason, Faith" or a crosslisted equivalent. Seniors by permission only.

HUMN 150. Art, Nature, Knowledge. 1 Credit.

Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:4

An interdisciplinary study of selected works in art, music, literature, science and philosophy from European Renaissance through the early 20th century. Crosslisted as ENGL 150.

HUMN 215. Hebrew Bible and Modern Literature. 1 Credit.

Offered Alternate Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3

The course examines how materials from the Hebrew Bible are reworked in modern literature and culture, focusing on Hebrew and American traditions. Crosslisted as HEBR 215.

HUMN 250. Nihilism, Modernism, Uncertainty. 1 Credit.

Offered Fall Semester Only; Lecture hours:3

An interdisciplinary study of major texts, figures, and concepts of the 20th century. Designed to follow HUMN 128 and HUMN 150. May be crosslisted as ENGL 230. May also be taught as UNIV 200.

HUMN 260. Introduction to Translation Studies. 1 Credit.

Offered Spring Semester Only; Lecture hours:3

An introduction to the history, theories, and development of the field of Translation Studies. Facility in one language other than English is strongly recommended. Crosslisted as EAST 205.

HUMN 266. Chinese Philosophy. 1 Credit.

Offered Alternate Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3

Major philosophical schools of the classical age, Buddhist philosophy, Neo-Confucianism. Crosslisted as EAST 266 and PHIL 266. Prerequisite: PHIL 100 or permission of the instructor.

HUMN 270. Methods of Interdisciplinary Study. 1 Credit.**Offered Spring Semester Only; Lecture hours:3**

An introduction to the techniques and issues of interdisciplinary and comparative study, using both theoretical study and concrete examples.

Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

HUMN 272. Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities. 1 Credit.**Offered Alternating Fall Semester; Lecture hours:3**

Comparative study investigating different cultures, historical epochs, narrative forms, media and traditions. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

HUMN 275. Greece and Turkey: East and West. 1 Credit.**Offered Summer Session Only; Lecture hours:Varies**

This course is based around a three-week summer study abroad experience in Greece and Turkey. Themes and materials will vary from year to year.

Prerequisites: interview and permission of the instructor. Crosslisted as CLAS 275 and ENGL 275.

HUMN 290. Studies in Environmental Humanities. 1 Credit.**Offered Alternate Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An investigation of the place of the environment in the humanities from a variety of academic perspectives. May also be taught as UNIV 200.

Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. Crosslisted as ENST 225 and ENGL 225.

HUMN 301. Brain, Mind, Culture. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An interdisciplinary study of the intersections between the humanities and neuroscience in the history of thought and contemporary culture. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

HUMN 303. Buddhism in American Culture. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An examination of the transmission of Buddhism to the U.S., with focus on the literature and cultural impact of the writers of the Beat Generation.

Prerequisites: RELI 200 or permission of the instructor.

HUMN 304. Narrative and Media. 1 Credit.**Offered Spring Semester Only; Lecture hours:3; Repeatable**

A seminar featuring narrative in several forms and contexts of representation. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

HUMN 306. US: Fever/Fantasy/Desire. 1 Credit.**Offered Fall Semester Only; Lecture hours:3**

Seminar on American literature between 1770-1861 with an emphasis on psychoanalytic approaches to literary and cultural study. Authors may include Brown, Sansay, Poe, and Melville. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. Crosslisted as ENGL 306.

HUMN 310. Dante and Milton. 1 Credit.**Offered Alternating Fall Semester; Lecture hours:3**

An intensive comparative study of Dante's "Comedy" and Milton's "Paradise Lost" as exemplars of medieval and late Renaissance understanding of human experience. May be crosslisted as ENGL 350.

HUMN 319. Independent Study. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:Varies,Other:3; Repeatable**

Individual project of study supervised by instructor. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

HUMN 320. History of Sexuality. 1 Credit.**Offered Either Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

A cross-cultural and interdisciplinary examination of the signification of sexuality in literature, philosophy, scientific discourse, and the visual arts.

Prerequisite: permission of the instructor. Crosslisted as ENGL 394 and WMST 325.

HUMN 325. Dostoevsky and Tolstoy: Literary Philosophy. 1 Credit.**Offered Alternate Fall or Spring; Lecture hours:3**

An introduction to the major philosophical ideas of the great Russian writers Fyodor Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy. In English. Crosslisted as RUSS 325.

HUMN 330. Studies in Autobiography. 1 Credit.**Offered Alternating Spring Semester; Lecture hours:3**

A critical, cross-cultural and transhistorical examination of the "writing of the self." Readings from Augustine, Descartes, Nietzsche, Derrida, among others.

HUMN 340. Seminar in Translation Studies. 1 Credit.**Offered Spring Semester Only; Lecture hours:3**

Advanced seminar in the history, theory, and practice of translation, including investigation of the role of translation in intercultural communication and comparative studies. Facility in a language other than English is strongly recommended.

HUMN 350. Senior Thesis Workshop. 1 Credit.**Offered Both Fall and Spring; Lecture hours:Varies,Other:3; Repeatable**

A colloquium on issues arising from the writing of a scholarly thesis. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

HUMN 351. Honors Tutorial and Senior Thesis. 1 Credit.

Offered Both Fall and Spring; Lecture hours:Varies,Other:3

Independent study and research leading to the writing of a thesis as approved by the Honors Council. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.

HUMN 3NT. Humanities Non-traditional Study. 1 Credit.

Offered Fall, Spring, Summer; Lecture hours:Varies,Other:3

Non-traditional study in Humanities. Prerequisite: permission of the instructor.